POSC 237-00
Southeast Asian Politics

**Syllabus**

Monday and Wednesday: 12:30 a.m. – 1:40 p.m.
Friday: 1:10 p.m. – 2:10 p.m.

Winter Term 2009: January 5 – March 20

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**Preface**

Southeast Asia is a diverse and dynamic region of the world. This course will cover key thematic issues of Southeast Asian politics, including the challenges of nationalism, state formation, regional integration, regional development, the rise of the power of non-state actors, and the struggles for citizen-sovereignty of the people. We will examine these frontier issues against the backdrop of Southeast Asia’s societal evolution through kingdoms, colonial eras, emergence of nation-states, influence of globalization, and environmental changes.

This course emphasizes on understanding conceptual issues, empirical evidences, and theoretical puzzles that resonate in the Southeast Asian politics but are relevant to many other regions of the world. The general aim of the course is to study the current issues of Southeast Asian Politics in light of historical evolution of different and diverse societies.

This course is designed for students to: (1) gain conceptual and empirical understanding of the dynamic processes of the Southeast Asian Politics; (2) achieve contextual and theoretical understanding of emerging issues in Southeast Asian Politics; (3) locate Southeast Asian politics within the global context and to view comparatively with other regions of the world. In so doing, this course will balance the focus on both country specific politics and thematic issues relevant to regional countries.
Course Outline

Week 1: Interpretations of “Southeast Asia”
Week 2: Colonialisms, Nationalisms, and “State” Formation
Week 3: Standardization of Institutions
Week 4: Challenges in “Civilizing the Margins”
Week 5: Regional Integration
Week 6: Democracy and Its Challenges
Week 7: Politics of Development
Week 8: Struggles for Livelihoods Freedom
Week 9: Social Ecological Complexities
Week 10: Your Interpretations

Required Texts


In addition to these four books, students will receive hard copies of selected chapters from a book manuscript by James C. Scott to be published by Yale University Press in 2009. There will also be e-reserve readings. I will also use movies, documentary videos, and news video clippings in class to illustrate the concepts and theories that explain the dynamics of Southeast Asian politics.
Assignments, Expectations, and Grade

There are four components of course assignments. These four components will be applied to evaluate your performance in this course. The grades are in parentheses. The details of assignments are as below:

(1) **Active Readings and Discussion (20%)**: Your participation in this class begins with reading assigned materials before the day of class for which readings are assigned. Raising questions, reflecting on lectures and your colleagues’ discussion in class are all counted as participation. This course will be conducted mostly in interactive lecture style. 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. Active reading questions for each class are distributed on Fridays by email for the following three days of the week. You will pick questions for one of the three days every week and respond to these questions by email and send them to the listserv address of the course - posc237-00-f07@lists.carleton.edu. This is roughly one response per week for seven weeks. All of these answers are worth 10 points out of 20 points in total for this component. Each response is worth 2 points. You will have a chance to discard two lowest earning responses out of seven responses. They will be returned to you at the end of the Week 9. The remaining 10 points for potluck discussion will be evaluated based on your performance on citizenship of this course. To be a good standing citizen of this course, you are required to: (1) have good attendance; (2) read assigned materials before the class; (3) have timely notification and communication with me when you have to be absent or if you need to request extension for personal reasons; and (4) exercise self-respect and responsibility of a student for the success of learning mission of this course and the Carleton College as a whole; and (5) exercise your intellectual freedom in discussions and the assignments for the course. To be an effective participant, you will be better off paying attention to current day Southeast 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 Southeast Asian Politics. Danya Leebow, a Reference and Instruction Librarian for Social Sciences, has created an online Research Guide for this course where you will find the url links to academic journals on Southeast Politics and to the websites of major newspapers covering Southeast Asian Politics.

(2) **Essay on Geopolitics of Southeast Asia (25%)**: This assignment requires you to identify one specific place in Southeast Asia you have never been to and you wish to visit in the future. Then write an essay of nine to ten pages about this place describing: (1) its origin; (2) historical significance; (3) cultural distinctions; (4) economic condition; and (5) political and societal significance. You will have to write about a place that is not listed in any online encyclopedia. The essay itself will be assigned 15 points. After completion of the essay, you will enter your essay into Wikipedia. The use of images, pictures, figures, and maps are encouraged especially for your Wikipedia entry. Your entry into Wikipedia is worth 10 points. Here is a link for instruction to use Wikipedia and to enter your essay: [http://webtrends.about.com/od/wiki/ht/wikihowto.htm](http://webtrends.about.com/od/wiki/ht/wikihowto.htm)

(3) **Research paper (35%)**: I have a list of topics that you can select for your research paper. You should feel free to select a topic from the suggested list or choose your own topic of interest in Southeast Asian Politics. There will be five stages in developing your paper. First, the topic proposal and an outline of your term paper is due on **January 20**. The proposal should include: (1) topic, (2) your research question and puzzles; (3) a brief explanation of your interest; and (4) a preliminary list of references. Second, based on your proposed topic and discussion with me, you...
will develop an outline of the paper. The outline is due on **January 27** and it is graded for 5 points. I will meet with you to discuss the next step in writing your paper. **Third**, the first draft of research paper is due on **February 16**. This first draft of paper should include all relevant aspects of research and contents of the paper based on your outline. **Fourth**, the final draft is due on **February 26**. This final draft should be a copy very close to a final product and it should be written between 10 and 15 pages. You will submit two hard copies. One copy of this final draft is for me and the other copy is for your peer who will review and present your paper at the mini-conference. The final draft is graded for 10 points. You will receive a memo from me with comment and suggestion to improve it along with your grade. **Fifth**, your final paper is due on **March 14**. The final paper should be between 15 and 20 pages including references but excluding maps, figures, tables, and images. This final product must address issues, suggestions, and comments raised by reviewers during the Miniconference and in my memo. The process of writing this paper is designed for you to develop an in-depth learning and understanding of the topic of Southeast Asian Politics you chose to write.

(4) **Peer review and mini-conference presentation (20%)**: After receiving the final draft of the paper from your classmate on **February 26**, you will read and prepare to give 15 minute presentation at the Mini-conference. The author of the paper will have 5 minutes to respond to the reviewer. The reviewer will write a one page comments and suggestion for the author to improve the paper. Presentation is worth 15 points and review memo is worth 5 points. This review memo should be sent to the author of the paper after the presentation while copying it to me. The authors should carefully read the reviewer’s memo and my comments and revise the paper for final product. The final papers are due on March 14 by noon.

**NOTE:** All written assignments should be double-spaced pages with 12 point Times New Roman font and with page numbers.

**Schedule of Assignments and Due Dates**

1/7   - Sign up for active reading responses
1/12  - Sign up for paper topics
1/20  - Topic proposal for research paper is due
1/27  - The outline of research paper is due (**Graded**)
2/5   - Essay on geopolitics of a place is due (**graded**)

**MIDTERM BREAK 2/7 – 2/9**

2/16  - The first draft of research paper is due
2/26  - The final draft of research paper is due (**graded**)
3/2   - Miniconference (**graded**)
3/4 - Miniconference (graded)
3/6 - Miniconference (graded)
3/9 - Miniconference (graded)
3/11 - Miniconference (graded)
3/14 - Final research papers are due (graded)

**Course Conducts**

a. **Attendance:** Attendance is required for this course. If you need to be absent from the class, it is your responsibility to notify me in advance. When you are absent, it is in your benefit to borrow notes from your classmate or ask your classmates to learn what you missed. If you wish, I will be available during office hours or by appointment at your request to meet with you and go over what you missed while you were absent.

b. **Plagiarism:** There is zero tolerance for plagiarism. A summary of the College’s policy on plagiarism states: “At Carleton College, an act of academic dishonesty is therefore regarded as conflicting with the work and purpose of the entire College and not merely as a private matter between the student and an instructor; all cases involving such dishonesty are referred for appropriate action to the Academic Standing Committee (ASC) via the Associate Dean of Students or the Associate Dean of the College.” For more information on Carleton’s policy on academic honesty, please consult [http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/dos/handbook/academic_regs/?policy_id=21359](http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/dos/handbook/academic_regs/?policy_id=21359)

c. **Late assignments:** Assignments are due on the dates specified in this syllabus or in the assignment sheet. Late work **will receive half point reduction per late day.** If you are unable to complete an assignment on time due to illness or personal emergency, you can request an extension with the supporting documents such as a medical note from a doctor or the Wellness Center.

d. **Special needs:** If you require special accommodation due to a documented physical or medically classified different learning strategy, please come see me during the first week of class or any time throughout the semester to discuss how I might best assist you in meeting the objectives and requirements of this course.

**IMPORTANT:** The key for you to be successful as a student and for me as a teacher in this course is timely and effective communication between you and me. Carleton has numerous resources to help you excel in learning. If you do not know them, do not be shy to ask. Make good use of resources on campus! I encourage you to use the Write Place even if you consider yourself the best writer in the world.
Schedule of Classes and Readings

WEEK 1: INTERPRETATIONS OF “SOUTHEAST ASIA”
Essential readings:

1/5 Introduction to the Course
This syllabus

1/7 Historical Dimensions


Chapter 1: Part A – Rethinking Southeast Asia, pp. 1-66.

1/9 Evolution of States and Societies


WEEK 2: COLONIALISMS, NATIONALISMS, AND “STATE” FORMATION

1/12 Economics and Politics of Farmers
Scott, James C. Moral Economy of Peasants: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia, Yale University Press, 1976. (Hereafter “Scott”)
Chapter 1: The Economics and Sociology of the Subsistence Ethics, pp. 1-34.


Chapter 3: The Distribution of Risk and Colonial Change, pp. 56-90.

1/14 Roots of Nationalisms and Postcolonial States


Chapters 1 – 4, pp. 1-52.

Scott, Chapter 5: The Depression Rebellion, pp. 114-156.

1/16 Colonial Landscapes

Scott, Chapter 4: The State as Claimant, pp. 91-113.

WEEK 3: STANDARDIZATION OF INSTITUTIONS

1/19 Creating boundaries of governance

Scott, James C. from forthcoming book manuscript, to be published by Yale University Press.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: State-Space: Zones of Governance and Appropriation

Chapter 3: State-Space: Creation, Maintenance, and Fragility

1/21 Consequences of boundaries

Duncan, Christopher, Civilizing the Margins: Southeast Asian Governments and Development of
Chapter 1: Legislating modernity among marginalized

Chapters: 2-9, students select one of these chapters. No more than two students may select the same chapter.

1/23 Indoctrination of Standardization


Chapter 1: Nationalism, Identity and the Logic of Seriality

Chapters 4-11, each select one chapters among these. No more than two students will select the same chapter.

WEEK 4: CHALLENGES IN “CIVILIZING THE MARGIN”

1/26 Politics of Borderless People and Boundaries


Scott, James C. from forthcoming book manuscript, to be published by Yale University Press.

Chapter 8: Prophets of Renewal

Chapter 9: Conclusion


1/28 Struggles for identities


1/30 Library Research Guide for the Course, this class will be led by Danya Lebow, a reference and instruction librarian at Gould Library 306, the PC Lab.

WEEK 5: REGIONAL INTEGRATION

2/2 Theoretical dimensions


2/4 Empirical Realities


2/6 Challenges of regional community formation

Chapter 6: Controversy over Burma’s admission into ASEAN, pp. 125-150.


2/7 – 2/9 MID-Term Break

WEEK 6: DEMOCRACY AND ITS CHALLENGES

2/11 Democracy in Southeast Asia


Chapter 1: Challenges in authoritarianism in Indonesia and Malaysia, pp. 1-23.

Chapter 2: Public Intellectuals, media and democratization: cultural politics of the middle classes in Indonesia, pp. 24-59.

The King, the Military, and the Struggle for Democracy in Thailand: Examining Institutional Incompatibilities (no reading required).

2/13 Challenges of Democracy

Heryanto et al., Chapter 5: Islamization and democratization in Malaysia in regional and global contexts, 117-144.


WEEK 7: POLITICS OF DEVELOPMENT

2/16 The Meaning of Development


Pak Mun Dam

**2/18 Human Rights**

Heryanto et al. Chapter 3: Developing dissent in industrializing localities, pp. 60-89.

Chapter 6: The blessed tragedy: the making of women’s activism during the reformasi years, pp. 145-177.


**2/20 Globalization**


Nam Thuen 2 Dam case (no readings)

**WEEK 8: CHALLENGES OF LIVELIHOOD FREEDOM**

**2/23 Complex Relations between Citizens and of States**


Sidel, John, “Philippines Politics in Town, District, and Provinces: Bossism in Cavite and Cebu,”
2/25 States’ Development Projects and Citizens’ Livelihood Freedom

Scott, Moral Economy of Peasants, Chapters 6 -7.

2/27 Struggles for Livelihood Freedom

Economist, “Sweet Serpent of South-East Asia,” December 30th, 2003
http://www.economist.com/world/asia/displayStory.cfm?story_id=2313069


WEEK 9: SOCIAL ECOLOGICAL COMPLEXITIES

3/2 – 3/9 Miniconferences