

**Course Title:** NATION, STATE AND “GLOBAL” SOCIETY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA  
**Meeting Times:** Mondays, 11 am to 12:50 pm  
**Instructor:** Kristy Kelly (office: 906 IAB; email: kk2772@columbia.edu)  
**Office Hours:** Mondays, 1 – 3pm and by appointment  
**Credits:** 3-credits

## **PREREQUISITES**

This course does not presume any previous experience in Southeast Asian studies.

## **COURSE OVERVIEW**

This course will examine Southeast Asia as a region, from intersecting historical, cultural, political and economic perspectives. We will take as our starting point that transnational processes have shaped and continue to shape personal biographies, specific nation-building projects and international economic and political relations. This course draws on in-depth field work from the social sciences, and takes an intersectional approach (race, class and gender), to introduce students to how transnational processes of globalization – namely economic integration, cross-border migrations, and technological innovations – are shifting what it means to be “global” in Southeast Asia. This course will examine the challenges local communities face in managing education, health care, their environment, borders, capital and families in the context of increasing urbanization, immigration and digitization. Throughout the course, students will be asked to critically examine how global-local binaries have been constructed to explain social change, what relationship this has to how change is actually experienced at different levels of social scale, and how these binaries are being resisted, challenged, ignored and transformed in social science research in and about Southeast Asia.

This course is a heavy reading and writing course. Students should be prepared to work hard, and contribute to class discussions. The course will be conducted in seminar style, with students taking the lead in directing class discussion. Most of the course readings are ethnographies, giving students an in-depth look at issues, as well as presenting the theoretical and methodological challenges of studying globalization.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING**

### CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION (30% OF TOTAL GRADE):

*Attendance and Participation (10% of total grade):* Attendance will be recorded; more than two absences will significantly lower a student’s final grade. Students are expected to read the assigned texts BEFORE class, to think seriously and critically, and to share their ideas in class. Students will be awarded marks for participating actively in seminars (not just attending). If I perceive a pattern of neglect in this area, I reserve the right to unilaterally drop you from the class. I may also hold unscheduled “pop” quizzes on the readings.

*Preparation and Postings (10% of total grade):* In order to kick-start discussions each week, students are expected to post brief reflections about each week’s readings, or questions that you want answered. Students are expected to post on the discussion board at least 10 weeks throughout the semester. All postings must be submitted before 6 PM on the Sunday before class. We will use the postings to start off our discussions each week, and so reading each others’ postings (and/or responding to them) is

encouraged. Responses to others' reflection posts or questions can count toward students' "posts." More information will be provided the first day of class.

*Presentation of a Reading (10% of total grade):* A part of each student's grade will be based on their facilitation of a reading identified in the syllabus (half of the attendance/participation grade). The expectation is that, in a creative manner, students will introduce key themes from the reading and raise questions prompting discussion. Students are not being asked to lecture about the material, nor review what others have already read, but rather to spark discussions on specific issues which they identify as being important. Each student will be required to give one brief oral critical presentation of 10 minutes length. *Students are required to prepare a single-sided sheet highlighting the main points* they wish to make in their presentation. They should make enough copies to distribute to all class members. Depending on the number of students enrolled, students may work in teams.

➤ A Note on "Doing the Readings":

*Reading is an active and interactive process between the reader and the text.* If you're really reading a text, you are reacting and interacting with it (this is why some people find it so challenging NOT to write in their textbooks!). I've included a wide range of texts from different social science disciplines, historical time periods, and countries covering a variety of issues. This is to provoke a wide range of responses from readers.

*Reading should also be a reflective process.* To really understand a text deeply, it is usually necessary to read it and think about it, then read it again, discuss it with others, write about it and read it again. I've found that even after many readings, when I read a text in order to explain it to someone else, I get new perspectives on the author's arguments and assumptions, on the text's strengths and weaknesses.

*So when I say "do the readings," I mean "engage yourself with the ideas of the texts."* I understand that some of the texts are quite complex and that not all of them are entertaining. But struggle is part of the reading experience. If something's not clear, if it's confusing, talk about it with others outside of class, and/or bring it up in class. As I mentioned above, taking notes on a text while you read it or re-read it is also a very good way to engage the text and to make sure you understand it.

THREE RESPONSE PAPERS (50% OF TOTAL GRADE):

Response papers should reflect a thoughtful and considered comment on one reading we have done for class. Consider response papers the equivalent of an exam question – where you get to choose or write the question (and stating the question should always be your first paragraph). While you can focus on only one author's argument, how you address it should bring in at least two other readings and show how they are similar or different. Each response paper must be 5-6 double-spaced pages, the first due by the end of week 6, at least two completed by the end of week 11, and all three completed by the end of week 16. The first paper is worth 10% of the total grade and the second and third papers are worth 20% respectively. Additional guidance will be provided in class and can also be found at the end of this syllabus.

Papers will be graded on the substance of the paper, thoroughness of thought and presentation of the ideas. Papers should be more than simply a report of what was read, but instead demonstrate students' own understanding of questions or issues raised in the material. Papers should go beyond descriptive analysis to advance a particular argument, supported by evidence, leading to a conclusion or

demonstrating the need for further research. Late submissions will result in grade reductions for a full-mark per day (e.g. an “A” will be reduced to “B” if submission is one day late). Further guidelines are attached at the end of this syllabus and will be discussed in class.

➤ **GRADING STANDARDS FOR RESPONSE PAPERS:**

A: The argument is clearly articulated and logically developed, using relevant evidence. The evidence used is of high quality, cleverly ordered to support the argument with an original and creative synthesis of materials and displaying understanding of wider issues. The presentation is of high standard.

B: The argument is well proposed, but the structure is not fully developed. The evidence used is quite extensive but sources are not fully utilized which limits the ability to be creative and deal with a full range of issues. The presentation is solid but can be improved.

C: The argument is satisfactory, with some limitations, but the structure is not well thought out. The evidence used is adequate, but insufficient to develop fully the argument or display much originality. The presentation is adequate and could be improved.

D: While the essay displays a basic understanding of the subject, the argument lacks coherence and logical development. The evidence provided is basic or does not sufficiently support the argument nor display originality or understanding of wider issues. The presentation is not of sufficient standard.

F: The presentation is well below acceptable standard. The essay is incoherent with glaring misunderstandings.

FINAL PROJECT (20% OF TOTAL GRADE):

This is the students’ opportunity to conduct a 15-20 minute section of class through a “show and tell” format. Select something which has an audio/visual component that relates to globalization, transnationalism, and Southeast Asia. Examples include TV or radio commercials, magazine or newspaper clippings or advertisements, songs, music videos, photographs, art, movie clips, websites, data reports, etc. Bring your item to class in a form so that everybody can see/hear it at the same time, For instance, record a commercial or film clip onto a USB or make copies of print items enough for everyone in class. In an oral presentation, analyze the item you selected. Dissect its details, nuances, symbolism. Discuss how it relates to at least three points from our readings and class discussions this semester. Tell us how your reading reflects or challenges dominant understandings of globalization and state-society-nation relations. Provide a 5-6 page double spaced written analysis to the Professor at the time of your presentation.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

The School of International & Public Affairs does not tolerate cheating and/or plagiarism in any form. Those students who violate the Code of Academic & Professional Conduct will be subject to the Dean’s Disciplinary Procedures. Cut and paste the following link into your browser to view the Code of Academic & Professional Conduct online.

[http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources\\_services/student\\_affairs/academic\\_policies/deans\\_discipline\\_policy.html](http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources_services/student_affairs/academic_policies/deans_discipline_policy.html)

Please familiarize yourself with the proper methods of citation and attribution. The School provides some useful resources online; we strongly encourage you to familiarize yourself with these various styles before conducting your research:

[http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources\\_services/student\\_affairs/academic\\_policies/code\\_of\\_conduct.html](http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources_services/student_affairs/academic_policies/code_of_conduct.html)

Violations of the Code of Academic & Professional Conduct should be reported to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **WEEK 1 (JAN 23): INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE**

- Anderson, Benedict (1991). "The origins of national consciousness," chapter 3 in *Imagined Communities*. New York, NY: Verso.

### **WEEK 2 (JAN 30): STUDYING SOUTHEAST ASIA AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES**

- Appadurai, Arjun. 1996. "Disjuncture and difference in the global cultural economy," in *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Appadurai, Arjun. 2000. "Grassroots globalization and the research Imagination" *Public Culture* 12(1): 1-19.

### **WEEK 3 (FEB 6): NATION FORMATION AND GEO-POLITICS: PRODUCING THAILAND**

- Winichakul, Thongchai. 1994. *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of the Nation*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

### **WEEK 4 (FEB 13): GOVERNING BORDERS: NATIONALISM AND TERRITORIALITY IN BORNEO**

- Ishikawa, Noboru. 2010. *Between Frontiers: Nation and Identity in a Southeast Asia Borderland*. Nordic Institute for Asian Studies.

### **WEEK 5 (FEB 20): GOVERNING MODERNITY: ENGINEERING INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE MEKONG DELTA**

- Biggs, David. 2011. *Quagmire: Nation-Building and Nature in the Mekong Delta*. University of Washington Press.
- February 21<sup>st</sup> – noontime brownbag with David Biggs at Weatherhead East Asian Institute (918)

**Paper #1 due in the course dropbox by 6pm, Friday, February 24<sup>th</sup>**

### **WEEK 6 (FEB. 27): GOVERNING BODIES: THE POLITICS OF MEDICINE IN COLONIAL AND POST-COLONIAL CAMBODIA**

- Ovensen, Jan and Ing-Britt Trankell. 2010. *Cambodians and Their Doctors: A Medical Anthropology of Colonial and Post-Colonial Cambodia*. Nordic Institute for Asian Studies

### **WEEK 7 (MAR 5): GOVERNING MODERNITY: GENDER, EDUCATION AND COLONIAL SUBJECT IN BURMA**

- Ikeya, Chie. 2002. *Refiguring Women, Colonialism and Modernity in Burma*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

WEEK 8 (MAR 12): SPRING BREAK (NO CLASS)

WEEK 9 (MAR 19): GOVERNING INDUSTRIALIZATION: FROM FARMS TO FACTORIES IN MALAYSIA

- Ong, Aihwa. 1987. *Spirits of Resistance and Capitalist Discipline: Factory Women in Malaysia*. New York: State University of New York Press.

WEEK 10 (MAR 26): GOVERNING MIGRATION: CAREWORK AND SOCIAL RELATIONS

- Parrenas, Rhacel Salazar. 2001. *Servants of Globalization: Women, Migration and Domestic Work*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Lan, Pei-Chia. 2006. *Global Cinderellas: Migrant Domestic Workers and Newly Rich Employers in Taiwan*. Duke University Press.

WEEK 11 (APR 2): GOVERNING MODERNITY: YOUTH, MIGRATION AND HIV/AIDS IN SOUTHWEST CHINA

- Liu, Shao-hua. 2010. *Passage to Manhood: Youth Migration, Heroin and AIDS in Southwest China*. Stanford University Press.

WEEK 12 (APR 9): GOVERNING THE ENVIRONMENT: NATIONAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN INDONESIA

- Tsing, Anna. 2005. *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

WEEK 13 AND 14 (APR 16 AND 23): GOVERNING AID AND DEVELOPMENT: CAMBODIA AND EAST TIMOR

- Hughes, Caroline. 2009. *Dependent Communities: Aid and Politics in Cambodia and East Timor*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell Southeast Asia Program.

WEEK 15 (APR 30): TRANSNATIONAL FAMILIES, CORPORATE ELITES AND COSMOPOLITAN CITIZENS IN MALAYSIA

- Ong, Aihwa. 1999. *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality*. Duke University Press.

Week 16 (May 7): Mapping our own Trans-local Locations

- In-class presentation of final projects

## GENERAL ADVICE REGARDING GRADING AND COURSE PERFORMANCE

Papers are graded NOT on the basis of the position you take, but on how well you show you (1) understand what the authors you read are saying and can express their main points in your own words, (2) can compare and contrast their arguments and approaches, and (3) develop your own reasoning to consider the implications that you consider important and to the empirical world that their theoretical work is supposed to help explain. Good theory is coherent, applicable and helps to generate new insight. This is what you should look for in what you are reading and what you should try to demonstrate in what you are writing.

Your own position should always be expressed in terms of this reasoning process, not be just an isolated statement of your previous ideas or sentiments. It should be clear not only if you agree or disagree with a specific point, but why and how you informed your judgment. You need not discuss every author you read (indeed, this would be impossible), but you should use the opportunity to show (1) that you have read the assigned material and can choose the most relevant to the points you want to make, (2) that you have thought long and hard enough about the readings to have a point that you want to make, and (3) that you are able to muster evidence for supporting your point (and deal with evidence that doesn't) in a fair and thoughtful way. Your argument must be your own; plagiarism or academic dishonesty of any kind is grounds for a failing grade in the course.

Written assignments will be graded based on the following criteria:

- a) *Quality of Ideas and Logic of Argument*: Range and depth of argument; logic of argument; quality of analysis and original thought; appropriate sense of complexity of the topic; fulfillment of the assigned task.
- b) *Organization and Development*: Effective title or introductory question that the paper aims to answer; clarity of thesis statement; logical and clear arrangement of ideas; effective use of transitions; unity and coherence of paragraphs; good development of ideas through supporting details and evidence.
- c) *Clarity and Style*: Ease of readability; appropriate voice, tone and style for assignment; clarity of sentence structure; gracefulness of sentence structure; appropriate variety and maturity of sentence structure.
- d) *Sentence Structure and Mechanics*: Grammatically correct sentences; absence of comma splices, run-ons, fragments; absence of usage and grammatical errors; accurate spelling; careful proofreading; attractive and appropriate manuscript form; accurate and appropriate use of documentation (in-text cites, footnotes and/or bibliography as needed).

The same criteria are used in evaluating your response to the take-home final exam question at the end of the semester and of the response papers you write where you get to pose the question you want to answer. The main difference is that in the response papers you have to begin by stating the question clearly, and in the take-home exam, I will give you the question(s).

Clarity and organization count. Be sure that your response papers and the final exam begin with a clear statement of what you want to argue and end with a conclusion about the readings in relation to this argument. Incoherent or ungrammatical sentences, paragraphs without topic sentences, and other forms of sloppy writing make it impossible to present a clear argument. Nearly everyone can benefit

from reviewing their writing with the Writing Center – it is a wonderful resource that is available to help you improve your writing (and hence your grade). But they can't help you if you wait until the last minute. You can and should plan ahead and (gasp!) get the essays done early; you can have them checked over and turned in anytime before the cutoff dates. They will be graded and returned to you ASAP, not at the cutoff dates.

Late papers will be penalized by a grade per day, except in those rare cases where an unforeseeable, extensive and documented problem crops up (e.g. illnesses of more than a week). You should be planning ahead and turning in your response papers or short stories well before the cut-off dates. This gives you latitude to accommodate the ordinary crisis and illnesses that turn up and to use writing resources on campus to best advantage.

If you need accommodation to meet these requirements, please consult the appropriate resources on campus and speak with me about it right away. In general, my door is open not only during office hours, but at other times as well. Come talk to me earlier rather than later about understanding the substantive issues in the course and/or meeting the requirements.