GLOA 450 Peace and Cooperation in Northeast Asia

Thursdays 12:00-14:40

George Mason University Korea
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Office Hours: Wednesdays or by appointment

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Course Description

In today’s fast-changing world, East Asia emerges as a region of importance in terms of security and cooperation. The significance of this particular region lies in the fact that a mixture of the legacy of conflict and confrontation and potentials for growth and co-prosperity generates a complex picture of formal and informal multilateral arrangements for economic and security cooperation. Limiting to the major players influencing the peace/security landscape and shaping the regional order, the course will look at the history, development, conflicts, and cooperative relations among China, Japan, Korea, and the United States.

This course surveys the concepts of peace, security, and cooperation in the context of East Asia and explores ways in which sustainable peace and cooperative mechanisms could be facilitated in Northeast Asia. The first part of the course offers a theoretical and historical overview to conceptualize the peace that has characterized the East Asian region since the 1970s, and to seek various explanations for the regional transition from intense warfare to relative peace. It will also look at how the end of the Cold War and globalization have impacted this region to seek cooperation as well as competition for economic development and national security.

The second part of the course takes selective themes on the cases of challenges to regional peace and stability and multilateral efforts and peace initiatives attempting to resolve the problems. The cases will highlight the historical inheritance of identity, nationalism, trust issues, reconciliation posing challenges and limitations to the institutional settings for multilateral cooperation and sustainable peace. They will also bring out new challenges for the regional peace and stability rise from the fast-changing world order and the US-China rivalry.

This course aims to provide in-depth understanding and assessments of the current status of international relations in East Asia and seek ways to complement the existing regional cooperation and security apparatuses. A new conception of Northeast Asia Community building will be explored as a way to institutionalize the existing security and economic cooperation arrangements for peace and cooperation in the region. This interdisciplinary coursework is to encourage students to synthesize, compare and consolidate the various approaches, theories, and cases explored throughout the GLOA major with a focus on the East Asian region. This course is designed for higher-level undergraduate and graduate students to further develop research, critical thinking, writing, and presentation while preparing their dissertation on a similar subject or considering their future career in foreign policy areas, policy-making, and international organizations concerning East Asia.
Course Objectives

Upon completing this course, it is expected that students will be able to:

1. understand the current state of peace, security, and cooperation in East Asia and regional affairs.
2. apply knowledge and perspectives learned in Global Affairs to the East Asian region.
3. demonstrate critical thinking skills and solution-oriented analysis on the issues of global concerns.
4. acquire communication skills in both oral and written form.
5. conduct research on the topic of their interest with arguments, evidence, and methods.

Course Requirements

GLOA 400

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<th>Participation and assignments</th>
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<td>Short responses</td>
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<td>Case Presentation</td>
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- Participation and Topic Presentation (10%): Students are expected to participate in class as it demonstrates students’ independent thoughts on the subject matter. Attendance will be taken and reflected as part of the participation grade. Students will also be assigned to a topic to present summaries of the readings and materials, and to raise issues and questions. Each student will give a short presentation on the assigned theme based on the readings, lectures, and independent research during the synchronous meeting.

- Short Responses (20%): Most weeks will include a short response that you will need to complete. I will provide you a prompt and ask you to respond to it in some way. This activity may include watching a short video or a film, reading an article, or answering a set of questions. The instructions will be provided for you on Blackboard inside each week’s folder. These are critical thinking exercises that are meant to help build and justify viewpoints, encourage creative thinking, reach informed decisions, and apply the concepts and approaches that you have learned through the course material. They must be submitted by 11:59pm EST on Saturday each week.

- Exams (20%): There will be short essay exams to reflect the general topics we covered in the course.

- Case Presentation (20%): You are asked to do a presentation on the case(s) explored for your research paper - It could be considered as a briefing of your research. Presentations should be more in-depth, focused, and analytical than a research proposal, and it should have the theories, approaches, and case evidence, and possibly some findings. The presentation will be no more than 15 minutes. More detailed information will be found on BB.
- **Final project (30%)**: The final project can be either 1) a research paper or 2) Policy recommendations proposal with executive summary. This is an individual work, and it should be adapted to fit your interests and studies in your current degree program. The final project will be due **Dec. 5, 2022**. The topic/format of your choice should be confirmed by the instructor in advance. Research topic can address one the followings
  - Explore cases that can give some lessons or reference to your peace proposals for the Northeast Asian region.
  - Analyze a specific case of potential conflicts within the Northeast Asia region and attempts to resolve the conflict (e.g. security mechanisms, peace initiatives, multilateral talks, bilateral talks, Olympics)
  - Assess the prospect of the Northeast Asia community buildings in comparison to other regional communities that existed in the world.

The work should show originality, research effort, and in-depth analysis based on the contents learned throughout the course. The paper should not be longer than 3500 words. A proper and consistent citation style is required – Chicago style preferred. The paper should be submitted via Blackboard. The evaluation criteria and some samples of Policy Recommendation Brief can be found on BB.

**Readings**

Reflective reading is highly encouraged in this course. Its general purpose is to elicit your informed opinions about ideas presented in the text and to consider how they affect your interpretation. Reflective readings require you to do the following practice:

**Assess the text(s):**

1. What is the main point? How is it developed? Identify the purpose, impact and/or theoretical framework of the text.
2. What ideas stood out to me? Why? Were they new or in opposition to existing scholarship?

**Develop your ideas:**

1. What do I know about this topic? Where does my existing knowledge come from? What are the observations or experiences that shape my understanding?
2. Do I agree or disagree with this argument? Why?

**Make connections:**

1. How does this text reinforce my existing ideas or assumptions? How does this text challenge my existing ideas or assumptions?
2. How does this text help me to better understand this topic or explore this field of study/discipline?
Grading Scales

Grades will be calculated on a non-curved A-F scale:
- A (93-100) A-
- B+ (87-89) B (83-86) B-
- C+ (77-79) C (73-76) C-
- D (60-69) F (less than 60)
This class does not give 'I' (incomplete).

Class Policies

- Course Delivery: The course features mixed modalities of one synchronous session and asynchronous learning. One module cycle is from Monday to Friday. We will meet every Tuesday for presentations and discussions. Assignments, lectures, and assessments will be given asynchronously.
- Readings: All required readings should be completed before class. If you have any problem accessing the required readings, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.
- Absence: I will take the attendance. It is your responsibility to make up for the missed classes and assignments.
- Late Work Policy: Late work will never be accepted unless there is an extraordinary circumstance. Except in such cases, a penalty of a full letter grade may be assessed for each day the assignment is late.
- Electronic Devices: I strongly encourage students to keep cellphones, tablets, and laptops, out of sight for the duration of the class.
- Office hours and Email: I will be available to answer quick/short questions after each class. Students are also encouraged to meet me during the office hours to ask questions or discuss your work.
- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: Plagiarism will result in disciplinary action at the university level. When you use someone else's work, you will give that source full credit, typically in the form of an in-text citation and bibliographic reference. Make yourself familiar with the George Mason University Honor Code and the Plagiarism statement. [https://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm](https://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm)
- Special Needs and Concerns: If you have any special learning needs, please contact Disability Services at George Mason University to get proper assistance. Please let me know if you have any concerns about your learning.
- Commitment to Diversity: George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study, and personal growth. An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieving these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds, and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard, and respected. Please see [http://ctfe.gmu.edu/professional-development/mason-diversity-statement](http://ctfe.gmu.edu/professional-development/mason-diversity-statement) for the full GMU diversity statement.
Required readings


Most readings listed in the course outline are available through GMU library webpage (https://library.gmu.edu/). Get yourself familiar with finding these academic materials in the library. Those unavailable in the library or free online will be made available in Blackboard (“Readings” in ‘Course Contents’ tab).

Recommended books


Course Schedule

Topic 1. Conceptual and Historical Background

Module 1. Introduction and concepts (Aug. 25)
  - Why Northeast Asia?
  - What is peace? What is security? What is cooperation?

Module 2. The modern history of Northeast Asia (China, Japan, Koreas) (Sep. 1 & 8)
  - Post WWII / The Pacific era / Post Cold War / Globalization era / Now?

  ● Chienpin Li (2021) Rising East Asia, Sage Publishing.
  ● https://world101.cfr.org/rotw/east-asia

Q. What do Peace and Cooperation mean in the Asian context? What are the challenges?
**Topic 2. Explanations for Peace and Cooperation in East Asia**

**Module 3. Theoretical Explanations to Peace and Cooperation (Sept 15)**


**Q. What seems to be the most persuasive explanation for the peace in Northeast Asia?**

**Module 4. Changing regional order and Security cooperation (Sep 22 & 29)**

US-China relations / US alliances in Asia and Quad / Korea-Japan relations / Japan-China relations / Taiwan Strait relations / China-North Korea relations / China-South Korea relations / inter-Korean relations

Video : 2022 Asia forecast [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zPVT995nn5M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zPVT995nn5M)


**Q. Peace in East Asia: What is it? How it came about? Will it last?**

**Topic 3. Contemporary Challenges**

**Module 5. The Great Power Challenge (Oct 6 & 13)**

Video: Debate on containing China between John Mersheimer and David Kang: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wafCm3fmF7s

Video: Rise of China Ted Talk by Graham Allison https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDZAVNPbtBg


Q. How will the US-China Rivalry play out in East Asia?

Module 6. The Nationalist threat (Oct. 20)

Q. How can we work to build trust and cooperation in the region?

Topic 4. Initiatives for regional peace and stability: Challenges and Opportunities.

Module 7. Multilateral forms of cooperation (Oct. 27)
European Union, ASEAN


Q. What lessons can be drawn from other multilateral institutions? What can be proposed for Northeast Asia Community Building?
Module 8. The Nuclear Crisis and the Six-Party Talks (Nov.3)


Q. *What is the core issue and why it is difficult to be resolved? What are the other regional actors’ views and responses?*

Module 9. The Peace Initiatives (Nov. 10)

- Inter-Korea relations / Sunshine Policy / Peace Initiative / Sports
  - The Great Game (Full Episode): inside North Korea. Accessible via youtube.

Q. *What accounts to the failure of the engagement policy and peace initiatives by South Korea? What can be done to bring peace to the Korean Peninsula and stability to the Northeast Asian region?*


Video: 2016 Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Forum at CSIS Forum on Peace [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YAZwPtNXMYA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YAZwPtNXMYA)
Video: 2021 Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Forum [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSVGN7PsnTs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSVGN7PsnTs)

Concluding Module: Recommendations for Sustainable and Viable Peace (Dec. 1)
- In-class Exam

Final Paper Due (Dec. 5)