

# Course Syllabus

[Jump to Today](#)

[Edit](#)

## COURSE INFORMATION

Lecture: 11:00 AM - 1:50 PM, Fridays

Lecture Room: RBC 1328

Professor: Nico Ravanilla

Email: [nravanilla@ucsd.edu](mailto:nravanilla@ucsd.edu)

Office: RBC 1314

Virtual Office Hours (Zoom): 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM, Fridays, or by appointment.

## The Course

This seminar course is designed as an advanced undergraduate-level introduction to the political institutions and economic development of Southeast Asia. We will apply political economy framework to understand why some countries have better political economic institutions and economic development than others, using the countries in Southeast Asia as illustrated case studies.

## Learning Objectives

After completing this course, students are expected to:

1. have broad knowledge about Southeast Asia - its political institutions and different trajectories of economic development;
2. be able to apply political economy concepts to analyze real world policy issues;
3. be able to conceptualize and communicate academic ideas to a general audience through data visualization, seminar discussion, oral presentation, and written research paper.

## GRADING

Your final grade will be computed from the following components:

- Term Paper --- 30%
- Data Visualization (including presentation) --- 15%
- Background/Current Issue presentation --- 15%
- Southeast Asia Updates ---10%
- Class Participation --- 10%
- Take-home Midterm Exam --- 10%
- Take-home Final Exam --- 10%

## **COURSE ORGANIZATION AND REQUIREMENTS**

### **I. Term Paper**

#### **A. Format**

The term paper is the most important component of this course. The topics are open. You can write on whatever topics that interest you. However, the topics must be related to political economy issues in Southeast Asia (broadly defined). The papers may focus on a specific country, a group of selected countries, or the region as a whole.

The main text of each paper must be strictly less than 15 pages (template provided). Tables, charts, pictures, and other supplementary information can be added to the appendix and do not count toward the page limit.

The paper must have an abstract, presented at the beginning. The abstract must summarize the main idea of the paper. In particular, the abstract must answer all of the following three questions: (1) what is the research question of this paper? (2) what is the research method you use to answer that question? (3) what is the answer to that question? The abstract cannot exceed 150 words.

#### **B. Grading Criteria**

The score for the paper is based on its originality and intellectual contents, not its length. Each paper is graded on the following criteria:

1. Topic relevance and clear idea: You have to be clear about your research question, i.e., what you want to explore and answer. You have to convince readers why your paper is interesting, important, and relevant, i.e., why they should read your paper. You have to deliver a clear message on what the paper is about. If the readers are left unclear about what you try to say after reading the paper, then the paper is not clear. Good introduction and good conclusion are necessary, but also make sure that the whole paper is coherent, flows well, and is not confusing.
2. Reasonable arguments: Your arguments must be logical. For example, if you claim that excess demand leads to lower prices, that is not generally logical. If that is in fact the case, explain why it is so. Likewise, if you claim that more corruption leads to more private investment, make sure to explain why. Finally, if you would like to explain some

findings or stylized facts, try to think about alternative explanations, and explain why your argument is preferred to the alternatives.

3. Contribution: Make sure the readers know what your contributions are. Copying ideas from other sources without putting your own analytical thinking and arguments into the paper will not give you high score in this category (even when you provide appropriate citations and references). Posting new questions, presenting new findings, or making your own opinions and arguments give you higher scores.

### **C. Important Dates**

A proposal for the term paper is due on Friday, October 29th. The proposal is two-page long and consists of (1) topic, (2) research question and motivation, (3) tentative outline of your study method and references.

The final paper is due on Monday, December 13th.

## **II. Data Visualization**

You are required to create a data visualization that conveys information about anything related to Southeast Asia. The visualization must conform with the following instructions:

1. You collect raw data and create a graphic that presents the information from the data. The data could be from secondary source(s) but you are required to create the visualization by yourself.
2. You must choose the graphic format, title, label, colors, fonts that are appropriate to the information you present (line, bar, pie, scatter plot, fitted line, map, etc.). The graphic must be clearly presented and easy to understand.
3. It contains a short paragraph that summarizes the main message of the graphic. You can also add supplementary/clarifying information related to the graphic in this paragraph. The paragraph must not exceed 100 words. This word limit is strictly enforced.
4. It contains the source(s) of the data.
5. The graphic, the summary paragraph, the data sources, and your name must be in one page of a letter size paper. Submit (1) the **pdf** format of the assignment AND (2) the raw data in spreadsheet format (e.g. .xls or .csv).
6. Your visualization is due on Tuesday, November 9th at 11:59 p.m. You will present your infographic in class on Friday, November 13th. Each presentation will be no longer than 2 minutes (plus Q\&A).

## **III. Class Attendance, Participation, and Presentation**

Class participation is an important part of the course. You are required to attend and participate in class discussion.

Each class will comprise three components:

1. Southeast Asia Updates (SEA Updates). Every week we will have a discussion on "Southeast Asia Updates" where 2-3 students individually update class on current news on Southeast Asia. Send at least two headlines to me by email by Thursday 11:59 p.m. of the week that you are responsible for presenting. Just send the links to the websites; you may prepare 1 or 2 slides. Send the slides to me by email, so I can open them on my laptop during class.

2. Background Presentations. On October 8, 15, 22, we will have 5-7 student presentations per week. The contents are the background and current issues in Southeast Asia that's related to your term paper's topic. Each presentation will last for 10 minutes. Schedule of presentations are randomly assigned. Email me your slides by Wednesday 11.59 p.m. on the week that you are scheduled to present.

3. Lecture. I will give a short lecture on the topics. This lecture will provide you with necessary knowledge about Southeast Asian economies and political institutions.

#### **IV. Take-home Midterm**

You will have a take-home midterm exam. The exam is comprised of multiple choice questions and short essay questions. It will cover materials covered in class including the SEA updates and background presentations in the first part of the course (up to October 29th). You will have 48 hours to complete and turn in your answer sheet. The midterm exam will be accessible shortly at the beginning of the class on October 29th (11 AM).

#### **IV. Take-home Final Exam**

You will have a take-home final exam. The exam is comprised of multiple choice questions and short essay questions. It will cover all materials covered in class including the SEA updates. You will have 48 hours to complete and turn in your answer sheet. The final exam will be accessible shortly after the last day of the class on December 3rd.

#### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Any written material you submit is presumed to be your own original work, so if you do - as you will -- use ideas or materials written by other people, please make sure to cite these appropriately, and to indicate other students with whom you have collaborated. More information may be found in UCSD's [Policy on Integrity of Scholarship](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

#### **ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students with disabilities who may need academic accommodations are encouraged to discuss their authorized accommodations from the [Office for Students with Disabilities](#)

[\(OSD\)Links to an external site.](#) with their professors early in the quarter so that accommodations may be implemented as soon as possible.