

SA.552 (ASIA)

Courses

SA.552.100. Financial Systems of Japan and China: Domestic, Regional and International Perspectives. 4 Credits.

Examines the evolution of the financial systems of Japan and China from 1980 to the present, including structure, regulation, and functioning of these markets in domestic, regional and international contexts. National context includes an in depth review of the structure and operation of the financial markets of Japan and China, including: the key participants, the governmental and regulatory institutions that supervise them, various financial crises in each country with a focus on causes and solutions, reforms over time with a particular focus on liberalization of the financial system and related issues such as corporate governance and legal and accounting issues, the fiscal/monetary processes and policies in each country that affect the financial system, and the historical, political and social factors that affect institutions and policy. Regional context includes the Asian Financial Crisis, the structural causes, the roles of Japan and China, the IMF response and the various proposals to create regional solutions to future crises; roles of regional financial institutions (ADB, AIIB); China's Belt and Road Initiative and the degree/desirability of financial integration in Asia. The international perspective focuses on the geopolitical/geo-economic implications of the structure and regulation of financial markets. Current events/topics in finance relevant to the course are covered and students are encouraged to propose such topics for discussion. Taught by a SAIS alumnus with 30 years of investment banking and private equity experience in Asia and the US. Students wishing to take the class but lacking the prerequisites should email Professor Talarico at gtalari1@jhu.edu for permission to enroll.

Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.755.720[C]; SA.100.304[C] AND (SA.510.102[C] OR SA.510.108[C])

SA.552.101. Asian Energy Security. 4 Credits.

This course surveys the distinctive character of Asian energy security requirements – how they are changing over time, what political-economic forces are driving their transformations, and what those requirements imply for broader economic and political-military relationships between Asia and the world. It gives special attention to Asia's energy dependence on the Middle East and the extent to which Russia and alternative sources, including nuclear power, provide a feasible and acceptable alternative. Cross-national comparisons among the energy security policies of China, India, Japan, Korea, and Western paradigms are used to explore distinctive features of Asian approaches to energy security.

Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.755.710[C]

SA.552.102. Demystifying Indonesia: The Political Economy of an Important Southeast Asian State. 4 Credits.

This course examines the dynamics of power, business, politics, and economic growth in Indonesia. The course begins with a review of modern Indonesian history, its political, social, and economic development, and the multiple crises that have brought chaos and opportunity to the world's most populous Muslim state. It examines contemporary Indonesian politics and Indonesia's complex relationships with global capital markets, international financial institutions and donors. Note: successful completion of this course fulfills the capstone requirement for second-year MAIR students. <https://livejohnshopkins.sharepoint.com/sites/SAISInsider2/SitePages/DC-Capstones,-Professional-Skills-Courses.aspx> target="_blank">Click here for Capstone course application information

Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.770.611[C]

SA.552.103. History of Modern Southeast Asia. 4 Credits.

This course introduces students to the history of Modern Southeast Asia as a region and to each country as a distinct polity. It will emphasize the transregional and transnational connections between Southeast Asia and the rest of the world conducted along economic, religious, imperial, ideological, technological, epidemiological, and diplomatic lines. The course is divided into thematic and chronological sections. These sections include: Colonial Southeast Asia; Early Modern Southeast Asia; Imperialism and Colonial Subjectivity; Nationalism, Decolonization, and the Cold War and Contemporary Issues in Southeast Asia. While readings are designed to give historical depth to each polity, lectures/discussions will be broad, over-arching and thematic. This course will provide a firm foundation in understanding the historical, socio-political and economic transformation of modern Southeast Asian countries from colonies (or semi-colonies) to their contemporary contexts.

Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.770.755[C]

SA.552.104. India's Challenges and the Future of a Sixth of Humanity. 4 Credits.

Since its independence, India has been the world's largest democracy and second largest country, but an extremely poor country as well. However, in a few years India will emerge as the world's largest country with a sixth of the world's population and in a decade it is poised to emerge as the third largest economy riding on the back of nearly four decades of strong economic growth. But India faces many challenges. While some are endemic, others are growing. Many of these – political, economic and institutional – are internal and are shaped by India's multiple social cleavages. Others are more external, stemming from the geopolitics of its neighborhood or the long-term challenges of climate change. The seminar will examine the principal challenges facing India: political and institutional; economic growth; poverty and inequality; demographic; urbanization; natural resources and climate change; and geopolitical.

Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.790.727[C]

SA.552.105. International Relations of Southeast Asia. 4 Credits.

Considers the contemporary foreign policies and international relations challenges of major countries in Southeast Asia. Surveys key regional issues: evolution of ASEAN; security arrangements; trade conflicts and territorial disputes; the role of China, Japan and the United States; regional integration; transnational issues; and terrorism. Limited to 20 students.

Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.770.712[C]

SA.552.106. Japanese Politics and Foreign Policy. 4 Credits.

An introduction to modern Japanese politics and public policy, considering prospects for major changes in security and economic policy of global importance. After a general introduction to Japanese political development since 1868, undertakes more detailed analysis of current political structure and processes as well as of domestic and foreign policy issues. Emphasizes understanding how domestic and international politics influence the functioning of the Japanese economy, especially in the current historic period of political economic change.

Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.760.741[C]

SA.552.107. Maritime Security in Indo-Pacific. 4 Credits.

This course will examine maritime security issues in the Indo-Pacific region with a focus on the maritime interests and strategy of countries including China, the United States, Japan, India, South Korea, Vietnam, and Australia, among others. It will begin with an overview of the maritime security landscape in the region and explore the evolving views of regional stakeholders on maritime interests and their development of maritime capacity and capabilities intended to pursue those interests. In addition to covering contemporary maritime disputes in the region and the key actors involved, this course will also explore other maritime issues of importance to countries in the region, such as anti-piracy operations, fisheries issues, energy security, and Asia's growing interests in the Arctic.

Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.755.732[C]

SA.552.108. North Korea: Policymaking Primer. 4 Credits.

This course examines critical issues facing policymakers in and around North Korea and has three purposes. The first is to provide students with a better understanding of the place and role of North Korea in the international system, its people and elites, institutions and ideas, to analyze DPRK's relations with four great powers, focusing on nuclear politics and humanitarian concerns, as well as to give students a better grasp of various actors, their goals and motivations, policy issues and stakes, and policymaking processes in North Korea. In addition, students will explore the dynamics of the inter-Korean relations and consider the problems of nation-building, politics of competitive legitimation, and the question of Korean unification. The second purpose is for students to develop critical thinking and analytical tradecraft skills so that they can produce high quality analytical products for various types of consumers, using open source data and structured analytical techniques. The third purpose is for students to learn and practice the leadership skills required for domestic interagency coordination, multinational coalition-building, and international bargaining, which are part and parcel of any crisis management and resolution process on the Korean peninsula.

Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.765.744[C]

SA.552.109. Nuclear Proliferation in Asia: Politics and History. 4 Credits.

The course is structured around the background, theory, and application of nuclear politics and history in East Asia. In the first portion of the course students learn about the development of nuclear weapons programs during the Second World War and the Cold War and the differences in proliferation and non-proliferation strategies among early proliferators (e.g. the United States and the Soviet Union). During this portion of the course, students will examine important incidents and policy decisions that shaped nuclear proliferation in world politics. In the second portion of the course, students will learn broader theoretical concepts in International Relations scholarship such as brinkmanship diplomacy, deterrence theory, and alliance security dilemma, and apply them to the study of cases of proliferation, attempted proliferation, and nuclear latency in East Asian countries, including China, South Korea, North Korea, Taiwan, Japan and Australia in order to understand the variance in nuclear exploration, pursuit, and acquisition. The course draws upon canonical texts in the nuclear politics and history literature, and also incorporates recent policy analysis. This course relies on declassified archival documents to illustrate the history and theories addressed in the class, thus fostering a breadth of knowledge on different nuclear weapons cases. While we analyze these cases, I encourage students to engage with primary source documents as well as to think critically and evaluate the arguments put forward by historians and political scientists on nuclear proliferation and non-proliferation.

Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.755.738[C]

SA.552.110. Political Economy and Development Strategies in East Asia. 4 Credits.

This course examines and compares development strategies in East Asia. The course begins with a section investigating the individual cases of China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore, with emphasis given to government-business relations, institutions, and policies that influence their development strategies. The second section engages students in a cross-regional perspective by comparing these cases, with special attention to why certain development strategies work in some political and economic contexts but not others. The third section examines how globalization influences development strategies and the distinctive roles of these East Asian economies in global production. It also discusses the roles of international organizations and networks of trade and investment. The course aims to facilitate understanding of the development policies in East Asia both in terms of specific contexts and in a comparative perspective.

Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.755.722[C]

SA.552.111. Political History of North and South Korea. 4 Credits.

This course gives an historically informed overview of politics and society in the Republic of Korea (ROK or South Korea) and The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK or North Korea), focusing on profiles in political leadership, the development of political institutions, and societal change. It considers the legacies of colonial regimentation, Cold War militarism, and national division on domestic politics. Specific topics include authoritarianism, democratic transition and consolidation, civil society, government-led industrialization, and debates on Korean unification.

Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.765.704[C]

SA.552.112. South Asian Security Challenges and Defense Modernization. 4 Credits.

South Asia is a large and an immensely diverse region that is home to roughly 25 percent (1.9 billion) of the world's population. India the most populous country in the world (1.4 billion people) with 22 official regional languages. Neighboring Pakistan ranks sixth in the world by population with over 200 million people. The region also includes Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan & Maldives. Some regional definitions include Afghanistan in South Asia, as will this course. From the nuclearized India-Pakistan rivalry to state collapse in Afghanistan, South Asian security issues have significant ramifications for global order and security. Specific topics covered in this course include the partition of India, civil-military relations in India and Pakistan, the Kashmir conflict, the Sino-Indian rivalry, the creation of Bangladesh, external interventions in Afghanistan, nuclear deterrence, Insurgencies in India and Sri Lanka's civil war.

Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.790.728[C]

SA.552.113. The U.S., Japan, and Great Power Competition in Southeast Asia. 4 Credits.

Chinese influence in Southeast Asia poses critical challenges to the U.S.-Japan alliance in an age of great power competition. We will explore those challenges and how the US and Japan are responding through the lenses of geopolitics, geoeconomics, grand strategy, and the arts of statecraft. We will bring these lenses to bear on the questions: "Why is Southeast Asia so important to the region's great powers?" "How are the U.S. and Japan competing with China in Southeast Asia?" and "Is a regional order that imposes restraint on competing great powers possible?"

Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.760.709[C]

SA.552.114. U.S. Security Policy in the Indo-Pacific. 4 Credits.

Nowhere does the United States face greater long-term security and defense challenges than in Asia. This course, combining a thematic approach with weekly case studies, provides a rigorous examination of key security issues across the Indo-Pacific — from Pakistan to Japan — and their implications for U.S. interests and policy planning. Topics include the evolving Asian security order; defense challenges posed by the rise of China; trends in conventional military modernization; implications of the Sino-Indian rivalry on regional stability; emerging dynamics in Asian nuclear deterrence; and trends in security competition in the maritime, space and cyber domains. This course includes a practical focus on policy writing.

Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.755.729[C]

SA.552.115. US-Japan Relations in Global Context. 4 Credits.

Examines the evolution of the U.S.-Japan strategic relationship in a changing global and regional geopolitical environment. Gives special attention to the U.S.-Japan alliance and relations with China and the Korean Peninsula. Involves substantial direct dialogue with policymakers, analysts and business leaders, both American and Japanese. The class includes extensive travel study, and students are expected to write a policy-oriented research paper on economic, political, technological, or security issues in U.S.-Japan relations, the best of which are published by the Edwin O. Reischauer Center for East Asian Studies in both the English and Japanese languages. Students should have basic knowledge of Japanese diplomacy before taking this course. Note: successful completion of this course fulfills the capstone requirement for second-year MAIR students. Click here for Capstone course application information

Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.760.749[C]

SA.552.116. Technology and Security in Asia: India. 4 Credits.

This study trip capstone course explores policy challenges that sit at the intersection of technology and security issues in Asia. This academic year, the course will focus on India. During the fall term, students will study theoretical and foundational texts on technology and security; will divide into two groups to select complementary policy research questions; and will plan the trip itinerary and interviews. The provisional topical areas for research are data privacy, security, and localization; and India's investments in AI/ML technologies. Students will travel to India in January 2023. Following the trip, students will complete their group research projects and present their findings at a public event. This course includes practical instruction on writing, interviewing, and public speaking skills. Open to second year MAIR students. Click here for Capstone course application information

SA.552.117. The Korean Economy: Sustaining Convergence to the Highest-Income Countries. 4 Credits.

The course will analyze Korea's transformation from one of the poorest countries in the world in the 1950s to the 10th largest economy today. However, Korea faces serious challenges to continue its convergence to the highest-income countries. The course will focus on the challenges posed by Korea's rapid population aging and the associated fiscal pressures, its polarized economy (large companies versus small and medium-sized enterprises, manufacturing versus services, regular workers versus non-regular workers and men versus women), its dependence on energy-intensive industries and coal, and North Korea.

SA.552.118. Global Korea: Understanding Contemporary Issues. 4 Credits.

This course examines pressing geopolitical and economic issues confronting South Korea, which have immense implications not just for its own national security but also for regional and global security. The course consists of two parts: 1) traditional and emerging security issues related to the Korean Peninsula, and 2) Korea's economic security and other global issues. The first part is designed to understand North Korea in terms of its regime and nuclear capabilities as well as its implications for regional and global security. The first part also examines other pressing security and defense issues such as the Taiwan Strait and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, with a focus on the role of South Korea and the policy implications for South Korea. It will also survey emerging multilateral frameworks, including the Quad and AUKUS, to discuss Korea's potential role and contributions to regional and global multilateralism. Also discussed will be the future trajectory of the US-ROK alliance. The second part of the course assesses how South Korea's economy fits with the changing economic architecture of the Indo-Pacific and across the globe. The topics include global supply chains of critical technologies, climate change and clean energy, infrastructure development and connectivity, digital commerce and trade, the pandemic and public health, and the "soft power" of the Korean wave (hanryu). After an overview of these topics, the course will assess how the US-ROK alliance and economic partnership affects the region and the world's economic security. The course aims to provide students with the information necessary to understand contemporary issues for South Korea and to understand how those issues relate to the evolving concept of the US-ROK alliance and economic partnership, as well as how South Korea can position itself as a global leader.

SA.552.119. Korea Study Trip. 4 Credits.

Note: successful completion of this course fulfills the capstone requirement for second-year MAIR students. Click here for Capstone course application information

SA.552.120. Korean Civil Society: Issues and Analysis. 4 Credits.

Civil society is considered as an important building block of development, its actors key intermediaries between citizens and the state. The course will explore the role civil society has played in Korean economic development and how it has been, in turn, shaped by the growth experience. We will also study how Korean civil society has been responding to political and economic instability over the last decade. The strong civil society that led the country to democratization in the 1980s made a comeback and removed a corrupt president in 2017. Tensions within civil society at times have exacerbated social divide, as we are seeing in the recent clash of feminist and anti-feminist movements over deep-rooted misogyny and gendered citizenship debates. While traditional charities have been on the decline, there has been a surge of social and solidarity economy organizations such as cooperatives and social enterprises in response to concerns of climate change, growing economic inequality and social injustice. We explore these topics using conceptual frameworks from the literature on movements, nongovernment organizations and social enterprises.

Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.765.717[C]

SA.552.121. Research Seminar: Asia in Washington DC. 4 Credits.

Examines the approaches of major Asian nations to gathering information and influencing policy in Washington, D.C., from both a comparative and a historical perspective. After surveying the structure of American executive-branch and Congressional policymaking toward Asia, as well as the role of think tanks, universities, and mass media in Washington, D.C., the course considers concretely how China, Japan, Korea, India, and key Southeast Asian countries influence Washington. Involves several field trips and informal discussions with leaders active in Asia policymaking. Note: successful completion of this course fulfills the capstone requirement for second-year MAIR students. Click here for Capstone course application information

SA.552.122. Contemporary India. 4 Credits.**SA.552.123. Democracy and Development in South Asia. 4 Credits.****SA.552.124. Competition and Crisis in the Pacific Islands. 4 Credits.**

The Pacific Islands - more than a dozen small states arrayed across the vast Pacific Ocean - are increasingly being courted by the United States, China, and other major powers, and are in turn seeking to use their geopolitical leverage to secure commitments to address the crisis of sea-level rise that threatens their prosperity or even territorial existence. This course explores the history and cultures of this contested region, from World War II to the present; examines the ways in which Pacific Island states have collectively lobbied international institutions to advance climate mitigation and adaptation; and analyzes the U.S.-China and China-Taiwan dynamics in the region that are drawing attention to the Pacific Islands as an emerging zone of great power competition.

SA.552.125. Defense Technology and Innovation in Asia. 4 Credits.

The Indo-Pacific is home to some of the world's most dynamic defense markets. Countries such as Australia, China, Japan, and South Korea are seeking to expand their advanced defense manufacturing capabilities and exports, while others such as India, Indonesia, and Vietnam have charted ambitious programs for defense indigenization. For their research papers in this course, students will select an Indo-Pacific country and a defense market segment (e.g., fighter aircraft, submarines, UAVs, avionics) to study in depth, or can opt for a comparative study that contrasts defense markets in two countries, one of which can be outside the Indo-Pacific. This course will draw on the literatures from security studies, defense economics, and technology innovation, and students will gain experience conducting original research on policy-relevant defense topics. Note: successful completion of this course fulfills the capstone requirement for second-year MAIR students. Click here for Capstone course application information

SA.552.126. Environment, Development, and Politics in South Asia. 4 Credits.

This course explores the intersection of environmental challenges, development ambitions, and politics in South Asia. Housing over a quarter of the world's population—much of it very young—this region has seen rapid economic growth over the last two decades, lifting millions out of poverty, but also deepening environmental challenges, many of which are exacerbated by weak political institutions and inter-state rivalries. This multi-disciplinary course, drawing from economics, political science, sociology and anthropology, is organized around three major environmental themes: water resources, climate change, and pollution. Students will examine case studies from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka, and for each of the three environmental themes will explore underlying economic and development dynamics, political disputes and institutional incentives, and evidence-based responses that are available to regional and global policymakers.

SA.552.127. Human Rights and Humanitarian Challenges in East Asia. 4 Credits.

In recent years, East Asia has seen significant human rights and humanitarian challenges—from the 2021 coup in Myanmar and the brutal repression and conflict that followed, to the democratic backsliding seen across much of Southeast Asia, to Beijing's severe abuses against Uyghurs and other minority groups. At the same time, the region is home to countless civil society organizations, activists, and politicians committed to advancing respect for human rights, and for several decades, the United States has often prioritized human rights in its regional engagement. This course will review the human rights and humanitarian situation across East Asia, as well as the U.S. response. It will consider how the United States weighs its "values" and "interests" in determining its approach, and the role of human rights and humanitarian policy in the United States' strategic competition with China. Does human rights promotion detract from U.S. efforts to counter Chinese influence, or does it provide an advantage? What tools has the United States brought to bear in support of human rights in the region, and which have been most effective?

SA.552.128. Philippines Study Trip. 4 Credits.

The Philippines has never been more critical to Indo-Pacific security and prosperity. As the second largest ASEAN country by population, one of the fastest growing economies in Asia, a U.S. treaty ally abutting the South China Sea and Taiwan, and a vibrant yet flawed democracy, the Philippines stands as a significant player in ASEAN and the broader regional community. Decisions made in Manila will increasingly shape the trajectory of the Indo-Pacific region, as well as U.S.-China competition. Course topics include the U.S.-Philippines alliance, Philippine foreign policy including its relationships with China, Japan, and neighbors in Southeast Asia, contemporary Philippine politics, maritime security, economic security, and human rights. Students will travel to Manila, where they will meet with government officials, U.S. and third country diplomats, civil society representatives, and private sector leaders. Application-based Capstone course.

SA.552.129. Industry and Innovation in Korea's Global Economic Policymaking. 4 Credits.

Standing at the crossroads of U.S.–China competition and global economic transformation, South Korea exemplifies the dilemmas and opportunities confronting today's middle powers. This course examines how South Korea has leveraged industrial capabilities to achieve outsized international influence despite a challenging geopolitical environment. Students will analyze the evolution and adaptation of Korea's developmental state through multiple financial crises and the emergence of the chaebol–SME–startup ecosystem; explore the institutional nexus of foreign and industrial policymaking; and investigate case studies across key sectors including semiconductors, EVs and batteries, and emerging technologies. The course integrates international relations theory with comparative political economy to analyze how public-private coordination has empowered Korea to navigate great-power competition while building strategic flexibility through managed interdependence. Special attention will be given to Korea's evolving position in global value chains and technological ecosystems.