

This version: March 1, 2026

Political Economy of Southeast Asia (8753.677) **SNU GSIS, Spring 2026**

Tuesday 10:00 a.m. -12:50 p.m.
Building 140-1, Room 101

Instructor: Yoon Ah Oh (yoonah.oh@snu.ac.kr)
Office Hours: Wed 1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
TA: Sle Isabel LEE (leeisabel@snu.ac.kr)

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce graduate students to key political economy issues of contemporary Southeast Asia. We investigate the dynamics of economic development, political crises, and social conflicts of the region while paying special attention to their interactions. Domestic issues will be linked to external relations, both at the country and regional level. While recognizing that each Southeast Asian country is unique in its economic development strategy, political system, and social relations, this course also explores whether regional integration as well as globalization has led to convergence in national experiences and how we may study them. This course provides students with opportunities to work with both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

1	Attendance and participation	30 %
2	Comparative country statistics	10 %
3	Video observation report	10 %
4	Research paper	40 %
5	Oral defense of the research paper	10 %

1. Attendance and general participation

2 Comparative country statistics: Students will compile key country-level statistics.

3. Video observation report: Students will watch an assigned online video and submit a one-page report.

4. Research paper: Details will be posted later.

5. Oral defense of the research paper: Toward the end of the semester, students will present their project in class.

Course Reading

There is no single text for this course. Relevant maps, readings, and supplementary materials will be uploaded to eTL.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Plagiarism, including presenting generative **AI software content** as your own, is a violation of academic integrity. It is a serious offense and will not be treated lightly. It will result in lowered or failing grades as well as the possibility of more serious punishments.

AI Guidelines

Generative AI may be used only as a supplementary learning tool. AI-generated content, whether used directly or edited, **must not be included in written assignments.**

Use of Digital Devices for In-Person Classes

The use of electronic devices is **prohibited**. Violating this policy will negatively impact your participation grade. Students with approved accommodations from the Center for Students with Disabilities permitting the use of personal electronic devices must present the accommodation letter to the instructor in advance.

Paper Note-Taking Required

Bring pen and paper to class. Handwriting improves recall and understanding. Avoiding devices helps minimize digital distraction.

Recording Policy

Video and/or audio recording of any course activity is **prohibited**. This includes using speech-to-text apps to take notes or transcribe lectures. Students with approved accommodations from the Center for Students with Disabilities permitting the recording of class meetings must present the accommodation letter to the instructor in advance of any recording being done.

Attendance Policy

Students who are unable to attend class for legitimate reasons should post a message at the **Q&A Board** with supporting documents. Do it in advance unless it is an emergency. I need to know whether you have a legitimate cause (such as medical reasons, family emergency or job interviews) to decide whether your absence may be excused. Students are responsible for making up any missed coursework or requirements. Accommodations will be provided for legally protected absences, such as those resulting from a student's participation in the Korean Reserve Forces training.

If a student arrives late three times, this will count as one absence.

Resources

1. Statistical Sources

World Bank World Development Indicators

[ASEANStats](#)

ADB Key Indicators

[ADB Country Dashboard](#)

IMF World Economic Outlook Database

IMF Direction of Statistics

[WITS Country at Glance](#)

[WITS Country Analysis](#)

[WTO Trade Profile](#)

[The Observatory of Economic Complexity](#)

World Bank Ease of Doing Business Index

[U.S. Energy Information Administration Country Profile](#)

2. Academic Journals with SE Asian Economic Focus

Journal of Southeast Asian Economies (published by ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute)

Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies (especially the Survey Recent Developments series)

3. Reports

ASEAN Investment Report

ADB Asian Development Outlook

World Bank Country Update (for Indonesia, the Philippines, Myanmar, and Cambodia)

IMF Article IV Report

4. News Media

Nikkei Asia <https://asia.nikkei.com/>

Fulcrum: Analysis on Southeast Asia (published by ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute) <https://fulcrum.sg/>

Course Outline

Week 1: Introduction and Course Overview

Readings not required

Coxhead, Ian. 2015. *Routledge Handbook of Southeast Asian Economics*. Routledge. [Chapter 1](#)

Week 2: Overview of Southeast Asian Development: History and Policies

Coxhead, Ian. 2015. *Routledge Handbook of Southeast Asian Economics*. Routledge. [Chapter 1](#)

* Recommended:

Perkins, Dwight H. 2013. *East Asian development: Foundations and Strategies*. Harvard University Press. [Introduction, and Chapter 4](#)

Studwell, Joe. 2013. *How Asia Works: Success and Failure in the World's Most Dynamic Region*. New York: Grove Press. [Introduction and Part I](#).

Cleary, Mark, and Peter Eaton. 1996. *Tradition and Reform: Land Tenure and Rural Development in South-East Asia*. Oxford University Press.

Jones, David S. 2010. "Land Registration and Administrative Reform in Southeast Asian States: Progress and Constraints." *International Public Management Review* 11(1): 67-89.

Weeks 3: Sectors

Samphantharak, Krislert. 2019. "Sectoral Development in Southeast Asia: Agriculture, Non-Renewable Natural Resources, Manufacture, and Services"

* Recommended:

Samphantharak, Krislert. 2019. "Sovereign Wealth Funds in Southeast Asia."

Weeks 4: Firms & Data Workshop (Bring your laptop)

Samphantharak, Krislert. 2019. "State Owned Enterprises in Southeast Asia" <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3388390>

Samphantharak, Krislert. 2019. "Family Business Groups and Economic Development in Southeast Asia"

Company Lists from Forbes and Fortune

* Recommended:

Samphantharak, Krislert. 2007. "Capitalism in Southeast Asia through the Lenses of Corporate Finance: What We Know and What We Don't" <https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.975551>

Menon, Jayant and Thiam Hee Ng. 2013. "Are Government-Linked Corporations Crowding out Private Investment in Malaysia?" *Asian Development Bank Economic Working Paper Series* No. 345.

Week 5: Understanding Southeast Asian Development: Industrialization, Trade and FDI

Perkins, Dwight H. 2013. *East Asian development: Foundations and Strategies*. Harvard University Press, [Chapter 4](#)

* Recommended:

Coxhead, Ian. 2015. *Routledge Handbook of Southeast Asian Economics*. Routledge. [Chapters 7, 8, and 17](#)

Week 6: Crises and Conflicts & Data Workshop (Bring your laptop)

Samphantharak, Krislert. 2019. "Economic Crises in Southeast Asia."

Samphantharak, Krislert. 2019. "Natural Disaster and Economic Development in Southeast Asia."

Samphantharak, Krislert. 2019. "Civil Conflict and Economic Development in Southeast Asia."

Week 7: Theories and Frameworks

Lecture Notes

Week 8: Economic Linkages between Southeast Asia and China

Lecture Notes

* Recommended:

Oh, Yoon Ah. 2025. "Reassessing China's Economic Power in Southeast Asia during the 2010s: Insights from the Nexus of FDI-driven Manufacturing and GVC Trade." *Asia Europe Journal*. Online First.

Kitayaporn, Varan, and Ian Coxhead. 2025. "Upskilling China: Implications for Middle-Income Economies." *The World Economy* 48(6): 1297-1320.

Kubo, Koji, Bill Pritchard, and Aye Sandar Phyo. 2021. "How Chinese demand for fresh fruit and vegetables is creating new landscapes of rural development and vulnerability in Southeast Asia: Insights from the Myanmar melon frontier." *Geoforum* 122: 32-40. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2021.03.008>

Coxhead, Ian. 2007. "A New Resource Curse? Impacts of China's Boom on Comparative Advantage and Resource Dependence in Southeast Asia." *World Development* 35 (7): 1099-1119.

Week 9: Research Paper Workshop

Week 10: Online Video Observation (Children's Day)

Week 11: Vietnam

Perkins, Dwight H. 2013. *East Asian development: Foundations and Strategies*. Harvard University Press, [Chapter 5 \(Read the Vietnam part\)](#)

Samphantharak, Krislert. 2019. "Economic Development of Southeast Asia: Country Experience"

* Recommended:

London, Jonathan D., ed. 2016. *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Vietnam*. New York: Taylor & Francis Group. [Part II: Economy and Society](#)

Week 12: Indonesia and the Philippines

Samphantharak, Krislert. 2019. "Economic Development of Southeast Asia: Country Experience"

Perkins, Dwight H. 2013. *East Asian development: Foundations and Strategies*. Harvard University Press, [Chapter 4](#)

Clarete, Ramon L., Emmanuel F. Esguerra, and Hal Hill, eds. 2018. *The Philippine Economy: No Longer the East Asian Exception?* ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute. [Chapter 1](#)

* Recommended:

Articles from *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*

Week 13: Thailand and Malaysia

Warr, Peter. 2019. "Economic Development in Post-War Thailand." In *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Thailand*, ed. Pavin Chachavalpongpun. Routledge.

Samphantharak, Krislert. 2019. "Economic Development of Southeast Asia: Country Experience"

Week 14: Cambodia and Myanmar

Samphantharak, Krislert. 2019. "Economic Development of Southeast Asia: Country Experience"

Yoon Ah Oh. 2024. "Assessing Myanmar's Trade Dependence on China during the Reform Period of the 2010s: A Sectoral Value Chain Approach" *The Pacific Review* 37(2): 277-300

Week 15: Student Presentations

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