

## **Course Syllabus**

**GOV 347K (Unique 38080) and ANS347K (Unique 32650)**  
**Spring 2023**

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Instructor: Xuecheng Liu

Days & Time: TTH 9:30-11:00 am

Classroom JES A217A

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### **Government and Politics of South Asia (GC)**

#### **Course Description:**

South Asia is bounded on the south by the Indian Ocean and on land by West Asia, Central Asia, East Asia, and Southeast Asia. This sub-region comprises eight developing countries—Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. South Asia is home to well over one fifth of the world's population, making it the most populous geographical region in the world.

Since the end of the Cold War, South Asia has become a focal point of growing international attention and concern by nuclear proliferation, the rise of Islamic militancy and the anti-terror war, the emergence of India as a global power, and regional effort for cooperation. South Asian nations have also been experiencing a profound political evolution of democratization.

This course provides students with a comprehensive and systematic introduction to the comparative political study of the eight nations of South Asia. Organized in parallel fashion to facilitate cross-national comparison, the course sections on each nation address several topical areas of inquiry: political culture and heritage, government structure and institutions, political parties and leaders, and social conflict and resolution. India, the preeminent power of the subcontinent, will receive more attention. In terms of the international relations of the region, this course will address several predominant region-wide issues: the India–Pakistan conflict, the rise of Islamic militancy and the AfPak war, and regional cooperation under the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

**This course carries the Global Cultures flag.** Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. cultural group, past or present.

The University of Texas at Austin considers that freedom of academic expression, open discourse, and intellectual inquiry are an integral part of our educational mission. This course calls for candid discussions of potentially sensitive geopolitical and geocultural matters. In particular, the content and activities for the course could be deemed sensitive or illegal by non-U.S. governments. While the university makes every effort to provide safe spaces for all instructors and learners, under the current circumstances where most learning activities are conducted online, members of the academic community should be aware that privacy cannot be guaranteed.

**Prerequisites:**

This course is related to South Asian politics and inter-state relationship. It is intended to fulfil two tasks: Study the political development of South Asian region and learn the basic skills of academic writing. Since this is an introductory course, a background in Asian studies or Government is recommended but not required.

**The modality of the online/in-person teaching for this course**

Because of the severe and volatile trialedemic situation and severe winter weather at the beginning of the spring semester, the teaching modality could be shifted between the online lecture and in-person lecture. So I will post my written lectures containing all the key points on the topics on Canvas one day earlier than the scheduled class meeting, and let our students read my written lectures and assigned readings before the scheduled class meeting.

During the online meeting, I will explain the key points related to the written lecture and reading assignments and answer the key questions raised by the students before and during the meeting. Our students online may talk about your own ideas and views about the relevant topics in the lecture. Our lecturing meeting can also have time for discussion.

I will also post my answers to the key questions raised by the students on Canvas and then the students who have not been able to attend the online meeting can read them on canvas at any convenient time. However, when I explain the requirements for writing the essay proposal and essay drafts, I urge all the students to try your best to attend the in-person meetings because you may not fully understand the specifics of the written requirements.

In terms of participation, considering the severe triplrdemic situation and the volatile local internet services, attendance at the online meeting is encouraged but unnecessarily required,

However, all the students must make a statement to me by email before the scheduled class meeting that you have read the assignments and email your questions to me if any (My class email address: xcliu\_ut@yahoo.com). This statement means that you have attended the class meetings. If I have not received your statement, you would be considered as absent. If the students cannot get access to the internet service at the scheduled online meeting, you may report the reason of your absence to me after your internet service is available.

**Grading Policy:**

Two mid-term exams (60%).

One short term paper of 6-7 pages (30%, first draft 15% and final draft 15%)

Overall class participation/attendance may be reflected in a plus or minus up to 10 points in determining the course grade.

Any student missing a mid-term exam with a verified medical excuse or for an official university event with a letter from the responsible university authority may choose to take a make-up exam or do an alternative assignment.

We will adopt UT's new "plus & minus" grading system in this course. The following is a list of letter grades, their corresponding GPA values, and the percentage values that I plan to use for your assignments. Note that these percentage scores will not be noted on your transcript.

**Letter Grading Reference:**

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>GPA</b>	<b>Percentage Score</b>
A	4.00	94-100 %
A-	3.67	90-93
B+	3.33	87-89
B	3.00	84-86
B-	2.67	80-83
C+	2.33	77-79
C	2.00	74-76
C-	1.67	70-73
D+	1.33	67-69
D	1.00	64-66
D-	0.67	60-63
F	0.00	59 & below

**Textbooks:**

**The textbooks are all electronic resources and students can read them online or download them by purchase. We will just choose several chapters from each book as reading assignments.**

1. Robert C. Oberst, et al, *Government and Politics in South Asia*, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition New York: Westview Press, 2014. (**Electronic Resource**) [**GPSA**]
2. T.V. Paul ed., *South Asia's Weak States*, Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Security Studies, 2010. (**Electronic Resource**) [**SAWS**]
3. Lawrence Saez, *The South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC)*, Hoboken: Taylor & Francis, 2012. (**Electronic Resource**) [**SAARC**]
4. Paul R. Brass ed., *Routledge Handbook of South Asian Politics: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal* (Hoboken: Taylor & Francis, 2010). (**Electronic Resource**) [**RH**]
5. Neil Devotta ed., *An Introduction to South Asian Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2016). (**Electronic Resource**) [**ISAP**]
6. Niamatullah Ibrahimi and William Maley, *Afghanistan* (New York: Routledge, 2020) (**Electronic Resource**) [**AF**]
7. Ghosh, Partha S., *India-South Asia Interface: Religion, Politics and the Wider World* (New York: Routledge, 2021); Taylor & Francis Temporary Ebooks, 2022. [**ISAI**]
8. During the course of the semester, additional latest articles on South Asia may be added and distributed as required readings in class.

### **Accommodations**

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259,  
<http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

### **Academic Integrity**

Each student is expected to uphold the University of Texas at Austin Honor Code:

The core values of the University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/ or dismissal from the

University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.

For further information please visit the Student Judicial Services Web site:  
<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs>. Refer to the Dean of Students Student Judicial Services website or call 471-2841 for the official university policies and procedures on scholastic dishonesty.

### **Religious Holidays**

By UT at Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

### **Recommendations Regarding Emergency Evacuation**

Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767, <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/>:

Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.

Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building. Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class. In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office. Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL):

512-232-5050 Link to information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: [www.utexas.edu/emergency](http://www.utexas.edu/emergency)

### **Classroom Safety and COVID-19**

To help preserve our in person learning environment, the university recommends the following.

- Adhere to university [mask guidance](#).
- [Vaccinations are widely available](#), free and not billed to health insurance.  
The vaccine will help protect against the transmission of the virus to others and reduce serious symptoms in those who are vaccinated.

- **Proactive Community Testing** remains an important part of the university's efforts to protect our community. Tests are fast and free.
- Visit [protect.utexas.edu](http://protect.utexas.edu) for more information

## Class Schedule

### **Jan. 10 (T)**

Introduction to the Course (in the classroom)

### **I. General Survey of Political Development in South Asia**

#### *1. The Changing South Asia and Defining Features of South Asian Politics*

### **Jan. 12 (TH)**

#### **Reading Assignments:**

- (1) A Political Map of South Asia  
<https://www.mapsofworld.com/asia/south-asia-geography.html>  
<http://mapsof.net/map/map-of-south-asia>  
<http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00maplinks/>
- (2) South Asia: peoples, Politics, Economics, Geography, and Definitions  
<http://www.cotf.edu/earthinfo/sasia/SAdef.html>
- (3) SAWS: Introduction; 3. State Formation, Consolidation, and the Security Challenges; 4. State, Nations, and the Regional Security Order; 5.State Globalization and State Capacity
- (4) GPSA: Introduction

### **Jan. 17 (T)**

#### **Questions for Group Discussion (in the classroom):**

- (1) Geography, Peoples, Ethnics, Religions, capitals and big cities.
- (2) Political systems, major political parties, political leaders
- (3) Major ethnic and religious conflicts, wars

### **II. Introduction to South Asian Countries**

### **Jan. 19 (TH)**

#### *2. India*

##### **Lecture on India (I)**

##### **Reading Assignments:**

GPSA: 2. Political Culture and heritage; 3. State Institutions and Changing Political Dynamics; and 4. Shifting perspectives About Political Parties and Political

leaders.  
ISAP: India pp. 4-28.

**Jan. 24 (T)**  
**Lecture on India (II)**

**Jan. 26 (TH)**  
**Questions for Group Discussion (in the classroom):**

- (1) The social and cultural heritage of ancient India
- (2) The political and cultural heritage of British India
- (3) The Main characteristics of the Indian Independence Movement
- (4) India's political institutions, political parties, and political leaders.
- (5) Identify major challenges and prospects in Indian politics.

**3. Pakistan**

**Jan. 31 (T)**

**Lecture (I)**

Reading Assignments:

**SAWS:** 8. Weak State, failed State, Garrison State: The Pakistan Saga

**GPSA:** 8. Political Culture and Heritage; 9. Constitutional Structure; and  
10. Political Parties and Political leaders

**Feb. 2 (TH)**

**Lecture (II)**

**Feb. 7 (T)**

**Questions for Group Discussion (in the classroom):**

- \* Review Pakistan's Political culture, institutions, political parties and leaders;
- \* Identify and analyze problems and conflicts in the Pakistani Society;

**4. Afghanistan**

**Feb. 9 (TH)**

**Lecture (I)**

Reading Assignments:

**SAWS:** 9. Afghanistan: A Weak State in the Path of Power Rivalries

**AF:** 1 Introduction pp.1-7; 2 State Formation pp.8-39; 3 Politics pp.47-79.

**ISAP:** 7. Afghanistan (by email)

**Selected Articles by email:**

- (1) Why we aren't 'winning' in Afghanistan

By Aaron B. O'Connell, *Washington Post*, August 10. 2017  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/america-is-relying-too-much-on-military-power-in-afghanistan/2017/08/10/102a565e-7d19-11e7-a669-b400c5c7e1cc\\_story.html?tid=hybrid\\_collaborative\\_1\\_na&utm\\_term=.cfb9a1a8d8f5](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/america-is-relying-too-much-on-military-power-in-afghanistan/2017/08/10/102a565e-7d19-11e7-a669-b400c5c7e1cc_story.html?tid=hybrid_collaborative_1_na&utm_term=.cfb9a1a8d8f5)

(2) US Troops Withdraw from Afghanistan ( Three latest analytical articles by email )

**Feb. 14 (T)**

**Lecture (II)**

**Feb. 16 (TH)**

**Questions for Group Discussion (in the classroom):**

What Achievements have we made in the anti-terror war in Afghanistan?

Why have we failed to achieve the goal for democratizing Afghanistan?

What is the future of Afghanistan after the Taliban ruled it again in 2021?

## **6. Bangladesh**

**Feb 21 (T)**

**Lecture (I)**

**Reading Assignments:**

(1) ISAP: 4. Bangladesh (by email)

(2) GPSA: 14. Political Culture and heritage; 15. Government Institutions; and  
16. Elections, Parties, and Interest Groups.

**Feb. 23 (TH)**

**Lecture (II)**

**Feb. 28 (T)**

**Questions for Group Discussion (in the classroom)**

1. The background of Bangladesh's Independence.

2. Main features of political development in Bangladesh.

3. Leading political parties and political leaders.

**March 2 (TH)**

Review the chapters of South Asia, India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.

**March 7 (T)**

**The First Mid-term Examination**

**March 9 (TH)**

Lecture on the requirements for writing a paper proposal

\* How to write a paper proposal?

## **March 13-18: Spring Break**

### **March 21 (T)**

The instructor will stay online and get ready for Q&A.

Students continue to do research in library and prepare for the paper Proposal (3pages, title, thesis, and at least 5 references, Double space and font 12).

Remarks on the first mid-term examination

**Submit the paper proposal by email before 11:59 pm.**

### **March 23 (TH)**

**\* Explain Requirements for writing an academic paper.**

## ***7. Nepal***

### **March 28 (T)**

#### **Lecture (I)**

#### **Reading Assignments:**

- (1) **SAWS:** 12. Rebellion and State Formation in Nepal
- (2) **GPSA:** 25. Political heritage and Culture; 26. Political Institutions and Government Processes; and 27. Political Parties, Elections, and Leaders
- (3) **ISAP:** 6. Nepal (by email)

### **March 30 (TH)**

#### **Lecture (II)**

### **April 4 (T)**

#### **Questions for Group Discussion ( in the classroom)**

Historical Evolution of Nepali Monarchy;  
Establishment of a democratic republic state;  
Leading political parties and political leaders.

## ***8. Sri Lanka***

#### **Reading Assignments:**

- (1) **SAWS:** 10. Challenges in State Consolidation and Minority Integration
- (2) **GPSA:** 19. Political Culture and Heritage; 20. Government structure; and 21. Political Parties and Interest Groups
- (3) **ISAP:** 5. Sri Lanka (by email).

### **April 6 (TH)**

#### **Questions for Group Discussion:**

- Ethnicity and religion in Sri Lanka;
- The LTTE separatist movement and the civil war;
- Main features of political development in Sri Lanka;
- Leading political parties and political leaders.

#### **\*Submit the first draft of the term paper (15 points)**

(Please **Email** your first essay drafts to the Instructor before 11:59 pm).

## **III. The Future of South Asia**

### ***9. Regional Integration and Cooperation***

Questions Related to This Topic:

Why Has SAARC failed in promoting regional cooperation?

### **April 11 (T)**

#### **Reading Assignments:**

**SAARC:** Introduction; and Future Challenges

**SAWS:** 13.Transforming South Asia: .Is a Pluralistic Security Community feasible?

**GPSA:** 30. The Future: South Asia as a Region and a Player in the World System

### **April 13 (TH)**

**Reviews the chapters of Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and SAARC.**

### **April 18 (T)**

**The second mid-term examination online**

### **April 20 (TH)**

Last class meeting

\* Make comments on the course and conduct the Course Instructor Survey online.

\* **Submit the final draft of the term paper by email before 11:59 pm.**