POLS 680 — Topics in Asian Politics: Comparative Politics of East Asia

Fall 2018
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Department of Political Science
Seminar: Monday 9:30-12:00 pm
Office Hours: Tue and Thurs 2:00 – 3:00 pm or by appointment
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Course Description
This course is a graduate-level seminar designed to explore regional politics in East Asia. We focus on Japan, China, Korea(s) due to their economic and geopolitical importance, as well as cultural uniqueness. From a comparative perspective, we will explore major political themes, including state formation, economic development, political changes, civil society, and globalization.

The goal of this seminar is to introduce students to the main debates on East Asia in the subfield of Comparative Politics and provide them with conceptual, theoretical, and analytical tools for conducting and evaluating comparative research in East Asia.

The seminar is a collaborative effort and its value is highly dependent on the input of the participants. To facilitate substantive, productive discussions, therefore, students must complete and synthesize all reading prior to class.

Course Requirements
1) Attendance and active participation at all meetings of the seminar, including but not limited to leading discussion at least once during the semester (30%). Each week, two students are expected to give a presentation on the reading and will lead a discussion on that week. Students who miss two or more classes are subject to failure in the course.
2) Weekly one-page memos outlining the main themes in the readings due on Sundays (9 pm) the day before the seminar (20%). All the memos should be posted on laulima and students are expected to read all others’ memos before the class. Weekly memos should not summarize but rather address the key contribution of the reading and possible critiques. On the week when you give a presentation, you are exempted to write a weekly memo.
3) A final research paper on a topic of the student’s choosing and discussed in advance with me (50%).

Note: Assignments submitted late will be docked one full letter grade every 24 hours past deadline.

Course Materials
1) Books to purchase


2) All other additional articles and book chapters will be posted on laulima.

Schedule and Readings

**PART I. BACKGROUND**

**Week 1 (August 25). Introduction and overview of the East Asian Politics**

No reading

**Week 2 (September 1). Holiday (Labor Day)**

**Week 3 (September 8) State and Nation-Building**


**Week 4 (September 15). Developmental State**


**Week 5 (September 22). Developmental State, cont’d**

David Waldner. State Building and Late Development (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), chs. 1, 2, and 5.


**Week 6 (September 29): Democratic Transition**


**Week 7 (October 6). Economic Reform and Economic Growth in Post-Mao China**


**Week 8 (October 13). Authoritarianism in China**

**Week 9 (October 20). Social Movements**
Week 10 (October 27). Political Contention

Week 11 (November 3). Political Contention

Week 12 (November 10). Citizenship


Week 13 (November 17). North Korea


Week 14 (November 24). Welfare States

Week 15 (December 1). Globalization

Week 16 (December 8) Student Presentations