PS 345: Southeast Asian Politics
Winter 2015
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Class meeting hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 10-11:20 in 111 Lillis
Office hours: TBA

Course Description: This course surveys four major themes in contemporary Southeast Asian politics, including 1) nationalism, communism and revolution; 2) alternative paths of economic development; 3) religious and ethnic politics; and 4) politics of authoritarian rule and democratization. Through those four themes, students are expected to be critically informed of the main patterns of political development in Southeast Asia, and to be able to apply political science theories to analyze particular issues facing the region today.

This course satisfies Group 2 (social sciences) and International Culture requirements.

Evaluation: Grades will be based on class participation (10%), a midterm (30%), a final exam (30%), and a term paper (30%).

- Students are required to attend all sessions and read course materials carefully before class. Please give 24 hours advance notice or doctor’s letter for excused absence. No other extensions will be excused.
- Class participation (asking questions and offering comments) is strongly encouraged. Use of laptops is allowed in class only for taking note, not for accessing the Internet. Cell phone and tablet use is forbidden except in emergency case with advance notice provided to instructor. Students found to have violated these rules will be asked to leave class immediately for the rest of the class.

Exams: Midterm and final exams are in 60-minute-long, in-class, closed-book format. They include short-essay questions designed to test (1) students’ understanding of reading materials and lectures, and (2) their ability to make clear, informed and convincing arguments. Bring two green books (available at Duck Store).

Term Paper: Students are required to write a term paper that follows the guidelines below. Length: 8 pages double-space (excluding cover page and bibliography). Sources: Students are not required to use information and materials from outside the course materials for writing their paper. Citations are required for anything other than basic facts. In-text citations are sufficient: for example, (Beeson 2009, 32-33). Topic: Based on what you know about theories of democratization and the history and economic and political conditions of Southeast Asian countries from the textbook and other readings, make the case for one country in this region you think the US has the best chance to influence their transition to democracy. The paper must include (1) an analysis of historical, economic and political conditions in the country to show why it has a good chance to become a functioning
democracy; (2) a comparison of that country to two others in the region to demonstrate that the country you pick has the best chance; and (3) some comments on how the US can help. The first two sections must form the bulk of the paper.

Outline: A one-page outline is due either in class or by email to Professor Vu by 10 am on Feb 23. In this outline, you should let me know which 3 countries you have selected, which is perhaps the country with the best chance, and why (tentatively). You will find the country chapters in the textbook especially useful for this purpose. I will send back comments on your outline if I think they can be helpful.

Due: The paper is due on Thursday, March 12, by 5 pm. Please put a hard copy in my mailbox by the Political Science department office on the 9th floor of PLC (no stamp from the office is required). No emailed or late paper accepted.

Grading criteria: (1) understanding of reading materials and lectures; (2) ability to make clear, informed and convincing arguments; (3) ability to organize materials and arguments into a coherent essay; and (4) ability to deploy theories and cases from the readings to support their arguments.

Cheating or plagiarism: will result in failing the class and in most cases will be reported to the University.

Readings: Except the required book below, other required readings are available on blackboard.

• Robert Dayley and Clark Neher, Southeast Asia in the new international era, sixth ed. (Westview 2013). This textbook is to be used as a reference for the entire course, especially for the term paper.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Session 1 (Jan 5): Overview and introduction to SE Asia as a region
  • Dayley and Neher, Southeast Asia in the new international era, 1-25 (Introduction chapter).

NATIONALISM, COMMUNISM, AND REVOLUTION

Session 2 (Jan 7): Colonialism and the rise of nationalism
  • Sukarno: An autobiography as told to Cindy Adams (Bobbs-Merrill 1965), 17-50.

Session 3 (Jan 12): Colonialism and the rise of nationalism (cont.)
  • Sukarno: An autobiography as told to Cindy Adams (Bobbs-Merrill 1965), 50-77.

Session 4 (Jan 14): Revolutionary success and failure

  Jan. 19: Martin Luther King’s Birthday. No class

Session 5 (Jan 21): Revolutionary and counterrevolutionary violence
Session 6 (Jan. 26): **Genocide in Cambodia**

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Session 7 (Jan 28): **Theories of developmental capitalism**

Session 8 (Feb 2): **Developmental capitalism in Thailand and the Philippines**

Session 9 (Feb 4): **Singapore’s success story**

Session 10 (Feb 9): **Socialist failed experiments**

**RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC POLITICS**

Session 11 (Feb 11): **Overview of SE Asian Islam**

Session 12 (Feb 16): **MIDTERM** (covering materials on nationalism, communism, revolution, and economic development)

Session 13 (Feb 18): **Islam in Indonesia**

Session 14 (Feb 23): **Ethnic politics**

**TERM PAPER OUTLINE** due in class on Feb 23

Session 15 (Feb 25): **Ethno-religious conflict**

**REGIMES AND REGIME CHANGE**

Session 16 (Mar 2): **Overview and trajectories**

Session 17 (Mar. 4): **Democratization in Thailand**

Session 18 (Mar 9): **Democratization in Indonesia**

Session 19 (Mar 11): **Democratization in Myanmar**

**TERM PAPER:** due on Thursday, March 12, by 5 pm
**FINAL EXAM:** March 18, 10:15 am, in 111 Lillis
(covering religious and ethnic politics, regimes and regime change)