

Political Science 346-01 (13237)
Dr. Helen Delfeld
Southeast Asian Politics

Fall 2013, Maybank 307	Professor Helen Delfeld
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Office Hours: TTH: 10 – 11:45 W: 10-12 (in my office, unless notified otherwise) I am also happy to make appointments outside of regular office hours. (email is strongly encouraged – only call my office phone number to see if I’m immediately available for a drop-in appointment. Don’t bother leaving a message; email me instead.)	

This course will explore the fascinating and rapidly changing political milieu of Southeast Asia. Much of the attention the international community gives Asia is directed toward the giants of northern Asia (Japan and China) and South Asia (India/Pakistan/Bangladesh), but Southeast Asia has fascinating and unique dynamics all its own. It is the crossroads of the world, including the world’s most populous Muslim state, and the only predominantly Christian state in Asia. Burma is turning a corner in reducing some human rights violations, but is largely unaffected by the opening of economies to the world market that characterizes both Cambodia and Vietnam. In some ways, Southeast Asia is a fascinating microcosm of larger world politics, but in others the dynamics are peculiar to the region itself. Understanding this vital region is key to a sophisticated understanding of world politics itself.

A second goal of this course is to explore what it means to do comparative politics, using techniques unique to comparative analysis: ethnography, content analysis, discourse analysis, comparative case studies, and so on. These are often not the same as techniques used within the largest political subfield, American politics. Often, we ask what it means to know something; what it means to know something in a culture other than one’s own, and what it means to know even your own culture.

Each week we will focus on a different country, with a few exceptions at the beginning and end of the semester. The first day of the week will focus on the specific country case in question; the second day of the week will focus on a more theoretical theme. This theme will have some special relevance to the country in question; it may affect other countries in the region, or it may affect them differently. This way we get to explore critical political issues while also paying close attention to the specific context of Southeast Asia. These issues will include religion and its role in politics; neoliberalism and trade; the state and other forms of governance; indigenous issues.

Required Readings

You will need to order the ebook Southeast Asian Affairs 2013, edited by Dalit Singh. You can find this at the Institute for Southeast Asian Studies website at <http://bookshop.iseas.edu.sg>

All other readings should be found on OAKS. If you find out I've misrepresented the truth on this point, I owe you a coffee.

Grading (out of a total of 1000 points)

Individual grades

1. Two exams (150 pts each)
2. Research paper (total of 400)

This assignment would work nicely with the group work. All the research required for a paper is exactly the same research that might end up helping out a background piece on a country.

 - a. Book review (100)

A short (1000 word) review article will give a critical reading of a **scholarly** book not covered in class. Part of this assignment is the research you have to do to find a suitable book, so do your research on topics this week to line up your book.

A book/article review is a standard academic format: a section describing the content of the book, since your reader will not necessarily have read the work(s); placement in its scholarly context (who would agree or argue? why?); and a section critiquing the approach, content, and overall quality of the work(s), which incorporates your own analysis – which is not opinion. Analysis is derived rather from carefully considered opinion, supported by convincing evidence.
 - b. Annotated bibliography (100)

Since you will use a minimum of six **scholarly** sources to write your final paper, you will be given a leg up on the process by producing an annotated bibliography of those sources. Each annotation will consist of the complete bibliographic reference of each source and one paragraph, minimum of 100 words, on both the **content** and the **theoretical approach** of the source. At most, three sources from the class syllabus may be used. At least four of the sources must be from the last four years.
 - c. Final paper (200)

The final paper will explore a topic that touches on SE Asian politics, perhaps obviously... However the important part of any research paper is exploring and presenting a genuine argument, which means you need to know the debate into which you are inserting your analysis.
3. Weekly reading responses. Please practice your skill at distilling the actual argument the scholar in question is making. Then, secondly, engage with that argument. Due the Sunday evening **before** classes. You may miss two over the course of the semester. (100 pts)
4. Peer assessment by group on group participation (100 pts)

Teams will assess individual members based on criteria established at the beginning of the semester. Each team member will be excluded from discussions regarding his or her performance, to allow other team members to be frank and honest. This is not an opportunity to gang up on a person, or give credit for more than a team member deserves. This is an opportunity to decide ahead of time what constitutes stronger and less strong student performance, and to learn to assess that with as much objectivity as possible. I reserve the right to override grades in this category if my observations do not match the assessments of the team, or if I find the justifications for a given grade to be insufficient. If I am forced to do so, it does not bode well for the grades of the other group members! Be clear, be concise, and be fair to the performance of the person in question.

Group Grades (sorry, I know “Group Work” sucks. But this won’t so much, I promise, because it’s got a point.)

5. Group presentation on your country (125 pts); this is to be done the day your country appears on the syllabus. Give us an intro to the country, going beyond the reading, giving us a deeper look into what makes this country interesting or special.
6. Model UN participation/presentation (125 pts). You will be representing your country at the Model UN, and assessed on your ability to move your country’s interests forward in that venue.

Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate knowledge of political systems	Exam; C- necessary to demonstrate successful learning
2. Apply theories and concepts to new situations	Research paper process; C- necessary to demonstrate successful learning

Conscience Cash

Since we all have multiple responsibilities, some of which conflict with the calendar of our class, I have instituted a Conscience Cash system to enable some flexibility in the scheduling of class due dates. Each person will begin with a “dollar” which can be used in the following ways:

1. You may trade the dollar to allow you to turn in a paper one day late.
2. You may trade the dollar for a chance to rewrite the final paper.
3. You may trade the dollar to take a test at another time.
4. You may trade the dollar to allow you to drop a quiz grade (most appropriate, likely, when you miss a quiz due to being late, or absent) – this is in addition to the two that everyone is allowed to drop. Obviously, you would choose this

option at the end of the semester if you didn't need it for another purpose, to improve your overall class grade.

There is **no other accommodation** available for missed work. You should use your dollar only when absolutely necessary, so you don't encounter an unexpected emergency, and pay with your grade.

Please Note: If you are a SNAP student eligible for accommodations, you must provide me with a copy of the notification letter you have been given by the SNAP office well before the need for any accommodation arises. If you are a student athlete who will miss class time due to away events, you must follow the procedures set out by the College in order to expect due consideration. In both cases, I will not guarantee granting your requests if I have not been given sufficient notice.

Date	Reading	Assignment
Aug 20	Say Hello!	Nada!
Aug 22	<i>Locating Southeast Asia</i> pp xi-19 OAKS	
	Questions: What is SE Asia? Is it a coherent idea?	
Aug 27	History and Colonization I	
	<i>Reading National Geographic</i> 1-46 OAKS	
	Haraway "The Persistence of Vision" OAKS	
Aug 29	One Small and Unusual State	
	"Brunei Darussalam in 2012: Towards a Zikir Nation"	
	"Timor L'este in 2012: The Harsh Reality of Independence"	
Sept 3	Peninsular SE Asia:	
	Thailand	
	"Thailand in 2012: A Year of Truth, Reconciliation, and Continued Divide"	
Sept 5	Theme: neoliberalism and the politics of tourism	Book Review Due
	"Neoliberalising Nature? Elephant-back Tourism in Thailand and Botswana" OAKS	

- Sept 10 **Malaysia; Singapore**
 "Malaysia in 2012: Promises of Reform; Promises Met?"
 Shades of Citizenship: Betwixt the Civic and the Ethnic"
- Sept 12 "Singapore in 2012: A Year of Scandals, Attempted Political Engagement, and Socio-economic Anxieties"
- Sept 17 **Burma/Myanmar**
 "Myanmar in 2012: mhyaw ta lin lin or Great Expectations"
- Sept 19 **Theme: human rights and ethnic divisions**
 "Ethnic Politics in Myanmar" OAKS
- Sept 24 **Vietnam**
 "VietNam in 2012: A Rent-Seeking State on the Verge of a Crisis"
 "Navigating the Crisis: The VCP's Efforts to Restructure the Economy and Fight Corruption"
- Sept 26 **Theme: the US and China in SE Asia**
 "Southeast Asia in America's Rebalance to the Asia-Pacific"
 "Chinese Perspective on the US Role in Southeast Asia"
- Oct 1 **Cambodia and East Timor/Timor L'este**
 Chandler "Cambodia Deals with its Past" OAKS
 "Cambodia in 2012: Towards Developmental Authoritarianism?"
- Oct 3 **Theme: humanitarian intervention and its aftermath**
 "Cambodia and the Perils of Humanitarian Intervention" OAKS

**Annotated
 Bibliography
 Due**

- Oct 8 **Laos**
 "Laos in 2012: In the Name of Democracy"
- Oct 10 **Theme: deforestation and environment**
 "Laos: Crisis and Resource Contestation" OAKS
 "The Sweet Serpent of Southeast Asia" OAKS
- Oct 15 **Fall Break!**
- Oct 17 **Exam**
- Oct 22 **Island SE Asia:**
 Indonesia
 "Indonesian Politics in 2012: Graft, Intolerance,
 and Hope of Change in the Late Yudhoyono Period"
- Oct 24 **Theme: Islam and Southeast Asia**
 Houben, "Southeast Asia and Islam" OAKS
- Oct 29 **Philippines**
 "The Philippines under Aquino III, Year 2: A
 Ponderous Slog Continues"
- Oct 31 **Theme: Terrorism? State Terrorism?**
 "Ashes from the Phoenix"
- Nov 5 Model UN Discussion
 "The UN and East Timor" OAKS
- Nov 7 Model UN training
- Nov 8-9 **Model UN!**
- Nov 12 **Theme: Peasant politics**
 Scott *The Moral Economy of the Peasant* OAKS
 "The Limits of Malay Educational and Language
 Hegemony" OAKS
- Nov 14 **Uplands/Zomia**
 Scott *The Art of Not Being Governed* 1-39 OAKS

Nov 19 **Theme: the state?**

Fox et al "Policies, Political-Economy, and Swidden
in Southeast Asia" OAKS

Nov 21 Fill in and Catch up

Nov 26 Final Assessment.

Final Exam