

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF EAST ASIA—REGIONAL COOPERATION?

Political Science 4386, Summer Two (July Term) 2021
M–F 1:00–2:50pm, Hyer Hall 100 (SMUFlex)
Web page: <http://canvas.smu.edu>

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Virtual office hours: M–F 3:0–4:00pm
Zoom 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 is 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. 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 forty 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.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to

- explain the historical context of politics and IR of East Asia,
- analyze issues related to politics and IR of East Asia, and
- discuss the manners in which U.S. foreign policy shapes and is shaped by politics and IR of East Asia.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance and participation (including weekly memo 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 (Zoom participation) 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 by 5pm on Friday.* 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.*

Zoom Participation: When you participate in a Zoom class meeting, you must turn on the video feature for the duration of the class meeting. If students are not clearly in view on the screen when attending via Zoom, they will be counted absent, and the participation grade will be impacted. Non-participation will lead to a commensurate penalty in your grade for the course. If students have a technological issue that complicates participation, or if there is a specific reason to have the camera off, students must notify the instructor as soon as these issues occur to develop an alternative arrangement. During the class, please obey the following Zoom protocol:

- Please raise your hand virtually.
- Please wait to be called on before you unmute to speak.
- Please use the Chat function only if you have trouble getting my attention.
- Please keep your video on so we can see you.

Mature, respectful behavior befitting an SMU student is expected. When you participate in a

class meeting over Zoom, please find a quiet location where you may work uninterrupted. *Turn off mobile phones and other devices that may disrupt the meeting.*

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 most importantly, 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 essays and other assignments. Laptops, cell phones, iPhones, and any other *electronic devices may not be used in class—**not even for note-taking.***

Masks Recommended: While masks are not required in this course, individuals should use their own discretion if they prefer to wear masks. The instructor and students will show respect for individual decisions and responses to the health concerns of the pandemic for those who choose to continue wearing masks. Your vaccine status is private information and will neither be requested nor made public.

Attendance: This course will be participating in a multi-school attendance software pilot. Please download the SEAtS Mobile app prior to the first day of class on your Smartphone. You will be able to sign into the app with your SMU email and password. DUO is required on your first sign-in. We highly recommend using the push functionality for this so that you can remain in the app during the DUO process. If you have difficulties signing in, please reach out to Faye Walter wwalter@smu.edu for assistance. For each class session, you will check-in on the Seats app during the designated time using one of two options: Beacon (in-room) or QR code. For Beacon check in, Bluetooth must be turned on and you must be in the designated classroom in order for the beacon to pick up your attendance. For the QR code, use the QR icon within the SEAtS app to scan the code displayed by your instructor. Within the app, you will only see the courses you are enrolled in that are participating in the pilot. At the end of the term, you will receive a survey for feedback. Please take a few minutes to do the survey as it will be an important tool in evaluating the program.

The course is designed, and will be conducted, to be student-driven and discussion-centered. 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 due July 17 (Saturday) at 11:59pm on Canvas. The exam is open book and open notes and will require 5–7 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 this summer term you will present and defend your findings to the class. The final paper will be due August 4 (Wednesday) at 11:59pm on Canvas.

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 10 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 5 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 5–7 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.

Each of you must meet with me for 15 minutes in the first week of the session. Sign up for an appointment time before the first day in class.

Disability Accommodations

Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first register with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS). Students can call 214–768–1470 or visit www.smu.edu/Provost/SASP/DASS to begin the process. Once approved and registered, students will submit a DASS Accommodation Letter to faculty through the electronic portal *DASS Link* and then communicate directly with each instructor to make appropriate arrangements. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice to implement.

Religious Observance

Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence. (<https://www.smu.edu/StudentAffairs/ChaplainandReligious-Life/ReligiousHolidays>).

Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities

Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity should be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of your participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work. (See [2020–2021 SMU Undergraduate Catalog](#) under “Enrollment and Academic Records/Excused Absences.”)

Student Academic Success Programs (SASP)

Students needing assistance with writing assignments for SMU courses may schedule an appointment with the Writing Center through Canvas. Students wishing support with subject-specific tutoring or success strategies should contact SASP, Loyd All Sports Center, Suite 202; 214–768–3648; <https://www.smu.edu/sasp>.

Books and Readings

The following books should be purchased in advance **before** the session starts. 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).

Sheila A. Smith, *Japan Rearmed: The Politics of Military Power* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019).

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, July 6)

* Uri Friedman, “Why America Resists Learning from Other Countries,” *Atlantic*, May 14, 2020 (<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2020/05/coronavirus-could-end-american-exceptionalism/611605/>)

* Hiroki Takeuchi, “Trade as a Pathway to Peace,” *The Catalyst*, Fall 2020 (<https://www.bushcenter.org/catalyst/china/takeuchi-trade-and-peace-china.html>)

2. The Implications of China's Rise (Wed, July 7)

Christensen, introduction & chapters 1–2 (pp. 1–62).

3. The Challenge of China's Rise (Thu, July 8)

Christensen, chapters 3–4 (pp. 63–114).

* Hiroki Takeuchi, “Domestic Politics of Chinese Foreign Policy: Where Will Xi Jinping Bring China?” *Asian Security* (May 2019): pp. 205–213.

* Elizabeth Economy, “China's Inconvenient Truth,” *Foreign Affairs* (May 28, 2021).

4. Food Safety After Fukushima: Scientific Citizenship and Politics of Risk (Fri, July 9)

[Guest Speaker: Dr. Nicholas Sternsdorff-Cisterna, SMU Anthropology Department]

Memo Assignment 1 due July 10, 11:59pm on Canvas.

5. China's Rise and Global Governance (Mon, July 12)

Christensen, chapter 5 (pp. 115–165)

* Thomas J. Christensen, “There Will Not Be a New Cold War: The Limits of U.S.-Chinese Competition,” *Foreign Affairs* (March 24, 2021).

Recommended videos:

SMU Tower Center Sun & Star Webinar: “The Belt, Road, and Beyond: Domestic Motivations and Implications for the World” (with Min Ye), November 5, 2020:

<https://blog.smu.edu/towercenter/2020/11/18/sun-star-the-belt-road-and-beyond-domestic-motivations-and-implications-for-the-world/>.

SMU Tower Center Sun & Star Webinar: “The Emperor's New Road: China and the Project of the Century” (with Jonathan Hillman), February 25, 2021:

<https://blog.smu.edu/towercenter/2021/02/25/sun-star-webinar-series-the-emperors-new-road-china-and-the-project-of-the-century/>.

6. China's Rise and IR of East Asia, 1991–2008 (Tue, July 13)

Christensen, chapters 6–7 (pp. 169–241)

7. China's Rise and IR of East Asia, 2009–Present (Wed, July 14)

Christensen, chapter 8 & epilogue (pp. 242–312)

8. The China Challenge and COVID-19 (Thu, July 15)

* Suisheng Zhao, “Rhetoric and Reality of China’s Global Leadership in the Context of COVID-19: Implications for the US-led World Order and Liberal Globalization,” *Journal of Contemporary China* (forthcoming, 2020): pp. 1–16.

* Yanzhong Huang, “The Myth of Authoritarian Superiority: China’s Response to Covid-19 Revisited,” *China Leadership Monitor* 68 (Summer 2021), <https://www.prcleader.org/yanzhong-huang>.

9. Discussion: The China Challenge in a Tumultuous Time (Fri, July 16)

[Guest Speaker: Dr. Thomas Christensen, Columbia University]

TAKE-HOME MIDTERM DUE JULY 17, 11:59PM ON CANVAS

10. Japan's Security Policy During the Cold War (Mon, July 19)

Smith, introduction & chapter 1 (pp. 1–54)

11. Japan's Security Policy During the Post–Cold War (Tue, July 20)

Smith, chapters 2–3 (pp. 55–127)

* Mireya Solis, “The Underappreciated Power: Japan After Abe,” *Foreign Affairs* 99(6) (November/December 2020): pp. 123–132.

12–13. Global Value Chains and Development in East Asia (Wed & Thu, July 21 & 22)

* Richard Baldwin, *The Great Convergence: Information Technology and the New Globalization* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2016): pp. 79–176.

* 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.

* Hiroki Takeuchi, “Is the Liberal International Order Dead? Global Value Chains and the CPTPP.”

* Adam S. Posen, “The Price of Nostalgia: America’s Self-Defeating Economic Retreat,” *Foreign Affairs* 100(3) (May/June 2021): pp. 28–43.

Recommended video:

SMU Tower Center Sun & Star Webinar: “Networked Japanese Investment in Mexico’s Automotive Sector: Cooperation, Small-and-Medium-Sized Enterprises and Challenges Under the USMCA” (with Melba Falck and Leo Guzman), April 29, 2021: <https://blog.smu.edu/towercenter/2021/06/15/smu-tower-center-sun-star-webinar-on-japan-and-east-asia-in-partnership-with-smu-mission-foods-texas-mexico-center-networked-japanese-investment-in-mexicos-automotive-sector-cooperation-small-a/>.

14. Multinational Corporation in Action (Fri, July 23)

[Guest Speaker from Toyota Motor Corporation]

Memo Assignment 2 due July 24, 11:59pm on Canvas.

15. The Pacifist Constitution and Japan’s Military Policy (Mon, July 26)

Smith, chapter 4 (pp. 128–172)

16. Japan’s Security Policy and U.S.-Japan Relations (Tue, July 27)

Smith, chapter 5 & conclusion (pp. 173–240)

Recommended video:

JASDFW Japan Currents Symposium Webinar: “The Future of the Alliance Under President Biden and Prime Minister Suga” (with Michael Green, Aiko Lane, and Yoshihide Soeya), February 10, 2021: <https://blog.smu.edu/towercenter/2021/03/24/sun-star-the-future-of-the-alliance-under-president-biden-and-prime-minister-suga/>.

17–18. Students’ Presentations (Wed & Thu, July. 28 & 29)

19. Discussion: Japan’s Security Policy in a Tumultuous Time (Fri, July 30)

[Guest Speaker: Dr. Sheila Smith, Council on Foreign Relations]

Memo Assignment 3 due July 31, 11:59pm on Canvas.

20. Review (Mon, August 2)

21. The U.S.-Japan Alliance and International Relations of East Asia (Tue, Aug. 3)

[Guest Speaker: Ambassador Thomas Schieffer, former U.S. ambassador to Japan and Australia]

22. Review (Wed, August 4)

FINAL PAPER DUE AUG. 4, 11:59PM ON CANVAS