

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF EAST ASIA—REGIONAL COOPERATION?

Political Science 4386

2018 SMU-in-Japan Summer International Studies Program

M–F 11:10am–12:40pm, Kwansai Gakuin University, Japan

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Office hours:
By appointment

Course Description and Objectives

This course has both *substantive* and *procedural* objectives. Substantively, this course provides an overview of international relations in the East Asian region while introducing students the leading theories and debates about regional cooperation in the field of international relations (IR). Procedurally, because this is a *writing-intensive* course, students are expected to write an analytical essay that demonstrates a *clearly articulated research question* and *thesis statement*. The thesis is to be *supported* by logical and empirical *evidence*, and not merely opinion. The essay and the annotated bibliography are to be *well researched* and written in a polished and *grammatical* style.

Postwar Europe was integrated as a region rather early through the European Coal and Steel Community and NATO; today close intra-European ties are institutionalized in the European Union. By contrast, East Asia was long divided by colonialism, the Cold War, and America's "hub and spoke" alliance system.

However, there are signs that may lead to regional cooperation in the twenty-first century. Intra-regional trade and investment is reaching new highs. There are multiple efforts to build new regional institutions, most notably the ASEAN Plus Three initiative. There has been a limited, but significant, spread of democratization and signs of pluralism in authoritarian and communist countries, especially in China.

Meanwhile, there remain lingering signs of regional conflict. The region is confronted with two major, long standing points of crises, the Korean Peninsula and the Taiwan Strait, as well as a host of other lesser, but quite serious, territorial disputes. Two of the major countries in the region, China and Japan, have experienced long historically-rooted conflict. China's burgeoning economic power is placing new strains on the global trading regime and energy resources, and the region as a whole continues to be vulnerable to a systemic economic crisis of the sort that was seen in the 1997–98 Asian financial crisis. One or a combination of these factors may pull apart the fragile equilibrium that has kept the peace in the region for nearly thirty years.

This course will examine the various tensions between the establishment of closer ties among the nations in East Asia and the preservation of national sovereignty. The central question is whether the East Asian region is heading towards greater peace and cooperation or war and conflict in the twenty-first century. The subtitle of the course includes a question mark because all of us, including the instructor, are searching for answers.

For the purposes of this course, East Asia is defined as the region encompassing the Russian Far East, China, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia. Since it has been extensively involved in the region since the 1850s, we will also focus on the role of the United States in the region. We may make occasional reference to India, but South Asia and Central Asia are not a primary focus of this class.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance and participation (including weekly written assignment) (30% of a student's course grade): Attendance at lecture and participation in discussion are mandatory. The readings vary in length and difficulty but average about 70 pages per day. You are expected to attend all the lectures and do the required readings. Come to class **prepared and ready to participate** in discussing the material assigned in the readings. Most importantly, *students are required to turn in a **memo** by **emailing** it to the instructor*. An unexcused absence will adversely affect your course grade, as will being present but unprepared to participate, or participating without being prepared.

*After four unexcused absences, I may give an FA (F for attendance) to your course grade. An excused absence is almost exclusively restricted to religious reasons, certain university activities, documented medical conditions, or documented family emergencies. Absences for religious reasons or for university extracurricular activities require communication with me at the **beginning** of the session. It is **your** responsibility to make arrangements with me **prior** to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work.*

Ultimately your attendance and participation grade turns on **my** impression of how seriously you take this course. It is **your** responsibility to take this course seriously and let me know that. How? Attend class; be prepared for class—read the assignments for understanding, be ready to ask and answer questions, take an informed role in discussions, and especially write a good memo; **arrive early** to class; remain for the entire class; *be attentive in class without distracting me or your classmates with cell phones, text messages, side conversations, bathroom trips, coming-and-going, and so forth*; complete assignments when due; and demonstrate your understanding on the papers and other assignments. Laptops, cell phones, smart phones, and any other *electronic devices may not be used in class*—**not even for note-taking**.

The course is designed, and will be conducted, like a graduate seminar. How well this course achieves its goals will depend on students' participation. Students are expected to do the assigned reading **before** class; to have read **actively**, comparing what they are reading with what they already know through other readings in this class or other classes to join class discussion.

In each class, **every** student is expected to give a brief (1–2 minutes) presentation of their initial impressions of the readings, along with any questions they wish to raise for the day's discussion.

2. Take-home midterm (30%): The take-home midterm will be made available on June 14 (Thursday) and due June 21 (Thursday). The exam is open book and open notes and will require 7 pages (typed, double-spaced, 12-point font) of writing. The essays will be evaluated on the basis of: demonstrated mastery of the assigned readings; skill in exposing nuances of similarity and difference in various defensible positions; cogency, clarity, precision and organization of presentation; and relevance of evidence marshaled to *support your argument(s)*. No extensions will be granted except in the case of a serious illness or a death in the family. **Please plan to finish the assignment prior to the due date, and leave adequate time to proofread and to work out any computer or printer problems that may arise.**
3. Final paper (40%: 10% for presentation and 30% for paper): The major task for the course will be to write a policy paper which would give the government an advice for enhancing regional cooperation in East Asia. Late in the summer term you will present and defend your findings to the class. A research paper on the subject will be due on July 16 (Monday) by email.

A *written brief* concisely summarizing the argument you will make in your presentation must be sent to the instructor no later than 5pm one day before your presentation. It should be a maximum of one page (single-spaced), and can be written in bullet points, paragraphs, or in any other style. It will not be graded, but if it is late or missing, your presentation will be marked down 20%.

Presentation should be five minutes in length, proving background on the issue, a review and assessment of the past policies taken by governments, and most importantly your recommendations. Following the presentation, there will be three minutes for questions from the audience and general discussion. Your grade on this assignment will reflect both the quality of your presentation and your answers to audience questions.

Papers should be ten pages (double-spaced, twelve-point font, one-inch margin). They should be similar in content to your presentation, but less time spent on background information. The papers should also take into account as much as possible the issues raised during your presentation. You may find it helpful to recruit a classmate to serve as a note taker during your presentation to ensure that you do not forget about any points that are raised.

Each of you must meet with me for 15 minutes in the first weeks of the semester. Sign up for an appointment time during the first day in class. Be punctual.

Disability Accommodations

If you need academic accommodations for a disability, it is **your** responsibility to first contact Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS) at 214-768-1470 or www.smu.edu/alec/dass.asp to verify the disability and establish eligibility for accommodations. You should then schedule an appointment with me to make appropriate arrangements. *You must make these arrangements before departing to Japan.* (See University Policy No. 2.4)

Religious Observance

If you wish to be absent on religiously observed holidays that require missing class, you should notify me in **writing** at the **beginning** of the semester, and should discuss with me, **in advance**, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence.

Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities

If you participate in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity, you will be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of your participation. It is **your** responsibility to make arrangements with me **prior** to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work.

Books and Readings

The following books should be purchased in advance and you should bring them to Japan. Readings marked with an asterisk (*) will be available electronically. There may be changes in the readings and assignments below.

Thomas J. Christensen, *The China Challenge: Shaping the Choices of a Rising Power* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2015).

Michael J. Green, *By More Than Providence: Grand Strategy and American Power in the Asia Pacific Since 1783* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017).

Schedule and Reading Assignments

Readings provide background on topics covered in class lectures and discussions, so read the assignment **before** the class for which they are assigned. Since the course will make frequent reference to current events, you should make a habit of *reading respectable online news on a regular basis* and pay attention to the events in East Asia.

1. Course Introduction (Tue, June 12)

2. International Relations Theory and East Asia (Wed, June 13)

Green, introduction (pp. 1–18)

* John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001): pp. 29–54.

* Patrick J. McDonald, *The Invisible Hand of Peace: Capitalism, the War Machine, and International Relations Theory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009): pp. 23–49.

3. IR of East Asia in the 19th Century (Thu, June 14)

Green, chapters 2–3 (pp. 56–113)

4. SMU Tower Center Sun & Star Symposium (Fri, June 15)

Everyone is invited to the symposium, “U.S.-Japan Relations in a Tumultuous Time: Is Liberal International Order Decaying?”: 9:30am–5:30pm at Kangaku Kaikan

5–6. IR of East Asia in the Early 20th Century (Mon & Tue, June 18 & 19)

Green, chapters 4–6 (pp. 115–239)

7–8. Global Value Chains and Free Trade Agreements (Wed & Thu, June 20 & 21)

* Fukunari Kimura, “How Have Production Networks Changed Development Strategies in Asia?” in Deborah K. Elms and Patrick Low, *Global Value Chains in a Changing World* (Geneva: WTO Publications, 2013): pp. 361–383.

The first take-home midterm distributed on June 14 and due June 21 at 5pm by email.

9–10. Toyota Field Trip (Fri & Sat, June 22 & 23)

11–12. IR of East Asia During the Cold War (Mon & Tue, June 25 & 26)

Green, chapters 7–8 & 10–11 (pp. 245–322 & 363–421)

13–14. IR of East Asia During the Post–Cold War (Wed & Thu, June 27 & 28)

Green, chapters 12–15 & conclusion (pp. 429–548)

15. Review (Fri, June 29)

16–17. The China Challenge (1): Understanding China’s Rise (Mon & Tue, July 2 & 3)

Christensen, introduction & chapters 1–4 (pp. 1–114)

18–19. The China Challenge (2): Shaping China’s Choices (Wed & Thu, July 4 & 5)

Christensen, chapters 6–8 & epilogue (pp. 169–312)

20. Review (Fri, July 6)

21–22. Students’ Presentations (Mon & Tue, July 9 & 10)