

WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

**Spring 2023**  
**POSC 4378 Politics of Asia**  
**Tuesday and Thursday: 9:30-11:45 a.m.**

**Instructor:** Dr. Ming Xie (*She / Her / Hers*)

**Email:** mxie@wtamu.edu

**Office:** Old Main 406B

**Office Phone:** 806-651-2564

*NOTE:* I will respond to messages within 48 hours, excluding weekends, holidays, and breaks.

*NOTE:* Please be mindful when emailing me – do not email a WT student with the same last name and the same first name initial with me. It is not the student's responsibility to notify you that you've emailed the wrong person.

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays and Thursdays: 9:00am-3:00pm or by appointment

**Required Text:**

Yahuda, M. (2019). *The international politics of the Asia-Pacific 4<sup>th</sup> edition*. Routledge.  
ISBN: 978-1-138-64707-7

The course deals with contemporary issues. Therefore, it is required that students stay abreast of regional political developments by making a habit of searching for relevant articles.

Some useful sources include:

- BBC News Asia-Pacific Section (<https://www.bbc.com/news/world/asia>)
- The Wall Street Journal Asia Section (<https://www.wsj.com/news/types/asia-news>)
- Channel News Asia ([www.channelnewsasia.com](http://www.channelnewsasia.com))
- The New York Times (<https://www.nytimes.com/section/world/asia>)
- The Straits Times (<https://www.straitstimes.com/global>)
- The South China Morning Post (<https://www.scmp.com/asia>)
- The Taipei Times (<https://www.taipeitimes.com/>)
- The People's Daily (<http://en.people.cn/>)
- Global Times (<https://www.globaltimes.cn/>)
- Foreign Affairs (<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/>)
- The Asahi Shimbun (<https://www.asahi.com/ajw/>)

**Course Description:**

This course provides students with a comprehensive and systematic introduction to the comparative political study of Asia. Asian has evolved rapidly over the last half century and is

now taking center stage of global politics. As one of the world's most vital regions, Asia embodies explosive growth and vibrant societies, but also conflicting national interests among major power challenging global stability. The course will analyze the increasingly complex international relations in Asia. It will emphasize issues of national identity as well as strategic aspects. The rising tensions between China and the United States will be central to the analysis. This course is *not* aimed to survey a general history of these countries but to discuss major issues and challenges associated with their political, economic, and social change and development. The course introduces major International Relations theories as analytical tools, with special attention to non-western theories. It will cover historical background, the major actors (the United States, China, Japan, India), the Taiwan issue, the Korean peninsula and regional cooperation. The course will start with a historical-theoretical overview. The second part will address the relationship and growing rivalry between the three great powers framing the international relations of the region: the United States, China, and increasingly India. Next the course will discuss the international relations of Japan in the region, and the tension surrounding the island of Taiwan and the Korean peninsula. Finally the course will review the economic and security dimension of Asian regionalism.

### **Course Objectives:**

- Gain conceptual and empirical understanding of the dynamic processes of the Asian Politics
- Achieve contextual and theoretical understanding of emerging issues in Asian politics
- Locate Asian politics within the global context and to view comparatively with other regions of the world
- Analyze the points of conflict and cooperation in the region and the role of key outside actors

### **Course Requirements:**

- **Attendance (10%)**
  - Attendance is mandatory throughout the semester.
  - You may have two unexcused absence in one semester. 10 points will be deducted for each additional unexcused absence.
  - Excused absences are granted only when:
    - 1) you must be absent for a compelling reason (e.g., health-related concerns, family emergencies, university-sponsored events); personal events such as family trips, weddings, and interviews are not legitimate reasons for excused absences;
    - 2) you notify the instructor before the start of class;
    - 3) you provide supporting documentation within one week of your absence.
  - Up to two excused absences will be granted in one semester.
  - Absences due to COVID-related health issues (e.g., self-quarantine due to exposure to virus): you should read the assigned readings and complete one additional instant reaction assignment to earn attendance credit. Need to obtain the instructor's approval before your absence.
  - Online live lectures will be delivered if the instructor needs self-quarantine.
  - Please make sure you come to class on time. **The instructor usually makes the most important announcements at the beginning of the class session.** Missing the first five

minutes of a class session will prohibit you from receiving important information. Constantly coming to class late will impact your participation grade.

- **The use of cell phone is prohibited during class period.** Please turn the ringer/screens off and put all phones away (e.g., in the bag) until class is over.
- Laptop may be used for note-taking purpose only. You are not allowed to use it for other purposes, such as browsing social media sites and working on assignments for other courses. Failure to follow the guidelines will impact your final grade.
- **Do not chat with your neighbors** when the instructor is lecturing and when your classmates are giving presentations. If you have questions, feel free to raise your hand and ask the instructor immediately. If you come up with some interesting or inspiring points that you would like to share with your classmates, please notify the instructor and share with the whole class.

- **Participation (10%)**

Our time in class is the opportunity to actively engage with the material we are exploring. Participation during class is crucial because it is an important avenue for learning. I encourage you to be active in every class session. This participation grade serves as a way to credit you with the effort and work you are putting into the class in and out of the classroom. However, I understand that we all have different levels of comfort regarding speaking in class. Participation will thus be counted as speaking to the whole group, in smaller groups, and completing in-class activities. If you are fully engaged in at least two of those three activities, you will earn full points. Only participating in one of those activities will earn you half of the participation points for that day. If you are not participating at any of those levels you will not earn points. I will communicate your grade to you every week. I encourage you to contact me so we can find ways to make participation work for you in this class. Any class missed will not impact your participation grade as long as you are within your allotted absences.

Your participation in this class begins with reading assigned materials before the day of class for which readings are assigned. This course will be conducted mostly in interactive lecture style. Raising questions, reflecting on lectures and your colleagues' discussion in class are all counted as participation. There will also be group-led and group-based discussion sessions. What this means is that you will have many opportunities to participate during the lecture. For group-led discussion sessions, I will assign a group of students to prepare a list of questions and ideas that are related to the readings and current Asian Politics prior to the class discussion session. This assigned group is responsible for leading discussion with puzzles and questions. For group-based discussion sessions, I will assign the problems related to the readings to each group during the class. After discussion within each group in class, groups will be responsible for reporting to the entire class and generate discussion. To be an effective participant, you will be better off paying attention to current day Asian politics and thinking about issues along with readings of this course. Needless to say, this requires you to read news in hard and soft media that cover Asian Politics.

- **Instant Reaction Assignments (30%)**

- You will complete 15 instant reaction assignments, each worth 20 points.

- Instant reaction assignments will not be announced ahead of time. You have to attend class sessions to finish the assignments.
  - The instructor will provide the question/prompt for each assignment during class sessions.
  - Instant reaction assignments cannot be made up.
- **Asian Culture for the Day Activity (10%)**  
Each student will take on the role of ambassador for an Asian culture or topic of their choosing. Details please see Appendix A.
- **Film Analysis (20%)**  
Students select a video/film that discusses some aspect of international politics and relations. Students must select one of the films suggested by the instructor. Next, students conduct a critical analysis of the film as a cultural and political context, focusing on several scenes that they think are most important to the plot. The guidelines please see Appendix B.
- **Exam (20%)**
    - You will take **one** exam, which is 200 points.
    - See the course schedule for the exact date of the final exam. Exam dates will not change.
    - The purpose of the exams is to test your comprehension of the ideas conveyed by the readings. The exams will emphasize the “big picture” of the readings rather than the details. You do not have to memorize dates and names; instead, focus on the key ideas and opinions you learn about in the readings.
    - The final examination will add weight to the short essay questions. It **cannot be made up (don’t ask)** except in case of university excused absence.

### Evaluation

Students should be aware that the instructor grades assignments according to the description in the WTAMU Catalog. An A is reserved for those students that have excelled or mastered the material or activity. A B is reserved for those students that have met all required areas and went beyond them with, perhaps, a few mistakes. A C is reserved for those students that met the required elements of the assignment with appropriate effort and went no further. A D is reserved for those students that almost met all of the required elements of the assignment, but with additional effort would have met them all. Finally, an F is reserved for those students that did not meet the required elements and, obviously did not put forth the required effort.

Every effort is made to make the grading system and rubrics as transparent and fair as possible. You may contest a grade up to one week after it is returned. If you believe that there has been an error on your assignment or exam, please wait 24 hours after receiving the grade. After that period, please submit a written description of the error you believe occurred along with the assignment or exam to the instructor for re-grading. Clerical errors and outright mistakes will be corrected; decisions about the amount of partial credit to give for an answer will not be revisited. Please note that your grade could increase, decrease, or remain the same upon reconsideration.

- **Grading System**

Task	Points
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Attendance	100
Participation	100
Instant Reaction Assignments	300
Asian Culture for the Day	100
Film Analysis	200
Final Exam	200
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000 points</b>

- **Grading Scale**

<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>
90.0 - 100	A
80.0 - 89.9	B
70.0 - 79.9	C
60.0 - 69.9	D
0 - 59.9	F

**Current Faculty Senate Statement:** The WT Faculty Senate places the highest priority on the health and safety of our university’s students, faculty, and staff. In cooperation and consultation with Academic Affairs and Dean's Council, Faculty Senate strongly supports that everyone in the WTAMU campus community abide by the provisions, both present and future, set out by system and university administration to maintain health and safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, Faculty Senate calls upon WT faculty to set an example for others by consistently and correctly wearing masks or face coverings while on campus, or at WT-sponsored events, as well as maintain at least six feet of physical distance.

**Course Policies and Responsibilities**

You will be responsible for assigned readings, quizzes, class lectures/discussions, participation in class and other assignments.

- **Attendance**

Attendance is important to succeed in this and any course in college. Your attendance is measured by your participation and completion of online activities.

- **Late Work**

Late assignments will automatically be penalized 10% if they are submitted after the due date. Assignments will not be accepted if they are more than 24 hours late without making prior arrangements with the instructor. For example: if an assignment is due on Friday at 11:59 PM turned in on Saturday at 1:00 PM, a B paper would be dropped to a C. If the student does not submit the paper until Monday at 07:00 AM, no credit will be given for the assignment.

The Late Policy does NOT apply to course exams. There are no make-up exams allowed in this course unless prior arrangements are made.

- **Retakes**

If an assignment is returned to the student to be redone, it will be assessed a 15% penalty each time it must be redone. It is in the student's best interest to read/listen to assignment directions carefully so as to complete the assignment correctly the first time.

### **Academic Integrity**

All work must be completed individually unless otherwise stated. Commission of any of the following acts shall constitute scholastic dishonesty: acquiring or providing information for any assigned work or examination from any unauthorized source; informing any person or persons of the contents of any examination prior to the time the exam is given in any subsequent sections of the course or as a makeup; plagiarism; submission of a paper or project that is substantially the same for two courses unless expressly authorized by the instructor to do so. For more information, see the [Code of Student Life](#). It is both the right and responsibility of every member of the community to read, understand and enforce the guidelines set forth for maintaining WTAMU's academic integrity. Sanctions for any violation of the Academic Integrity Code may include any of those listed under the "Sanctions/Penalties" section of the Code of Student Life. Plagiarism and Cheating are not tolerated. The WT Code of Student Life (August 2020, p. 25) defines plagiarism as:

- Presenting work, ideas or phrasing of another, in whole or in part, as one's own without giving credit and proper documentation of sources.
- Copying material directly from sources (including electronic media) except when the material is enclosed in quotation marks and the source is clearly identified. Failure to use quotation marks or appropriate methods of documentation shall be construed as attempted plagiarism.
- Paraphrasing too closely to the original, even when the source is identified.
- Claiming credit for work in any media (electronic, digital, artistic, etc.) where the student is not the original creator of said work.

**Any assignment or exam in this course that contains plagiarism or cheating will be scored a 0. More than one incident of academic misconduct will result in a letter grade of "F" for the course. Depending on the severity, academic misconduct could result in suspension or dismissal from the program.**

### **Acceptable Student Behavior**

Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (Code of Student Life). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. Inappropriate behavior may result in disciplinary action or referral to the University's Behavioral Intervention Team. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

### **ADA Statement**

West Texas A&M University seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified persons with disabilities. This University will adhere to all applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to register with

[Student Disability Services](#) (SDS) and to contact faculty members in a timely fashion to arrange for suitable accommodations. Contact Information: Student Success Center, CC 106; phone (806) 651-2335.

**Title IX Statement**

West Texas A&M University is committed to providing a learning, working and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect in an environment free of sexual misconduct and discrimination. Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. Harassment is not acceptable. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here:

- WTAMU Title IX Coordinator Richard Webb – Old Sub, **or** call 806.651.3199
  - WTAMU Counseling Services – Classroom Center 116, **or** call 806.651.2340
  - WTAMU Police Department – 806.651.2300, **or** dial 911
  - 24-hour Crisis Hotline – 800.273.8255, **or** 806.359.6699, **or** 800.692.4039
- <https://www.notalone.gov/>

For more information, see the Code of Student Life.

**Evacuation Statement**

If you receive notice to evacuate the building, please evacuate promptly but in an orderly manner. Evacuation routes are posted in various locations indicating all exits, outside assemble area, location of fire extinguishers, fire alarm pull stations and emergency telephone numbers (651-5000 or 911). In the event an evacuation is necessary: evacuate immediately do not use elevators; take all personal belongings with you; report to outside assembly area and wait for further information; students needing assistance in the evacuation process should bring this to the attention of the instructor at the beginning of the semester.

**WT Attendance Policy for Core Curriculum Classes**

For the purposes of learning assessment and strategic planning, all students enrolled in Core Curriculum courses at West Texas A&M University must swipe their Buff Gold cards through the card reader installed in the classroom/lab for each class/lab meeting.

**SPRING 2023 COURSE CALENDAR**

The schedule is tentative and subject to change. Changes to topics and readings will be announced in lecture and noted on WTClass at least one week ahead of time.

Week	Date	Lecture	Readings	Assignment Due Dates and Exams
Week 1	01/17	Outline of the course, introduction of subject, readings and course requirements; Sign up for the Asian culture of the day for which you will write analytical essays.	Course syllabus	

	01/19	What do we know about Asia-Pacific?	Yahuda Ch 1	
Week 2	01/24	The international relations of Asia-Pacific from a historical perspective	Yahuda Ch 2	
	01/26	History: The People's Republic of China, Japan, Korea	Yahuda Ch 3	Zyna A. North Korea
Week 3	01/31	International Relations theories about Asia	Acharya (2014)	
	02/02	Non-Western International Relations theory in East Asia	Kang (2003) Callahan (2015)	Collin W. UAE
Week 4	02/07	External power: U.S. in East Asia	Yahuda Ch 4	
	02/09	The U.S. alliance system in Asia	Hemmer and Katzenstein (2002) Cha (2010)	Jayden D. Qatar
Week 5	02/14	China in East Asia: A rising global power	Yahuda Ch 5	
	02/16	China's search for global influence: Soft-smart-sharp power?	Shambaugh (2015) Singh (2018)	Muriah R. Japan
Week 6	02/21	US-China rivalry: From strategic partner to strategic competitor	<a href="#">Allison (2015)</a> Tellis (2020)	Lauren S. Afghanistan
	02/23	Competing narratives: How China and the U.S. perceive each other	Lippert and Perthes (2020): pp. 12-19	Taylor M. Mongolia
Week 7	02/28	India as a regional power India and China: Competing or complementary visions of international order?	Paul (2014) Miller (2018)	
	03/02	In class group discussion		Taylor H. Philippines
Week 8	03/07	The Taiwan issue in the regional and international setting	Yahuda Ch 8	
	03/09	The One China policy and Taiwan's identity: Is Taiwan's status quo sustainable?	Zhong (2016)	Gracie I. Nepal
Week 9	Spring break			
Week 10	03/21	Regional points of tension (1): India-China border tensions – The South China Sea dispute		In class group discussion
	03/23	Regional points of tension (2): South Korea- Japan tensions (History and territory)		James A. Sri Lanka
Week 11	03/28	Japan's international relations in Asia Guest Lecture Dr. Han	Yahuda Ch6	



	03/30	Regional challenges and Japan's grand strategy	Hughes (2016)	Biak N. Myanmar
Week 12	04/04	The Korean Peninsula: Challenges to regional security	Yahuda Ch 7	
	04/06	Constructivism v. Realism: Debating North Korea's nuclear strategy	David Kang <a href="#">Enduring truths about North Korea</a> Cha <a href="#">The North Korea Challenge</a>	Grace N. South Korea
Week 13	04/11	ASEAN, Regional institutions and East Asian security	Yahuda Ch 9	
	04/13	South Asia in the field of tension between China and India	Paul (2019)	Christian M. Iran
Week 14	04/18	The East Asian regional economy	Ahn (2018)	
	04/20	Japan's regional economic strategy	Katada (2016)	Sarah T. India
Week 15	04/25	China's Belt Road initiative	<a href="#">Chinese World Order</a> Callahan (2016)	
	04/27	Concluding Class Debate: The future of Asian international relations: Cooperation or conflict	Yahuda Ch 10	Ali S. Pakistan
Week 16	05/02	Review of the course content		

## **Appendix A**

### **Asian Culture for the Day** (100 points; Due on the designated day)

Each student will take on the role of ambassador for a business culture or topic of their choosing. Some Tuesdays, we will have ambassador briefings on the chosen topic/culture.

At the beginning of the semester, students will sign up the dates for their “Asian culture of the day” assignments. On the designated days, you need to begin that class session with a thought or exercise that provides insight into concepts or practice in a specific Asian culture (10 minutes). Styles may include, but not limited, video clips, films, quotes, songs, and readings, game, engagement in trust initiatives, and yoga relaxation exercises. Remember, this activity should be related to the chose cultures/concepts.

To keep the time limit, each student should meet or email me to go over their plan at least one week before their scheduled time.

No visual aid is required, but you may use visuals if you have items that will enhance your culture ambassador briefings/presentation. Locate a second source (such as research articles), to use as support material (it's REQUIRED – it's also needed to turn in your support material and used sources). Remember to credit both sources in your oral presentation. The following are the Grading Criteria: Each item will be evaluated on the 20 point scale for a total of 100 points.

1. Consult with the instructor at least one week before day.
2. Demonstrate creativity, careful planning, and thought.
3. Activity are related to chosen culture or concepts.
4. Quality support materials
5. Encourage the participation of the whole class.

## Appendix B

### Film Analysis (200 points)

Topics may include, but not limited:

1. Describe the context in which the action takes place. Which elements of the film give us information about the political context? How does the context affect international relations and policies?
2. Describe different identities that emerge in the course of the film. How these identities are constructed? How can the political perspective help us understand the identities of the main characters? How can we use the critical perspective to understand these identities? What is the relationship between identities and the political context, both domestically and internationally?
3. How does history affect the standpoints of the main characters? What do we learn about history from the film? What is the relationship between history and identities of the main characters?
4. What political ideas, ideology, events, and values are conveyed by the film?
5. What can you say about communication styles and language use in the film? What did you learn about the characters from the way they use language? Identify social structures that affect how the language is used (discourse).
6. Analyze nonverbal codes and cultural space. How do the main characters use nonverbal communication? How are cultural spaces constructed in the film? Identify different elements that are used to construct these cultural spaces.
7. Identify political position(s) the film represents. How are the political positions represented in the film related to our present cultural and political contexts? To which cultural positions does the film appeal? Whose social interests (in terms of social positions) are represented in the film? Why are those and not other interests represented? How is power implicated in social positions that the film represents?

You can choose either to answer the above questions or choose some concepts we have learned from this class and write a **critical analysis paper**. This paper should be at least 5 pages (not including reference page), properly cited, typed in 12 point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, spell-checked, and grammatically correct.

#### Grading:

1. Content/Citations: The paper is a well-organized analysis of your observations about international background of political institutions, and how this background may or may not be an influence on individuals' identities and behaviors (50 points).
2. Depth of Observations: You have shown that you have thought carefully about the content of the film/game by discussing the implications or applications of your observations to political situations (50 points).
3. Relevance to our learned knowledge/concepts/theories (50 points)
4. Quality: Ideas are expressed clearly with complete sentences, correct punctuation, proper spelling, and following our writing policy. The paper is a minimum of 5 pages in length, cited correctly in APA style (50 points).

List of suggested movies (Please consult with the instructor before conducting the analysis)

- *A City of Sadness* (1989) by Hsiao-Hsien Hou
- *Sarkar* (2005) by Ram Gopal Varma
- *Helios* (2015) by Longman Leung
- *1987: When the Day Comes* (2017) by Joon-Hwan Jang
- *The Battleship Island* (2017) by Seung-Wan Ryoo
- *The Eight Hundred* (2020) by Hu Guan
- *Hunt* (2022) by Jung-Jae Lee