

Comparative Politics: Japan, Korea, and Taiwan

GOV 355M (38124) Spring 2023

Instructor: Dr. Leon N. Kunz

Time: TTH 9:30AM-11:00AM

Location: GAR 0.128

Course Description

This course introduces students to the study of comparative politics by contrasting the experiences of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. These three societies form important bulwarks of liberal democracy in East Asia. The lessons we can draw from their successes in terms of economic and political development are especially relevant at a time of democratic backsliding across the globe. The course will focus on the historical legacies, structures, actors, and contemporary issues relevant to the comparative study of East Asian democracy. Topics explored include: Japan's modernization and imperial expansion; the historical legacies of Japanese colonial rule in Korea and Taiwan; the emergence of the East Asian "developmental state"; dynamics of authoritarian rule and democratization; as well as the relationship between social movements and party politics.

Learning Outcomes

Students will learn how to...

- Think like a comparativist
- Critically evaluate and apply relevant social science concepts
- Understand the changing historical and political circumstances of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan
- Verbally present arguments and exchange views in formal as well as informal settings
- Write a convincing social science paper

Prerequisites

Six semester hours of lower-division coursework in government.

Readings

You will not have to purchase any textbooks. All required readings will be made available as PDF files on Canvas. You are encouraged to read widely beyond the required texts and keep up with current affairs in the region (and elsewhere).

Class Format

The first meeting each week (Monday) will consist of a brief lecture by the instructor that provides a narrative for the course, with the remaining time used for the discussion of the assigned readings. The second meeting each week (Tuesday) will usually start with a short student presentation followed by class and group discussions of the weekly readings. Everyone's learning success will depend on preparation and active participation in class. You will be expected to complete a variety of graded assignments that aim to facilitate critical engagement with the course material.

Grading

20% Attendance and Participation

20% Oral Presentation

20% Reading Responses

20% Parliamentary Style Debate

20% Essay

Grading scale: 93–100: A. 90–92: A-. 87–89: B+. 83–86: B. 80–82: B-. 77–79: C+. 73–76: C. 70–72 C-. 67–69: D+. 63–66: D. 60–62: D-. 0–59: F.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance is mandatory. You may miss up to two meetings without penalty. Every additional absence will negatively affect your grade. The following exceptions apply: a) you have a medical excuse, in which case you may be asked to provide a doctor's note; b) you want to observe a religious holiday. In the latter case you should notify me at least two days in advance. You may be asked to turn in a make-up assignment for missed class activities.

Participation in our discussions is an assessed component of the course. You are expected to actively participate in class and group deliberations. To be able to make meaningful contributions, you should complete the required readings in advance of each meeting. You are encouraged to take notes both before and during class. The quality of your verbal contributions is more important than mere quantity. However, you will need to consistently share your thoughts, arguments, observations, and questions to earn a good grade. Please note that strong participation also involves listening to others and engaging with their thoughts in a considerate manner. Even if you strongly disagree with somebody, you will be expected to be respectful throughout all interactions.

Electronic devices. Laptops and tablets may only be used for course readings and note taking. You should not use smartphones during class. Repeated violations will negatively affect your attendance and participation grade.

Oral Presentation

You will have to give one 10-minute oral presentation on a topic of your choice that relates to the material covered in class that week. You are encouraged to think about your presentation early on and discuss your choices with the instructor via email or during office hours. Depending on the size of the class, this could be a group assignment. The presentation dates will be assigned in week one or two. This assignment will train you to work like a comparativist. You are required to prepare a slideshow (using powerpoint or a different software). Your presentation should include at least one example of a cultural product that you use to illustrate the topic. Possibilities include texts, artworks, images, videos, or musical pieces. You should display the primary material you are focusing on, present your analysis, and help facilitate a discussion. You should formulate and present one to two hypothesis on the topic that will serve as the basis for the class discussion. A rubric will be made available on Canvas. The presentation is worth 20% of your final grade.

Parliamentary Style Debate

The class will be divided into different groups that will work together to prepare a structured debate on a pre-announced motion related to the course. The format will be a modified version of the British parliamentary style debate that is popular at universities around the world. We will carefully prepare this exercise. Following the announcement of the motion (e.g., “This house believes that Japan has become a more well-functioning democracy than the United States”), the groups will have at least one week to prepare their strategy and arguments. The debates will be held in class during week 9 (Tue., 3/7 & Thu., 3/9). Depending on whether you are part of the proposition or the opposition, you will be asked to give a brief speech in favour of or against the motion and to respond to the arguments of the other team. The debates will be audio recorded. A brief reflection paper on the whole exercise will be due on March 12, 23:59. If student enrolment should be high, we might have to schedule additional debates for the weeks after spring break (and adjust the deadline for those speakers). Detailed guidelines and a rubric will be posted on Canvas.

You do not need any prior experience in formal debating to complete this assignment successfully. Alternative arrangements can be made for students who absolutely do not want to participate in a graded debate (such as submitting a second research paper). This would have to be agreed upon before the end of January.

Essay

The final assignment will be an essay addressing a question related to a topic covered in class. The paper should be 1500-2000 words in length. The word limit includes citations and footnotes, but not the bibliography. Papers below or above the word limit will incur at least a 5% penalty. You should aim to develop a clear and nuanced argument drawing on the relevant academic literature. The citations and bibliography should conform to academic conventions. This assignment will be due on 4/23, 23:59. Late submissions will incur a 2% penalty per calendar day. Essays that are more than five days late will not be accepted. A more detailed prompt and rubric will be provided on Canvas.

Reading Responses

Beginning in week 2, you will have to submit one reading response per week through Canvas (12 submissions total). These submissions should focus on the required reading assigned for the second meeting of that week (Thursday) and be uploaded to Canvas on Wednesdays by 23:59. The responses should be between 300-500 words in length. Rather than merely summarizing the assigned reading, you should aim to meaningfully engage with it. This may involve critically assessing the arguments and narratives presented, drawing comparisons, sharing observations, reflecting on connection to other topics covered in class, or pointing to sections you do not fully understand. You can use this assignment to formulate questions that the text evokes. We may discuss these questions in class. The reading responses are all about consistency rather than perfection. Each response will be graded as follows: submissions deemed good will receive 2 points; satisfactory and late responses receive 1 point; unacceptable submissions receive 0 points. Reading responses that are more than one calendar day late will not be accepted. Your two lowest scores will automatically be dropped at the end of term.

The due dates for the reading response are as follows:

Reading response #	Due date
1	1/18
2	1/25
3	2/1
4	2/8
5	2/15
6	2/22
7	3/1
8	3/22
9	3/29
10	4/5

11	4/12
12	4/19

Please also take note of the other key dates and deadlines:

Tbd	Oral Presentation
3/7 & 3/9	Parliamentary Style Debates held
3/12	Parliamentary Debate Reflection Paper due
4/23	Essay due

Disclaimer concerning Freedom of Speech

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 geo-cultural 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 current circumstances where most learning activities are conducted online, members of the academic community should be aware that privacy cannot be guaranteed.

Content Warning

Some readings and other content in this course include references to potential triggers such as violence, sexual assault, homophobia, sexism, death, torture, and religious discrimination that some students may find traumatizing. Studying comparative politics involves dealing with difficult topics. If you have any specific triggers or concerns related to this course, please consider reaching out to me so that we can discuss this.

Sharing of Course Materials Prohibited

No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class without explicit, written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. The University is well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to [Student Conduct and Academic Integrity](#) in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure of the course.

Students with Disabilities

The university is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive learning environment consistent with university policy and federal and state law. Please let me know if you experience any barriers to learning so I can work with you to ensure you have equal opportunity to participate fully in this course. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability and Access (D&A). Please refer to D&A's website for contact and more information: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with D&A, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and needs in this course.

Classroom Safety and COVID-19

For any illness, students should stay home if they are sick or contagious, not only to stop the spread, but also to promote their personal wellness. The university will continue to provide rapid antigen self-test kits at distribution sites throughout campus. Students can receive up to four tests at a time. The university will provide symptomatic COVID-19 testing on campus for all students, faculty and staff.

UHS maintains up-to-date resources on COVID, which can be found here:

- [COVID-19 Information and Resources](#)
- [COVID-19 Exposure Action Chart](#)

Scholastic Dishonesty

Students who violate University rules on academic 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 academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, please visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct>.

Title IX Disclosure

Beginning January 1, 2020, Texas Senate Bill 212 requires all employees of Texas universities, including faculty, report any information to the Title IX Officer regarding sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking that is disclosed to them. Texas law requires that all employees who witness or receive any information of this type (including, but not limited to, writing assignments, class discussions, or one-on-one conversations) must be reported. If you would like to speak with someone who can provide support or remedies without making an official report to the university, please email advocate@austin.utexas.edu. For more information about reporting options and resources, visit <http://www.titleix.utexas.edu/>, contact the Title IX Office via email at titleix@austin.utexas.edu, or call 512-471-0419. Although

graduate teaching and research assistants are not subject to Texas Senate Bill 212, they are still mandatory reporters under Federal Title IX laws and are required to report a wide range of behaviors we refer to as sexual misconduct, including the types of sexual misconduct covered under Texas Senate Bill 212. The Title IX office has developed supportive ways to respond to a survivor and compiled campus resources to support survivors.

Names and Pronouns

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender identity & expression, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name, unless they have added a "chosen name" with the registrar's office, which you can do so [here](#). I will gladly honor your request to address you by a name that is different from what appears on the official roster, and by the pronouns you use (she/he/they/ze, etc). Please advise me of any changes early in the semester so that I may make appropriate updates to my records. For instructions on how to add your pronouns to Canvas, visit [this site](#). More resources available on the Gender and Sexuality Center's website, www.utgsc.org.

Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC)

All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. Know you are not alone. If you or anyone you know is experiencing symptoms of stress, anxiety, depression, academic concerns, loneliness, difficulty sleeping, or any other concern impacting your wellbeing – you are strongly encouraged to connect with CMHC. The Counseling and Mental Health Center provides a wide variety of mental health services to all UT students including crisis services, counseling services with immediate support and well-being resources. Additionally, CARE Counselors are located within the academic schools and colleges. These counselors get to know the concerns that are unique to their college's students. For more information on CMHC, visit <https://cmhc.utexas.edu> or call 512-471-3515.

University Health Services (UHS)

Your physical health and wellness are a priority. University Health Services is an on-campus high-quality medical facility providing care to all UT students. Services offered by UHS include general medicine, urgent care, a 24/7 nurse advice line, gynecology, sports medicine, physical therapy, lab and radiology services, COVID-19 testing and vaccinations and much more. For additional information, visit <https://healthyhorns.utexas.edu> or call 512-471-4955.

Sanger Learning Center

Did you know that more than one-third of UT undergraduate students use the Sanger Learning Center each year to improve their academic performance? All students are welcome to take advantage of Sanger Center's classes and workshops, private learning specialist appointments, peer academic coaching, and tutoring for more than 70 courses in 15 different subject areas. For more information, please visit <https://ugs.utexas.edu/slc> or call 512-471-3614 (JES A332).

Student Emergency Services (SES)

Student Emergency Services in the Office of the Dean of Students helps students and their families during difficult or emergency situations. Assistance includes outreach, advocacy, intervention, support, and referrals to relevant campus and community resources. If you need to be absent from class due to a family emergency, medical or mental health concern, or academic difficulty due to crisis or an emergency situation, you can work with Student Emergency Services. SES will document your situation and notify your professors. Additional information is available at <https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/> or by calling 512-471-5017.

PART I: COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Week 1 Introduction to Comparative Politics

- Tue., 1/10: No readings. Please familiarize yourself with this syllabus.
- Thu., 1/12: Kenneth Newton and Jan W. van Deth, *Foundations of Comparative Politics: Democracies of the Modern World* (4th Edition, Cambridge University Press, 2021), pp. 1-35.

PART II: HISTORICAL LEGACIES

Week 2 Japan: Modernization and Imperialism

- Tue., 1/17: Alisa Gaunder, *Japanese Politics and Government* (Routledge, 2017), pp. 1-20.
- Thu., 1/19: Lewis H. Gann, "Western and Japanese Colonialism: Some Preliminary Comparisons", in: Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie, eds., *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945* (Princeton University Press, 1987), pp. 497-525.

Week 3 Taiwan: “The Land Colonialisms made”?

Tue., 1/24: Dafydd Fell, *Government and Politics in Taiwan* (Second Edition, Routledge, 2018), pp. 1-10

Thu., 1/26: Wan-Yao Chou, “Taiwan under Japanese Colonial Rule”, in: Gunter Schubert, ed., *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Taiwan* (Routledge, 2016), pp. 22-35.

Week 4 Korea: Colonialism, Resistance, War

Tue., 1/31: Inyeop Lee, “Legacies of Japanese colonial rule and the Korean War”, in Yangmo Ku, Inyeop Lee, and Jongseok Woo, *Politics in North and South Korea: Political Development, Economy, and Foreign Relations* (Routledge, 2017), pp. 11-28.

Thu., 2/2: Dennis L. McNamara, “Comparative Colonial Response: Korea and Taiwan”, *Korean Studies*, Vol. 10 (1986), pp. 54-68.

PART III: STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES

Week 5 The East Asian Developmental State

Tue., 2/7: Chalmers Johnson, “The Developmental State: Odyssey of a Concept”, in: Meredith Woo-Cumings, ed., *The Developmental State* (Cornell University Press, 1999), pp. 32-60.

Thu., 2/9: Wonik Kim, “Rethinking Colonialism and the Origins of the Developmental State in East Asia”, *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, Vol. 39, No. 3 (2009), pp. 382-399.

Week 6 Authoritarianism in South Korea and Taiwan

Tue., 2/14: Fell, Chapter 2, “Authoritarian rule: The politics of martial law in Taiwan”, pp. 11-32.

Thu., 2/16: Timothy C. Lim, “Power, capitalism, and the authoritarian state in South Korea”, *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, Vol. 28, No. 4. (1998), pp. 457-483.

Week 7 Democratization I: Japan

Tue., 2/21: Dan Slater and Joseph Wong, *From Development to Democracy: The Transformations of Modern Asia* (Princeton, 2022), Chapter 1 "Democracy through Strength", pp. 1-26.

Thu., 2/23: Slater and Wong, Chapter 3, "Japan: Asia's first democratic developmental state", pp. 58-87.

Week 8 Democratization II: South Korea and Taiwan

Tue., 2/28: Slater and Wong, Chapter 4, "Taiwan: The Exemplar of Democracy through Strength", pp. 88-119.

Thu., 3/2: Slater and Wong, Chapter 5, "South Korea: Democracy in Fits and Starts", pp. 120-149.

Week 9 Debates (Tue., 3/7 & Thu., 3/9)

No readings. We will hold our assessed debates.

SPRING BREAK (3/13 - 3/18)

PART IV: ACTORS

Week 10 Political Parties

Tue., 3/21: Gaunder, Chapter 5, "Political Parties", pp. 49-67.

Thu., 3/23: Bruce Jacobs, "Taiwan during and after the democratic transition (1988-2016)", in: Gunter Schubert, ed., *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Taiwan* (Routledge, 2016), pp. 51-67.

Week 11 Civil Society and Social Movements

Tue., 3/28: Yoonkyung Lee, "Diverging Patterns of Democratic Representation in Korea and Taiwan: Political Parties and Social Movements", *Asian Survey*, Vol. 54, No. 3 (May/June 2014), pp. 419-444.

Thu., 3/30: Jai Kwan Jung, "The candlelight protests in South Korea: a dynamics of contention approach", *Social Movement Studies* (2022), pp. 1-19.

PART V: ISSUES

Week 12 **Selected Topic #1 (Tue., 4/4 & Thu., 4/6)**
Readings tbc

Week 13 **Selected Topic #2 (Tue., 4/11 & Thu., 4/13)**
Readings tbc

Week 14 **Selected Topic #3 (Tue., 4/18 & Thu., 4/20)**
Readings tbc

Building on the knowledge acquired up to this point, the final three weeks will be dedicated to the analysis of different issues relevant to the contemporary politics of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. The class will be presented with a choice of different topics such as nationalism, memory, transitional justice, demographic change, gender, LGBTQ, and environmental politics. Three topics will be selected by vote in week 10 after spring break.

The following is a selection of readings that we could focus on:

Nationalism and National Identity

Christopher R. Hughes, "National Identity", in: Gunter Schubert, ed., *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Taiwan* (Routledge, 2016), pp. 153-168.

Emma Campbell, "The end of ethnic nationalism? Changing conceptions of national identity and belonging among young South Koreans", *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (July 2015), pp. 483-502.

Kristin Surak, *Making Tea, Making Japan: Cultural Nationalism in Practice* (Stanford University Press, 2012).

Kristin Surak, "Japan, Land of the Rising Right", in: Boris Vormann and Michael Weinman, eds., *The Emergence of Illiberalism* (Routledge, 2020)

Rwei-Ren Wu, "The Lilliputian dreams: preliminary observations of nationalism in Okinawa, Taiwan and Hong Kong", *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol. 22, No. 4 (October 2016), pp. 686-705.

Sang Mi Park, "The Paradox of Postcolonial Korean Nationalism: State-Sponsored Cultural Policy in South Korea, 1965–Present", *Journal of Korean Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (2010), pp. 67–93.

Memory and Transitional Justice

Cheng-Yi Huang and Yi-Li Lee, "Constitutional Divergence and Transitional Justice in South Korea and Taiwan", in: Cheng-Yi Huang, ed., *Constitutionalizing Transitional Justice: How Constitutions and Constitutional Courts Deal with Past Atrocity* (Routledge, 2022), pp. 57-93.

Mikyoung Kim, *Routledge Handbook of Memory and Reconciliation in East Asia* (Routledge, 2016).

Environmental Politics

Dafydd Fell, *Taiwan's Green Parties: Alternative Politics in Taiwan* (Routledge, 2021).

Mary Alice Haddad, "Paradoxes of democratization: Environmental politics in East Asia", in: Paul G. Harris and Graeme Lang, eds., *Routledge Handbook of Environment and Society in Asia* (Routledge 2014), pp. 86-104.

Sung Chull Kim and Yousun Chung, "Dynamics of Nuclear Power Policy in the Post-Fukushima Era: Interest Structure and Politicisation in Japan, Taiwan and Korea", *Asian Studies Review*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (2018), pp. 107-124.

Gender

Robin M. LeBlanc, "The politics of gender in Japan", in: Victoria Bestor, Theodore C. Bestor and Akiko Yamagata, eds., *Routledge Handbook of Japanese Culture and Society* (Routledge 2011), pp. 116-128.

Doris T. Chang, "Studies of Taiwan's Feminist Discourses and Women's Movements", *International Journal of Taiwan Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1, (2018), pp. 90-114.

LGBTQ

Adam Chen-Dedman, "Seeing China differently: National contestation in Taiwan's LGBTQ (tongzhi) movement", *Nations and Nationalism* (March 2022), pp. 1– 18.

Mark McLelland, "Japan's queer cultures", in: *Routledge Handbook of Japanese Culture and Society* (Routledge 2011), pp. 140-149.

Joe Phillips and Joseph Yi, "Queer Communities and Activism in South Korea: Periphery-Center Currents", *Journal of Homosexuality*, Vol. 67, No. 14 (2020), pp. 1948-1973.

Religion

André Laliberté, "Religion and Politics", in: Gunter Schubert, ed., *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Taiwan* (Routledge, 2016), pp. 326-341.

Ji Yeon Hong and Christopher Paik, "Hate thy communist neighbor: Protestants and politics in South Korea", *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, Vol. 186 (2021), pp. 707-723.

Demographic Change

Emiko Ochiai and Leo Aoi Hosoya, eds., *Transformation of the Intimate and the Public in Asian Modernity* (Brill, 2014).

Yi-Yin Lin and Chin-Shan Huang, "Aging in Taiwan: Building a Society for Active Aging and Aging in Place", *The Gerontologist*, Vol. 56, No. 2 (April 2016), pp. 176–183.

The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus during the semester.