

Syllabus: GGR342 The Changing Geography of Southeast Asia

University of Toronto, Fall 2020

Thursday 3pm EST

Instructor

Zachary Anderson

Instructor Email: z.anderson@utoronto.ca

Office Hours: Drop-in office hours on BbCollaborate after the Question period on Thursdays at 3pm EST, and by appointment.

Teaching Assistants

Adrian Khan – adri.khan@mail.utoronto.ca



Singapore's Skyline

Course Description

In this course we will explore the human geography of Southeast Asia, with a particular emphasis on the changing relationships between societies and their environments. The concept of a region called “Southeast Asia” emerged as a strategic area during the Second World War, yet its remarkable diversity is at odds with such a simple classification. Modern-day Southeast Asia is characterized by incredible social, cultural, political, economic and physical diversity, and is shaped simultaneously by a wealth of natural resources, significant capital accumulation, and endemic poverty. This course will use an issue-oriented approach to develop your understanding of the challenges facing people, organizations and governments in the region, and allow you to reflect on Southeast Asia’s complex relationship with the rest of the world. We will focus in particular on the accelerated economic, social and environmental transformations which have taken place in Southeast Asia since the Second World War, using examples from the 11 nation-states comprising Southeast – Brunei, Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor, and Vietnam – to examine the challenges posed by rapid urbanization, industrialization and rural agrarian transformation.

Overall, the aim of the course is to provide an overview of the debates that animate the field of Southeast Asian studies from a geographical perspective, and to provide an opportunity for students to think critically about the production of knowledge on peoples and environments of Southeast Asia. Moreover, this course will provide analytical tools with which to inquire more broadly into geographical change and development globally.

Due to the online nature of this course, students are required to have at their disposal the means to participate in live online discussions.

Learning Objectives

- 1) To develop a general understanding of the basic human geography of Southeast Asia, including the historical underpinnings of contemporary politics in the region.
- 2) To enhance student' understanding of the importance of Southeast Asia as a world region and critically examine the ways that transnational political, economic and cultural forces and events have shaped modern Southeast Asia.
- 3) To identify and evaluate various analytical and critical perspectives in the political, cultural, and economic geography of Southeast Asia, and to think broadly about the idea of 'development' as it relates to Southeast Asia.

Course Organization

Access to Course Materials & Readings

There is no required textbook for this course. Readings for this course are drawn from peer-reviewed journal articles and books, and scanned copies of each text will be available through the course Quercus page, through the University of Toronto Libraries Website. See "Reading List" below. For background reading, students are encouraged to consult Rigg, J. (2013). *Southeast Asia: A region in transition*, and McGregor, A. (2008). *Southeast Asian Development*.

Submissions

All work will be submitted via Quercus. Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site. Students are permitted, to opt-out of using Turnitin. If you would prefer not to submit your assignments through Turnitin, please contact me directly to arrange an alternative submission process. If you choose to opt out, please let me know well in advance of submitting assignment.

Assignments and Evaluation

Key Dates

1. Reading Responses	11%	Weekly, except week 1
2. Discussion Reports & Participation	22%	Weekly
3. Group Country Report	12%	09 October
4. Paper Proposal	10%	23 October
5. Research Paper	25%	04 December
6. Take-home Final Assessment	20%	TBA

Assignment Details

Assignment 1 – Reading Responses

Due every week, excluding week 1, 11%

Each week you are required to submit a brief reading response about that week's readings (see Reading List below) to your group's discussion board before your group meeting. The reading report will require you to paraphrase the main arguments presented in the readings and identify one insightful point and one "muddy" or unclear point you were left with after completing the readings. The purpose of these assignments is to help students learn how to read more actively and synthesize information across different readings. More detailed instructions will be available in the assignment guide posted to Quercus. No late submissions will be accepted.

Assignment 2 – Discussion Report

Due weekly, 22%

You will be divided into groups of 5-6 people for the duration of the semester. Students will be expected to meet with their group at least once per week to discuss that week's readings and video module(s), complete a weekly discussion report, and complete any assigned activities. Depending on the number of students in your group, you will be expected to lead your group's discussion and submit your group's discussion report **at least once** over the course of the semester. Each group will need to negotiate these responsibilities independently. Group discussion reports will be posted to a weekly shared discussion board on Quercus by **11:59pm every Friday**, Toronto time. More detailed instructions will be available in the assignment guide posted to Quercus. No late submissions will be accepted.

Assignment 3 – Country Profile

Due 09 October, 12%

This is a group assignment that will help to prepare you to work on your final research paper, assuming you choose a topic related to the country your group has been assigned. The main purpose of this assignment is to help you practice general academic research skills and familiarize yourself with issues affecting a specific country. Your group will submit a 1500-2000-word profile of your assigned country through Quercus by 11:59pm, **October 9th**. More detailed instructions will be available in the assignment guide posted to Quercus.

Assignment 4 – Essay Proposal and Bibliography

Due 18 October, 10%

You will submit a 500-750-word paper proposal and bibliography through Quercus by 11:59pm, **October 18th**. More details will be provided in the Assignment Guide posted on Quercus.

Assignment 5 – Final Research Paper

Due 04 December, 25%

Your final research paper will be 2400-2600 words and will be due by 11:59pm on **December 04th**. You will submit through Quercus (see instructions below). Detailed instructions for this essay will be provided in an Assignment Guide posted on Quercus.

Assignment 5 – Final Assessment

Date TBA, 20%

This comprehensive test will cover all readings, video modules and group discussion material from the course, and will comprise a series of short answer questions and a longer essay section. It will be given as a take home test during the assessment period. Further details will be provided later in the semester.

Late Penalties

Unless otherwise noted, late assignments will be penalized 1 point of maximum total grade for every day late, including weekends. Assignments will not be accepted more than one week after the due date unless you have obtained prior permission from me in the case of documented illness or other extenuating circumstances.

Required Text

There is no required textbook for this course. Readings for this course are drawn from peer-reviewed journal articles and books, and scanned copies of each text will be available through the course Quercus page, through the University of Toronto Libraries Website. See “Reading List” below. For background reading, students are encouraged to consult Rigg, J. (2013). *Southeast Asia: A region in transition*, and McGregor, A. (2008). *Southeast Asian Development*.

Course Schedule

Week 1 – September 10

Course Introduction: Encountering Southeast Asia

Anderson, Z. (2020). This Syllabus!

Osborne, M. (2016). What is Southeast Asia? In *Southeast Asia: An Introductory History*, 1-17. St.

Leonards, NSW, Australia: Allen & Unwin. [Note: this reading is purposely simple]

Week 2 – September 17

Locating and Defining Southeast Asia

Van Schendel, W. (2002). Geographies of knowing, geographies of ignorance: Jumping scale in Southeast Asia. *Environment and Planning D*, 20(6), 647-668.

Kratoska, P. H., Raben, R., Schulte Nordholt, H. (2005). Locating Southeast Asia. In *Locating Southeast Asia: Geographies of Knowledge and Politics of Space*, 1-19. Singapore: Singapore University Press.

Week 3 – September 24

Political and Economic Backdrop

Lin Sien, C., & Perry, M. (2003). Introduction. In *Southeast Asia transformed: A geography of change* (pp. 1-35). Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

McGregor, A. (2008). Setting the scene for development: Pre-colonial and colonial Southeast Asia. Ch. 2 in *Southeast Asian Development* (pp. 19-42). New York: Routledge.

Week 4 – October 01

Populations, Ethnic Groups and States

Baird, I. G. (2016). Indigeneity in Asia: An emerging but contested concept. *Asian Ethnicity*, 17(4), 501-505.

Clarke, G. (2001). From ethnocide to ethnodevelopment? Ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples in Southeast Asia. *Third World Quarterly*, 22(3), 413-436.

Duncan, C. R. (2004). Legislating modernity among the marginalized. In *Civilizing the margins: Southeast Asian government policies for the development of minorities* (pp. 1-23). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Week 5 – October 08

Industrialization, Economic Development, and Social Change

McGregor, A. (2008). Introducing Southeast Asian development. In *Southeast Asian Development* (pp. 1-19). New York: Routledge.

Rigg, J. (2004). The factory world. In *Southeast Asia: The human landscape of modernization and development* (pp. 202-236). London: Routledge.

Week 6 – October 15

Land Use, Environmental Change, and Livelihood Strategies

Fox, J., Fujita, Y., Ngidang, D., Peluso, N., Potter, L., Sakuntaladewi, N., ... & Thomas, D. (2009). Policies, political-economy, and swidden in Southeast Asia. *Human Ecology*, 37(3), 305-322.

Li, T. M. (2018). After the land grab: Infrastructural violence and the “Mafia System” in Indonesia's oil palm plantation zones. *Geoforum*, 96, 328-337.

Padwe, J. (2011). Cashews, cash and capitalism in Northeast Cambodia. In C. Hughes & K. Un (Eds.), *Cambodia's economic transformation* (pp. 123-153). Copenhagen: NIAS Press.

Week 7 – October 22

Environmental Governance and the Politics of Sustainability

Astuti, R., & McGregor, A. (2017). Indigenous land claims or green grabs? Inclusions and exclusions within forest carbon politics in Indonesia. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 44(2), 445-466.

Dressler, W. (2014). Green governmentality and swidden decline on Palawan Island. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 39(2), 250-264.

Goldman, M. (2001). Constructing an environmental state: Eco-governmentality and other transnational practices of a ‘green’ world bank. *Social Problems*, 48(4), 499-523.

Week 8 – October 29

Mobility and Migration

Amster, M. H., & Lindquist, J. (2005). Frontiers, Sovereignty, and Marital Tactics: Comparisons from the Borneo Highlands and the Indonesia-Malaysia-Singapore Growth Triangle. *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology* 6(1), 1-17.

Yeoh, B. S., & Lam, T. (2016). Immigration and Its (Dis)Contents: The Challenges of Highly Skilled Migration in Globalizing Singapore. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 60(5-6), 637-658.

Week 9 – November 05

Megacities and Urbanization

Douglass, M. (2010). Globalization, mega-projects and the environment. *Environment and Urbanization ASIA*, 1(1), 45-65.

Harms, E. (2012). Beauty as control in the new Saigon: Eviction, new urban zones, and atomized dissent in a Southeast Asian city. *American Ethnologist*, 39(4), 735-750.

Shatkin, G. (2004). Planning to forget: Informal settlements as 'forgotten places' in globalising metro Manila. *Urban Studies*, 41(12), 2469-2484.

Week 10 – November 19

"Global China" in Southeast Asia

Miller, T. (2017). Introduction and Ch. 1. In *China's Asian Dream: Empire Building along the New Silk Road* (pp. 1–52). Zed Books.

Week 11 – November 26

The Geography of Tourism

Connell, J. (2017). 'Timeless Charm'? Tourism and development in Southeast Asia. In *Routledge Handbook of Southeast Asian Development* (pp. 153-168). Routledge.

Hampton, Mark P., and Amran Hamzah. 2016. "Change, Choice, and Commercialization: Backpacker Routes in Southeast Asia." *Growth and Change* 47 (4):556-571.

Richter, L. (2009). Tourism policy-making in southeast Asia: A twenty-first century perspective. In M. Hitchcock, V. T. King, & M. Parnwell (Eds.), *Tourism in southeast Asia: Challenges and new directions* (pp. 132-145). Copenhagen: NIAS Press.

Week 12 – December 03

Activism, Civil Society and Digital Futures of Asia

Lim, M. (2013). Many clicks but little sticks: Social media activism in Indonesia. *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 43(4), 636-657.

Postill, J. (2014). A critical history of internet activism and social protest in Malaysia, 1998-2011. *Asiascape: Digital Asia*, 1(1-2), 78-103.

Course Policies & Expectations

Communication

Email and Quercus correspondence should be carried out in a professional and courteous manner. I will respond to all emails within two working days but will generally not respond to emails on weekends or after regular work hours (9am to 5pm). Please be sure that the course code **GGR342** or "**Changing Geography of Southeast Asia**" appears in the subject line of your email. You should use your UofT email account for correspondences related to this course, as the use of non-UofT email accounts can result in lost messages.

Conduct

In order to foster a positive and collaborative learning environment and do well in the course you will be expected to:

- Be willing to see from new perspectives and challenge your own assumptions;

- Be prepared and ready to engage in online meetings with your discussion groups. This means completing all readings and assignments and being ready to pose questions, share ideas, discuss material, and listen to one another. Being frank in discussions is fine, but it is equally important that we are respectful of each other and learn how to constructively engage with the others' differing perspectives;
- Invest approximately 6-8 hours per week to complete the readings, take notes, watch the video modules and reflect before or after the weekly Question Period - this does not include the time needed to complete assignments. All readings are essential to this course and your attendance at weekly discussion group meetings is expected. Even if you find a particular reading challenging, you will benefit from working through it; you will not be equipped to participate without attempting to do the required readings.

Accessibility Services

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible. I will work with you and Accessibility Services to ensure you can achieve your learning goals in this course. Accessibility Services can be reached at:

<https://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>. Enquiries are confidential.

Extension Requests

Students are expected to complete all assignments by the dates indicated above. Extensions on assignments will be granted sparingly in the case of illness or other emergencies. Please notify me as soon as possible if you anticipate any problems meeting the deadlines outlined here, and no later than one week after the assignment deadline.

- If you require consideration for missed academic work for any reason (e.g., COVID, other illness or injury, family situation), you should report this through the online absence declaration (even though you may not officially be missing a class meeting). The declaration is available on ACORN under the Profile and Settings menu. You should then contact me as soon as possible.
- For non-medical emergencies, please contact your college registrar, who may be able to provide you with a letter documenting your situation;
- For accessibility-related extensions, please provide an Accessibility Services Letter;
- See the [general guidelines from FAS](#).

Regrade requests

All assignments will be marked carefully and according to clear guidelines. You are strongly encouraged to arrange an appointment with me or your TA for more details about an assignment. However, if you feel that the grade your work has been given is not an accurate reflection of the quality of that work, then you may request a re-appraisal. This request must be made to me by email and must include your justification for why your work deserves a second look.

Academic Integrity

While I encourage you to discuss the class topics and assignments with your classmates, I expect the work you submit to be your own. Plagiarism is quoting (or paraphrasing!) the work of another author,

including fellow students, without a proper citation. This includes not using quotations marks when using an author's exact words. Plagiarism and submitting an assignment for which you did not complete the work are both serious offences under university policy. It is also an offense to submit academic work for which you have already obtained (or are concurrently seeking) credit. For help with this, consult the "[Rules and Regulations](#)" section of the FAS Calendar, and have a look at the useful document "[How not to plagiarize](#)".

Cheating and plagiarism are serious offences at the University of Toronto, and you should be familiar with and abide by the University's [Code of Behavior on Academic Matters](#).

Support

Academic Skills

Skills such as critical thinking, research, writing, reading, notetaking, and proper citing require practice. Resources are available at U of T for the development of your intellectual and professional skills and will help you far beyond any one course (or degree!). The following are strongly recommended: a) the [U of T Writing Centres](#), and b) the [Academic Success Centre](#). You can also consult your College Registrar's Office for information on writing skills labs and writing courses.

Language Skills

If English is your second (or third, or fourth!) language and you need some help developing your English language skills, please visit the University's [English Language Learning site](#) for a great list of the resources available. This service is also open to those who consider English their first language but find formal, academic English challenging and want to improve their skills.

Mental health and well-being

If you have mental health concerns, you are not alone! Over half of the undergraduates in a 2011 University of Alberta student survey reported feeling extreme anxiety or hopelessness¹. Please contact the [Health and Wellness Centre](#) for support.

¹ University of Alberta Executive Summary; ACHA-NCHA II, American College Health Association, Spring 2011, p. 15.