

# Introduction to East Asian Politics

## GO 256/Colby College

Spring 2021  
T&Th 11:00-12:15 [Remote]

### Professor Walter Hatch

[wfhatch@colby.edu](mailto:wfhatch@colby.edu)

skype address: walter.hatch

### Office Hours:

T and Th 4-5; and by app't.  
on-line most M and W evenings

### Course description:

Northeast Asia, comprising Greater China, Japan, and the two Koreas, is a growth center, a rare hot spot in an otherwise lukewarm global economy. Unfortunately, the region also happens to be a hot spot for possible security conflict. Economically, China is rising rapidly; politically, it has become more assertive in the region. For example, it has threatened to use military force to extinguish simmering aspirations for independence on Taiwan. In addition, North Korea has built a nuclear weapons program that has alarmed its neighbors, as well as the United States. Japan has territorial disputes with South Korea and China. And it squabbles loudly with both countries over how to remember a bloody past. This is a survey course with a twist. It introduces you to the domestic politics and foreign policies of nations/territories in this region, but then pushes you to apply what you have learned to four specific cases of international conflict in Northeast Asia. It thus spans two subfields in political science: comparative politics and international relations.

### Course objectives

My goals here are fourfold. By the end of the semester, I am hoping you will:

- 1) Understand more clearly the comparative politics and international relations of East Asia (**basic knowledge**)
- 2) Be able to think more deeply about the domestic politics and foreign relations in this region (**analysis**)
- 3) Be able to communicate more effectively (**written and oral exposition**)
- 4) Gain more practice in thoughtful, collegial discussion (**teamwork**).

### Class format:

This is a remote class, with power point/audio lectures available asynchronously. Our class meetings over zoom (usually no longer than 45 mins) will be primarily discussion sections. I expect you to review my presentations (in separate but accompanying pdf and m4a files), and complete any assignments (always some reading, sometimes a video; occasionally a quiz) before we gather. Expect to use our meetings to dig deeper, analyze difficult issues, ponder assigned materials. Coming prepared to these meetings will not only help raise your class participation grade; it will also make our time together much more productive and interesting.

### Class materials:

Three books are available at the Colby Bookstore:

- Howard W. French, *Everything Under the Heavens: How the Past Helps Push China's Push for Global Power* (Knopf, 2017)
- Richard McGregor, *Asia's Reckoning: China, Japan, and the Fate of U.S. Power in the Pacific Century* (Viking, 2017)
- Andrei Lankov, *The Real North Korea: Life and Politics in the Failed Stalinist Utopia* (Oxford University Press, 2014)

In addition, you will find some required readings on the course moodle. If they are not there, you can probably find them on the web, including the Colby College e-library.

## Requirements

- Five mini-exams on the Comparative Politics of China (Feb 28); Greater China, meaning Hong Kong and Taiwan (March 3); Japan (March 14); South Korea (March 21) and North Korea (March 21). These will be multiple choice exams, and you will have a very short time (maybe 5-8 minutes?) during a 24-hour window to complete them on moodle. Worth 5 percent each, or 25 percent total.
- Short paper (500 words) on comparative politics of East Asia (due March 25). More on this later. Worth 10%.
- Three of four Policy Briefs (due 4/11, 4/21, 4/28, 5/5). You get to choose which one to skip. These will be short (600 word max) statements on each of our case studies. You will summarize the case's background and contemporary context. Then you will take one of two positions offered in a prompt. You will be evaluated most heavily on how persuasive you are in your use of logic and evidence. (See handout on moodle: "Policy Briefs.") Each brief is worth 15%; in total, then they are worth 45% percent in total.
- Final exam sometime between May 14 and 19. On second half of course (foreign policy; IR). If I can safely travel to Maine, I might administer this in person. Otherwise, I will give you an hour to provide short answers to several questions, including one on the case of EA conflict about which you did NOT write a policy brief. More later. Worth 10%.
- Class participation. I value your *engaged presence* in class. Presence, of course, means attending our zoom sessions; in this case, more is better. (See below for rules on passing the course.) Being engaged means a) carefully listening to others in class, and trying to understand them; b) occasionally raising important questions or offering thoughtful comments – unless, of course, you are just shy. To determine whether folks are routinely quiet because they are shy or unprepared, I will occasionally assign quizzes on readings and lectures. These will be very short, and will need to be completed before class. Class participation, as a whole, is worth 10 percent.

## Hatch House Rules:

- In most cases, I do not give make-up examinations. Adjust your travel plans accordingly – or see me as early as possible if you think you have an unbreakable obligation. Typical exceptions to this rule include illness or injury that you can document (with, for example, a note from your doctor), or a verifiable family emergency.
- Assignments are due as designated in the syllabus. Any work received after the assigned time/date will be penalized at the rate of one-half letter grade per day. I will not extend deadlines, or waive the penalty, except in the extraordinary case of a verifiable family emergency or documented medical problem. Plan ahead and build a cushion into your time budget so that you aren't derailed by last-minute surprises (like a broken printer or a computer virus).
- You cannot pass this course without turning in all assignments and attending class routinely. Please do not ask my permission to miss a class meeting, or spend time explaining your absence. I am interested in you, but not the particulars of your daily schedule. Anyone who misses three (3) class meetings risks being dropped from the course.
- I will vigorously enforce Colby's policy on academic negligence and dishonesty. The former includes simple but apparently unintended mistakes like quoting sources without using quotation marks around the borrowed words; the latter includes cheating on exams and plagiarizing the work of others. The policy is outlined in your student handbook, in the 2020-21 course catalogue, and here:  
<http://www.colby.edu/academicintegrity/wp-content/uploads/sites/179/2019/09/StudentHandbook19AcademicIntegrity.pdf>
- If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism and/or how to avoid it, please refer to this site provided by Colby libraries:  
<https://libguides.colby.edu/avoidingplagiarism>
- Please treat other members of this class with respect. I will do my best to maintain the integrity of this community by discouraging any action or speech that denigrates the race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, social class, or political ideology of others.
- No audio, video, or photographs of the class may be recorded without my explicit consent.
- Please focus on class discussions (not Instagram, email, etc) during class. (Duh?)
- I reserve the right to modify the syllabus.

## Course plan:

### Week One: States and Regions

#### **February 11 (Th): Theories of Comparative Politics and International Relations**

No reading

### Week Two: Background

#### **February 16 (T): Conflict or Cooperation in East Asia**

John Mearsheimer, "The Gathering Storm: China's challenge to U.S. Power in Asia," in *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, Vol. 31, 2010, pp. 381-396

John Ikenberry, "Between The Eagle and the Dragon: America, China and Middle State Strategies in East Asia," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 130 No. 1, March 2016, pp. 9-43

David Kang, "Getting Asia Wrong," *International Security* vol. 27, no. 4, Spring 2003, pp. 57-85

#### **February 18 (Th): History**

French (class textbook), introduction and chapters 1-3 (pp. 3-126); feel free to skim chapter two, except pp. 62-73

McGregor, chapter 1 (pp. 19-38)

Walter Hatch, "Turning Asian, Turning Western: A Study of Japanese 'Identity' from a Gramscian Perspective," *Pacific Review*, Vol. 23 No. 3, July 2010, pp. 377-406

### Week Three: Politics of China

#### **February 23 (T): From Emperors to Chairmen**

Tony Saich, chapters 1, 4, 5 and 6, *Governance and Politics of China* (Palgrave, 2015), pp. 1-28, 85-190

Elizabeth Economy, "China's Neo-Maoist Moment: How Xi Jinping is Using China's Past to Accomplish What his Predecessors Could Not," in *Foreign Affairs*, October 1, 2019

Recommended: Francis Gérard, "History as a Mirror: Using China's Past to Shape its Future." DVD in Colby library

#### **February 25 (Th): State and Society in China**

Tony Saich, chapter 7, *Governance and Politics of China* (Palgrave, 2015), pp. 191-223

Chan Kwok-bun, "The dark side of a guanxi-based society," *China Daily*, February 3, 2012

[http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/weekly/2012-02/03/content\\_14529458.htm](http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/weekly/2012-02/03/content_14529458.htm)

Walter Hatch, "Activism with Chinese Characteristics: Navigating the Sloping, Uncertain Terrain of Civil Society in China," *The IUP Journal of International Relations*, January 2014, pp. 37-60.

#### **February 28 (Sunday): Complete first CP mini-exam on PRC**

Week Four: From Greater China to Japan

**March 2 (T): Politics of Taiwan and Hong Kong)**

Fang-Long Shih and Carol Jones, "Introduction to Taiwan and Hong Kong in Comparative Perspective: Centres-Peripheries, Colonialism, and the Politics of Representation," in *Taiwan in Comparative Perspective* (Vol. 5), July 2014, pp. 1-20

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/asiaResearchCentre/countries/taiwan/TaiwanProgramme/Journal/JournalContents/TCP5ShihJones.pdf>

John F. Copper, "Taiwan's Political Party System – Past, Present and Future," in *Taiwan Insight*, University of Nottingham, January 2018.

<https://taiwaninsight.org/2018/01/04/taiwans-political-party-system-past-present-and-future/>

Richard C. Bush, "Order from Chaos: Taiwan's president begins her second term with a call for unity," Brookings blog, May 21, 2020

<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2020/05/21/taiwans-president-begins-her-second-term-with-a-call-for-unity/>

Cal Wong, "What Exactly is Hong Kong's Legislative Council? Understanding LegCo as Hong Kong heads to the polls," *The Diplomat*, September 6, 2016

<https://thediplomat.com/2016/09/what-exactly-is-hong-kongs-legislative-council/>

Karen Cheung, "Living in Dark Mode," in *New York Times*, November 26, 2019

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/26/opinion/sunday/hong-kong-protest-elections.html>

Jeffrey Wasserstrom, Shui-yin Sharon Yam, "Beijing's Hong Kong Fables Have Unhappy Endings: Old narratives about the city fell apart this year, but new ones can still be born," *Foreign Policy*, December 30, 2020

<https://foreignpolicy-com.colby.idm.oclc.org/2020/12/30/beijing-hong-kong-fables-unhappy-endings/>

**March 3 (W): Complete second mini-exam on Taiwan and HK**

**March 4 (Th): Japan's 1955 System (and second CP mini-exam -- HK and Taiwan)**

Tomohito Shinoda, "Japanese Politics under the LDP," chapter one from *Contemporary Japanese Politics: Institutional Changes and Power Shifts* (Columbia UP, 2013), pp. 11-46

Richard Samuels, "Kishi and Corruption: An Anatomy of the 1955 System," in JPRI working paper no. 83, Japan Policy Research Institute, December 2001

<http://www.jpri.org/publications/workingpapers/wp83.html>

recommended: Yuta, "How Do Japanese elections Work?" (2017)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHRmbAyW5IM>

Week Five: More Japan

**March 9 (T): No class**

**March 11 (Th): From LDP to DPJ to LDP in Japan**

Kenji E. Kushida and Phillip Y. Lipsky, "The Rise and Fall of the Democratic Party of Japan," introduction to *Japan under the DPJ: The Politics of Transition and Governance* (Shorenstein Center, Stanford, 2013), pp. 3-42

<http://www.lipsky.org/kushidalipskydpjintro.pdf>

Amy Catalinac, "From Pork to Policy: The Rise of Programmatic Campaigning in Japanese Elections," *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 8 No. 1, January 2016, pp. 1-18

TASE Yasuhiro, "Breaking with the Abe Past: Policy Challenges for Prime Minister Suga Yoshihide," *Nippon.com*, September 17, 2020  
<https://www.nippon.com/en/in-depth/d00625/>

### **March 14 (Sunday): Complete third mini-exam on Japan**

Week Six: One Peninsula, Two Koreas

#### **March 16 (T): Politics of South Korea**

Louis D. Hayes, chapters 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 in *Political Systems of East Asia: China, Korea, and Japan* (ME Sharpe, 2012) pp. 83-115; and 131-139

Gi-Wook Shin and Rennie J. Moon, "South Korea After Impeachment," *Journal of Democracy*, 28:4, October 2017, pp. 117-131

recommended: Nathan Park, "South Korea is a liberal country now," *Foreign Policy*, April 16, 2020

<https://foreignpolicy-com.colby.idm.oclc.org/2020/04/16/south-korea-is-a-liberal-country-now/>

#### **March 18 (Th): Politics of North Korea**

Lankov (class textbook), *The Real North Korea*, introduction (pp. xiii-xvii), chapters 1-5, pp. 3-219

recommended: Daniel Gordon, "A State of Mind," DVD in Colby library

also here, in 10 min segments:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hOqBCDgfKMI&list=PL111392332614E618&index=3>

### **March 21 (Sunday): Complete fourth and fifth mini-exams (ROK and DPRK)**

Week Seven: Comparative Analysis

#### **March 23 (T): Similarities and Differences (plus fourth and fifth mini-exams – the two Koreas)**

Lowell Dittmer, 'Conclusion: East Asian Informal Politics in Comparative Perspective,' in Lowell

Dittmer, Haruhiro Fukui, and Peter N.S. Lee editors, *Informal Politics in East Asia* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 290-308

### **March 25 (Th): No class but comparative politics of EA paper is due**

Week Eight: IR of Asia; Who's in the Lead?

#### **March 30 (T): International Relations of Northeast Asia**

Richard Haas, "Asia's Scary Movie," *Foreign Affairs*, July 17, 2019

<https://www.cfr.org/article/asias-scary-movie>

Amitav Acharya, "Thinking Theoretically About Asian IR," in David Shambaugh and Michael Yahuda, *International Relations of Asia* (Rowan and Littlefield, 2014), pp. 59-89

McGregor (class textbook), introduction, chapters 2, 3, and 4 (pp. 1-15; 41-97)

#### **April 1 (Th) Foreign Policy of PRC**

French (class textbook), chapters 5 and 6

Ketian Zhang, "Cautious Bully: Reputation, Resolve, and Beijing's Use of Coercion in the South China Sea," in *International Security*, Vol. 44 No. 1, Summer 2019, pp. 117-159

Eleanor Albert, "The China-North Korea Relationship," CFR Backgrounder, June 25, 2019

<https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/china-north-korea-relationship>

Week Nine: IR of Greater China**April 6 (T): Foreign Policy of ROC (and perhaps the USA)**

Mumin Chen, “Embracing or Resisting the Giant Neighbor: Debates between KMT and DPP on Mainland Policy,” in *China Report*, Vol. 49 No. 4, 2013, pp. 399-411

Peter Hays Gries and Jenny Su, “Taiwanese Views of China and the World: Party Identification, Ethnicity, and Cross-Strait Relations,” in *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 14 No. 1, 2013, pp. 73-96

Tanner Greer, “Taiwan’s Defense Strategy Doesn’t Make Military Sense; But It Does Make Political Sense,” in *Foreign Affairs*, September 17, 2019.

Recommended: Fu-Lai Tony Yu and Diana S. Kwan, “Interpreting the Taiwan Strait Conflict: Taiwanese Versus Chinese Consciousness,” in *Contemporary Issues in International Political Economy*, pp. 149-174, May 2019.

**April 8 (Th): Case One -- Conflict over Taiwanese Sovereignty**

Denny Roy, “Prospects for Taiwan Maintaining its Autonomy Under Chinese Pressure,” *Asian Survey* 57:6, November/December 2017, pp. 1135-1158

Travis Sanderson, “Will Beijing’s Taiwan Strategy Backfire? China’s strategy of global diplomatic isolation will harm Chinese interests in the long run,” in *Diplomat*, September 24, 2019

<https://thediplomat.com/2019/09/will-beijings-taiwan-strategy-backfire/>

Richard C. Bush, “The United States Security Partnership with Taiwan,” Asian Alliances Working Paper #7, July 2016

<https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Paper-7v3.pdf>

David Sacks, “Biden Administration Sends Important Signals for the Future of U.S.-Taiwan Ties,” CFR blog, January 28, 2021

<https://www.cfr.org/blog/biden-administration-sends-important-signals-future-us-taiwan-ties>

Recommended: Frontline, “Dangerous Straits: Exploring the Future of US-China Relations and the Long Simmering Issue of Taiwan,” 2001.

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/china/>

**April 11 (Sunday by 5 pm): Policy brief #1 is due**Week Ten: Japanese Foreign Policy**April 13 (T): Foreign Policy of Japan**

McGregor (class textbook), chapters 5-7, pp. 98-165; chapter 10, pp. 212-229

Andrew Oros, “International and Domestic Challenges to Japan’s Postwar Security Identity: “Norm Constructivism and Japan’s New ‘Proactive Pacifism,’” in *Pacific Review* (28:1), 2015, pp. 139-160

**April 15 (Th): No Class**Week Eleven: Japan-China Conflict and Korea**April 20 (T): Case #2 – Conflict between Japan and China over War Memory (and Islands)**

McGregor (class textbook), chapters 8-9, pp 169-211; and chapters 11-15, pp. 230-332

Walter Hatch, “Bloody Memories: Affect and Effect of World War II Museums in China and Japan,” in *Peace & Change* (39:3), July 2014, pp. 366-394

recommended:

Yasukuni Jinja website:

<http://www.yasukuni.jp/~yusyukan/>

Nanjing Massacre museum (China Discovery) website:

<https://www.chinadiscovery.com/jiangsu/nanjing/nanjing-massacre-memorial-hall.html>

**April 21 (Wednesday by 5 pm): Policy brief #2 is due**

**April 22 (Th): Foreign Policy of ROK**

Ki-jung Kim, “Korean Foreign Policy: A Historical Overview,” in Chung-in Moon and M. Jae Moon, *Routledge Handbook on Korean Politics and Public Administration*, 2020 (google this)

Snyder et al, “Domestic Constraints on South Korean Foreign Policy,” CFR, January 2018.

[https://www.cfr.org/sites/default/files/report\\_pdf/Discussion\\_Paper\\_Series\\_Snyder\\_et\\_al\\_South\\_Korean\\_Constraints\\_OR.pdf](https://www.cfr.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/Discussion_Paper_Series_Snyder_et_al_South_Korean_Constraints_OR.pdf)

Sangbae Kim, “Roles of Middle Power in East Asia: A Korean Perspective,” in *EAI Report*, January 2014

Week Twelve: Japan-Korea Conflict and ROK Foreign Policy

**April 27 (T): Case #3 – Contested Rocks (Dokdo/Takeshima)**

Bec Strating, “Japan-South Korea: The Symbolic Politics of the Dokdo-Takeshima Dispute,” *The Interpreter*, Lowry Institute, December 6, 2017

<https://www.lowryinstitute.org/the-interpreter/symbolic-politics-dokdotakeshima-dispute>

Youngshik D Bong, “Built to last: The Dokdo territorial controversy; baseline conditions in the domestic politics and international security of Japan and South Korea,” in *Memory Studies*, Vol. 6 No. 2, April 2013, pp. 191-203

Ji Young Kim, “Territorial or Historical Dispute? The Dokdo/Takeshima Dispute, Symbolic Politics, and the Japan-South Korea Security Relationship in 2005-6,” a paper for the Association for Asian Studies conference, March 2011

Kimura Kan, “Why Can’t Seoul and Tokyo Get Along?” in *Nippon.com*, January 30, 2014

**April 28 (Wednesday by 5 pm): Policy brief #3 is due**

**April 29 (Th) at 8:30 pm: Foreign Policy of DPRK**

Lankov (class textbook), Interlude (pp. 221-230)

Ankit Panda and Vipin Narang, “Why North Korea is Testing Missiles Again,” in *Foreign Affairs*, May 16, 2019

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/north-korea/2019-05-16/why-north-korea-testing-missiles-again>

Seong-Ho Sheen, “Coping with the North Korean Survival Game: The Cheonan Incident and its Aftermath,” in *EAI Issue Briefing* No. MASI 2010-02, July 1, 2010

Jung-Chul Lee and Inwook Kim, “Making Sense of North Korea: How to Respond to Pyongyang’s Charm Offensive,” *Foreign Affairs*, January 21, 2015

<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/142798/jung-chul-lee-and-inwook-kim/making-sense-of-north-korea>

Scott Snyder, “What Kind of North Korea will Biden Face?” *CFR blog*, January 25, 2021

<https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/what-kind-north-korea-will-biden-face>

Week Thirteen: Nukes and a Wrap

**May 4 (T): Case #4 -- Conflict over nuclear weapons in Korea**

Lankov (class textbook), chapters 6-7 and conclusion, pp. 231-288

Victor D. Cha and David C. Kang, "The Debate over North Korea," in *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol 119, No. 2 (summer 2004), pp. 229-254

Walter Hatch, "North Korea is nuclear: Live with it, and help it feel less cornered," *Seattle Times*, August 22, 2017

<https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/north-korea-is-nuclear-live-with-it-and-help-it-feel-less-cornered/>

Edward Luttwak, "It's Time to Bomb North Korea," *Foreign Policy*, January 8, 2018

<http://foreignpolicy.com/2018/01/08/its-time-to-bomb-north-korea/>

recommended: Ariel Levite and Toby Dalton, "If Denuclearization is a Fantasy, what can North Korean Negotiations Achieve," *War on the Rocks*, January 31, 2020

<https://warontherocks.com/2020/01/if-denuclearization-is-a-fantasy-what-can-north-korean-negotiations-achieve/>

recommended: Discovery Channel (with NYT), "Nuclear Nightmare: Understanding North Korea"

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gapw\\_EAjkpE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gapw_EAjkpE)

**May 5 (Wednesday by 5 pm): Policy brief #4 is due**

**May 6 (Th): Wrap Up**

Beverly Loke, "China's rise and U.S. hegemony: navigating great power management in East Asia," *Asia Policy*, July 2019, pp. 41-60

McGregor (textbook: "Asia's Reckoning"), Afterword, pp. 333-355

French (textbook: "Everything Under the Heavens"), Conclusion, pp. 265-284

**Exam Period: Final**