Course Description
The course is designed to provide both a conceptual understanding of democratic theories and empirical knowledge of experiences of democratic transition and consolidation in a number of different countries. The course will investigate different forms of democracy, focusing particularly on the divergent experiences of democratization across East and Southeast Asia, a region home to the gamut of regime types. (Students are free to draw on other cases in papers, as noted, but for the sake of coherence, assigned texts and class discussions will focus on this bounded set of cases.)

The course begins by looking at the various models of democracy and the tension between prevailing theories of democratization and the Asian experience, including the relationship between democracy and development, the processes of democratization, and role of formal democratic institutions. The middle third of the course adopts a comparative approach, analyzing Southeast Asian democracy at an institutional and international level. Case studies examining the divergent experiences of Asian countries will form the final part of the course. Prior knowledge of East and/or Southeast Asia will be helpful, but is not required; if you come to the class with little prior background in Asian politics, ask a lot of questions, especially early in the term, as you ramp up your case-study knowledge.

This course is open to both undergraduate and graduate students. Students should register under the number appropriate to their current standing (grad or undergrad). While the assignments below are similar for both, my expectations are not: I expect a higher level of synthesis, analysis, and theoretical engagement from grad students than from undergraduates in the course. That said, this course should be challenging for all students enrolled!

Objectives
By the end of the course, students should be able to:
• Distinguish among forms of democracy
• Identify and assess paths toward democratization
• Detail democratic (and non-democratic) institutions and frameworks in Asia
• Characterize and compare the quality of democracy across Asian states
Evaluation Criteria

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thematic paper(s)</td>
<td>30% undergrad, 20% each grad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case study paper</td>
<td>30% undergrad, 20% grad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper presentations/discussion-leading</td>
<td>10% total</td>
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You are expected to complete all readings, attend all classes, participate meaningfully in class discussions, and keep up with political developments in Southeast Asia. Do not let yourself fall behind in the readings and do not miss class. Any unexcused absence will affect your final grade.

Class Participation

The class will be run as a seminar. Participation will be evaluated based on whether you voluntarily pose and respond to questions in each class session, demonstrate that you have read and thought through the assigned readings (due on the date for which they are listed), and listen respectfully to what your peers say. All students must come to every class prepared to engage critically with both the week’s readings and with their classmates’ oral presentations.

Thematic and Case Study Papers

All students will present and submit two (undergraduate) or three (graduate) papers: a thematic synthesis paper critically reviewing the week’s readings in weeks 2–6 and/or 7–9, and a case study analysis of a particular country or countries in weeks 10–13. (Grad students will write one paper each on Parts I, II, and III; undergrads will write on Part I or II and Part III.) Papers or undergrad thematic paper drafts (see below) are due in class on the day that those readings are assigned.

The thematic paper will examine theoretical and comparative aspects of democracy and democratization, generally focusing at least to some extent on Asia; non-Asian cases may also be included, however. Go beyond summarizing the assigned readings. I will evaluate these papers based on the strength of your synthesis, analysis, critique, extension, or other engagement with the assigned works. Additional sources are permitted, but for this paper, should be only supplemental. You may also choose to draw on works assigned for other weeks, since the material builds upon itself. For undergraduates only: What you submit on the day of the relevant class will be a draft; I will revert with comments by the end of that week, then you will submit the final version of your thematic paper to me at the following class, drawing on my comments, the class discussion, and any other insights you may have had. (Graduate students have the option of submitting a similar draft for their first paper, but must let me know that what they are handing in that day is a draft.)

The case study paper will examine a particular country from among those discussed in weeks 10–13, or may compare two countries (one or both of which should be from among those discussed). You will need to do a limited amount of outside research (for instance, on recent elections or other late-breaking developments), but again, my primary concern is with the strength of your analysis. Pick an angle and present a coherent argument: for example, you might assess the depth or robustness of democratization, assess whether changes to voting rules or some other institutional attribute have functioned as intended, or consider why democracy has (not) been able to be consolidated. All students are strongly encouraged to come speak with me about their case study papers before getting too far into the writing.
Each paper must be approximately **3,000 words** (aim for within +/- 300 words of that limit) and not only demonstrate a command of the week’s assigned readings, but also use these readings to answer a specific question or support a particular claim—in other words, the paper must not just recap what you have read, but **make an argument**. As a rule of thumb: in general, no more than one-third of the paper should be summary; the emphasis should be on original analysis, albeit drawing on the assigned readings. While I expect high-quality papers from all students, I will hold graduate students to a higher analytical standard than undergraduate students.

Assignments for each week will be allocated during the first class. If more than one student is presenting a paper in a given week, those presenting must coordinate in advance, to be sure their foci (the questions or claims on which they center, or the case studies they examine) are different—and ideally complementary—rather than overly similar.

Those students who have written papers for a given class will **give a brief presentation of their core argument(s) in class, then facilitate a discussion**. Plan for a 10-15 minute presentation, then 20 minutes’ discussion. For that discussion, paper-presenters should email 2-3 guiding questions to kick things off to all students (via Blackboard) by the preceding Monday evening; those questions should be germane both to the argument presented and to the assigned texts (e.g., considering a theoretical point in light of other cases, probing the root causes for a given phenomenon, or assessing alternate explanations). If more than one student is presenting in a given week, they should collaborate in preparing questions, then lead a longer, conjoined discussion.

**General Guidelines**

All written assignments must be double-spaced, with 1” margins, in Times New Roman font. Late papers will incur a non-negotiable penalty of **one letter grade (10 points) for each day late**. Papers should be thoroughly proofread, to avoid aggravating the reader. You may either submit a hard copy of the paper in class or email it to me before the start of class. (If your case study paper compares two countries from among those on which we focus, plan to submit and discuss your paper on the second of those weeks, unless you arrange with me otherwise.)

**Special needs**  Students with special needs due to physical, learning, or other disabilities will be accommodated. To request such accommodation, first register with the Disability Resource Center (Campus Center 137, [http://www.albany.edu/disability/DRC/](http://www.albany.edu/disability/DRC/)); they will provide you with a letter to me, detailing the provisions requested. To ensure equitable treatment of all students, please submit these letters within the first two weeks of the semester (in person, so we can discuss appropriate arrangements).

**Academic honesty**  I expect all students to be ethical and honest in completing all work for this class. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with the university’s guidelines on academic integrity ([http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/regulations.html](http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/regulations.html)); ignorance is NOT an excuse. Violations of this code, such as plagiarism, cheating, copying, or misrepresentation of work as your own, will meet with appropriate penalties and discipline as outlined in UAlbany’s regulations, up to and including loss of course credit, suspension, or expulsion from the university. It is the responsibility of every student also to report any observed violations.
Readings are due on the date under which they are listed. All are available online (via Blackboard unless a URL is listed).

PART ONE: THEORIES OF DEMOCRACY

Week 1: 27 January  Introduction
• Overview of the course and distribution of weeks; no assigned reading

Week 2: 3 February  Concepts and Processes


Week 3: 10 February  The “Asian Values” Debate


Week 4: 17 February  Democratization (in Asia): Causes and Consequences


**Week 5: 24 February**  
**Democracy and Development in Asia**


**Week 6: 3 March**  
**Building Democratic Institutions**

- Guest speaker: David Guinn, Center for International Development


**PART TWO: THE MECHANICS OF DEMOCRACY**

**Week 7: 10 March**  
**Representative Institutions: Elections and Electoral Systems**


Benjamin Reilly, *Democracy and Diversity: Political Engineering in the Asia-Pacific* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2006), chap. 5 [chap. 6 is for next week].


17 March: No class (spring break)

**Week 7: 24 March**

*Mediating Institutions: Parties and Party Systems*


Allen Hicken and Erik Kuhonta, “Introduction: Rethinking Party System Institutionalization in Asia,” in Allen Hicken and Erik Kuhonta (eds), *Party System Institutionalization in Asia: Democracies, Autocracies, and the Shadows of the Past* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming [full manuscript on Blackboard; also for Week 13]).


Benjamin Reilly, *Democracy and Diversity: Political Engineering in the Asia-Pacific* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), chap 6 [see readings for Week 6].


**Week 8: 31 March**

*Governing Institutions: Presidents and Parliaments*


Week 9: 7 April

**International Dimensions**


**PART THREE: CASE STUDIES**

Week 10: 14 April

**An Unlikely Democracy: Indonesia Past and Present**


Week 11: 21 April

**Resilient Semi-Democracies: Singapore and Malaysia**


**Week 12: 28 April  Democracy in Crisis: Thailand and the Philippines**


**Week 13: 5 May  Successful Consolidation?: South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan**

Allen Hicken and Erik Kuhonta, ed., Party System Institutionalization in Asia: Democracies, Autocracies, and the Shadows of the Past (Cambridge, forthcoming), chaps. 4 (McElwain), 5 (Cheng and Hsu), and 11 (Wong) [see readings for Week 7].
