

POSC 355 – Politics of East Asia
(Fall 2017 Course Description)

This course examines the politics of East Asia through the lens of political history, political economy, and institutions. After a two-week general introduction to East Asia, we explore basic concepts such as legitimacy, development, and security. The remainder of the course is divided into three approximately equal sections on China, Korea, and Japan. For each country, we trace their political-historical development and analyze the social, political, and economic systems. For instance, we assess the role of government in economic development: Who or what should take credit for the 'miraculous' success of the East Asian economies? What role did political institutions, geopolitics, or culture play in aiding growth? We also explore each country's political systems and institutions. How does China's Communist party-state work and what have been the political outcomes of its rapid economic transformation? What, if any, are the democratization prospects of China? What contemporary issues and challenges do democratic Korea and Japan face and how do they try to address them?