

SOC 751: Development in Asia, Section 1, CRN 89247, 3 Units, Spring 2014-2015
Wednesday, 12-2:30pm, Sakamaki B414
Professor: Sun-Ki Chai, Office Hours TTh 10:15-11:15am, Saunders Hall 237, 956-7234,
sunki{atmark}hawaii.edu

This course focuses on the institutions of Asian economic development, as well as their links to broader cultures and social structures. There are two ways to approach this issue: substantively and theoretically. Substantively, this means analyzing these economies according to various institutions such as firms, the state, and financial markets, describing how each institution functions distinctly within various Asian countries. Study of these institutions can be organized on a country-by-country basis, or on a comparative institution-by-institution basis. We will choose the second approach, as it provides more opportunity to generalize about the characteristics that Asian political economies share, as well as what separates them.

Within social science, one can detect two major theoretical approaches to explaining the distinctive characteristics of East Asia economies. Both rejecting conventional Neoclassical or Radical explanations, the "Confucian Capitalism" approach concentrates on social ties between individuals, families, and firms, while the "Developmental State" approach focuses on the interventionist policies of political regimes. The Confucian Capitalism and Developmental State approaches do not necessarily contradict one another. Both view themselves as alternatives to neoclassical explanations of economic development. However, their two literatures exist in relative isolation from one another, and have contrasting emphases. Most obviously, the Confucian Capitalism approach tends to be bottom-up in its view of society, while the Developmental State approach tends to be top-down. In addition, the Confucian Capitalism literature focuses on culture as the basis for decision-making, while the Developmental State literature focuses on rational calculation.

Among the questions that we will attempt to address: Is it meaningful to even talk about a single East Asian model of development? Have the theoretical challenges posed by these literatures been blunted by Japan's lingering "lost decade" and the region's financial shocks of the late 1990s? Does the growing dominance of the Chinese economy force us to reframe the theoretical debate away from an Asian model to a China-centered one? Is it possible to come up with a coherent synthesis of the two main approaches in response to this question.

The requirements for this course will be fairly flexible. A seminar writing assignments will account for 70% of the grade. Students will be responsible for writing a semester research paper in a format appropriate for scholarly publication in their academic discipline, with the subject matter being anything relating to the content of the course. It is expected that you will start formulating these papers early on in the course, and we will check on and discuss their status as the course proceeds. Furthermore, each week (excluding the first), student will take turns preparing a set of comments and study questions that we will use in guiding discussion. These students should be prepared to lead the initial phases of discussion that week. This will count for 30% of the grade.

We have one course reader, Andrew Walter and Xiaoke Zhang (Ed.), [East Asian Capitalism: Diversity, Continuity, and Change](#) (Oxford University Press, 2014). Most of the readings, however, will be articles that will be posted on the course Laulima website.

Tentative Weekly Topics:

WEEK 1 (1/14): Introduction to the Course

WEEK 2 (1/21): The State

WEEK 3 (1/28): Labor and Firms

WEEK 4 (2/4): Financial Institutions

WEEK 5 (2/11): Educational Institutions

WEEK 6 (2/18): Media and "Soft Power"

WEEK 7 (2/25): The International Dimension

WEEK 8 (3/4): Confucian Capitalism: Alternatives to the Protestant Ethic and "Asian Values"

WEEK 9 (3/7): Confucian Capitalism: Network Models and Non-Contractual Agreements

WEEK 10 (3/18): Developmental State: Pre- and Post-Crisis

Spring Recess (3/25)

WEEK 11 (4/1): Developmental State: Institutional Variations and "Neo-Authoritarianism"

WEEK 12 (4/8): The Rise of China and the Asian Development Model

WEEK 13 (4/15): Integrated Theoretical approaches to Asian Development

WEEK 14 (4/22) PAPER PRESENTATIONS

WEEK 15 (4/29) PAPER PRESENTATIONS

WEEK 16 (4/29) PAPER PRESENTATIONS