

# **International Relations of South Asia**

**National Chengchi University**

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## **Course description**

For countries of South Asia, the quest for security – internal and external - overrides other concerns. As a region comprising different shades of political temperament and beset by every possible conventional (and non-conventional) security challenge – terrorism, non- proliferation, ethnic and religious conflicts, territorial disputes as also non-traditional security issues (effects of climate change, energy security and water disputes)- South Asia is fast becoming the central axis of global security concerns.

Geographically from west to east, the region stretches from Afghanistan to Myanmar and from south to north includes the island nations of Maldives and Sri Lanka to the Himalayan countries of Nepal and Bhutan. Much of the physical space of continental South Asia is dominated by India and to a lesser extent by Pakistan and Bangladesh. The South Asian region is host to a diverse set of political institutions and these exercise their influence on regional security issues and beyond.

For ardent followers of international politics and trends, the South Asian region strikes a bell for mostly negative value features – nuclear rivalry, terrorism, natural disasters, fragile institutions of governance, ethnic violence, widening economic disparities etc. News headlines are dominated by the surge in violence and wanton terrorism in Afghanistan and Pakistan, Maoist violence in India and Nepal, simmering ethnic tensions in Sri Lanka and the 'underdevelopment' trap that other countries of the region are facing.

## **Course objective**

The objective of this course is to understand the structures of governance, internal political developments and the innate influences that determine the international relations of South Asia at two levels – to the rest of the world and amongst themselves. The 'insecurities' influencing the behavior of each nation-state of the region towards the other and the commonalities that give South Asia a unique identity and expression in international politics are the highlights of this course.

To analyze the various strands influencing security issues in South Asia, this course adopts a multi-causal approach to understand the salient features of South Asia's international relations without

ignoring the existence of broader and constantly evolving relationships...A significant objective of the course is to integrate the different levels of approaching South Asia through a holistic prism. Challenging questions such as - *Why is South Asia host to 'negative value features' in security terms? In security terms, can South Asia evolve into a 'stable' region? Are there international relations debates in South Asia? What is the 'state' and what does the 'state' mean in South Asia? Does South Asia need better governance? Are current political structures in South Asia flawed? What is civil society in South Asia all about?* – are some of the critical issues that will be discussed and debated during the course.

In terms of innovation, this course emphasizes the importance of existing literature from the region that critically examines issues raised above, creating space for the generation of an entirely new set of constructs that could hypothetically be applied to the region. *This course will enhance the profile of NCCU as being the first university in Taiwan to offer a seminar course in English on the International Relations of South Asia. It will also enhance the knowledge base of students by informing, interpreting and debating contemporary issues of significance in security studies as applied in a South Asian context.*

### **Course requirements**

This course is tailored for graduate students with a background and interest in political science, international relations, diplomacy, history, sociology and policy studies. A broad reading and understanding of international relations in the post-world war phase and the politics of South Asia is expected.

### **Course evaluation**

#### **1. Class participation and attendance (25 %)**

Students will be divided into small groups and are expected to come up with a topic that has to be presented orally with the objective of generating a discussion. The topics will be decided after consulting the course instructor. The time schedule for presentation will be decided later.

Absence from class without any explanation will find a bearing in the overall grade.

#### **2. Book Review (15%)**

Students have to choose a book focusing on South Asia's international relations or politics for reviewing. The book to be reviewed has to be approved by the course instructor. The review is not expected to be more than 2500 words in length.

#### **3. Mid-term exam (20%)**

A mid-term examination comprising multiple choice and objective questions will be held in the 10<sup>th</sup> week of the course.

#### **4. Long Essay/Term paper/Research Paper (40%)**

This course is designed not only to acquaint course participants with the international relations of South Asia but also to provoke the inquisitiveness within them to critically examine themes and issues pertaining to the region. Fresh theoretical approaches, existing frameworks, contemporary issues, post-world war developments, the cold war in South Asia are broad templates that course participants must keep in mind while choosing a topic in consultation with the course instructor.

The text of the term papers should not exceed 6000 words and drafts are to be presented for the benefit of all participants. Each draft presentation should not exceed fifteen minutes and the time schedule will be decided later.

Guidelines for writing term papers will be issued separately.

#### **Recommended readings and internet sources**

##### **Books**

Ayesha Jalal, *Democracy and authoritarianism in South Asia: a comparative and historical perspective*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Lloyd I. Rudolph & Susanne Hoeber Rudolph, *Explaining Indian democracy : a fifty-year perspective, 1956-2006*, New Delhi : Oxford University Press, 2008.

Harsh V. Pant, *Contemporary debates in Indian foreign and security policy: India negotiates its rise in the international system*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

Atul Kohli, *Democracy and Discontent: India's growing crisis of governability*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2007. (Electronic Resource)

Imtiaz Ahmed (ed.), *Understanding terrorism in South Asia : beyond statist discourses*, New Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 2006.

Eric Gonsalves and Nancy Jetly (eds.), *The dynamics of South Asia: regional cooperation and SAARC*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1999.

Praveen Swami, *India, Pakistan and the secret jihad: the covert war in Kashmir, 1947-2004*, London; New York: Routledge, 2007.

Sufia M. Uddin, *Constructing Bangladesh: religion, ethnicity, and language in an Islamic nation*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, c2006 (Electronic Resource)

Mahendra Lawoti, *Towards a democratic Nepal: inclusive political institutions for a multicultural society*, New Delhi ; Thousand Oaks, CA. : Sage Publications, 2005.

### *Articles*

Vernie Liebl, "India and Pakistan: Competing Nuclear Strategies and Doctrines," *Comparative Strategy*, April-June 2009 Vol. 28, Issue 2, pp.154-63.

Srinath Raghavan, "Civil-Military Relations in India: The China Crisis and After" *Journal of Strategic Studies*, February 2009, Vol. 32, Issue 1, pp. 149-175.

Sumit Ganguly, "Nuclear Stability in South Asia," *International Security*, Fall 2008, Vol. 33, Issue 2, pp.45-70.

Imran Munir, "From Independence to Fundamentalism: Pakistan's Search for Identity," *Critical Asian Studies*, December 2007, Vol. 39, issue 4, pp. 617-633.

Sharif Shuja, "Pakistan: Islam, Radicalism and the Army," *International Journal on World Peace*, June 2007, Vol. 24, Issue 2, pp. 25-35.

Rajesh Basrur, "Nuclear command and control and strategic politics in South Asia" *Contemporary South Asia*, June 2005, Vol. 14, Issue 2, pp.155-161.

### *Websites (newspapers and news magazines)*

**Bangladesh** – *The Daily Star, The Bangladesh Today*

**Bhutan** – *Kuensel Newspaper, Bhutan Times*

**India** – *Times of India, Hindustan Times, Hindu, Indian Express, Statesman, Asian Age, Telegraph, The Tribune, Pioneer, India Today, Outlook, Frontline*

**Nepal** – *Nepal Times, Himalayan Times, Himal*

**Pakistan** – *Dawn, Daily Times, Friday Times, Frontier Post*

**Sri Lanka** – *Daily News, Daily Mirror, The Island*

**Maldives** – *Dhivehi Observer and Haama Daily*

## **Course Schedule**

### **Week 1**

Introduction to the *International Relations of South Asia* (Course outline, structure and expectations)

### **Week 2**

Theoretical approaches to study South Asia

#### Reading/s

Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal, *Modern South Asia: History, Culture and Political Economy*, New York: Routledge, 2004.

Urmila Phadnis, *Ethnicity and Nation-building in South Asia*, New Delhi: Sage, 1990.

### **Week 3**

International Relations: India

#### Reading/s

Appadorai, *The domestic roots of India's foreign policy, 1947-1972*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1981.

C Raja Mohan, "India and the balance of power" *Foreign Policy* 85/4 (2006/07-08), pp 17-32.

Amrita Narlikar, "Peculiar chauvinism or strategic calculation? Explaining the negotiating strategy of a rising India" *International Affairs* 82/1 (2006/01), pp 59-76.

George Perkovich, "Is India a major power?" *The Washington Quarterly* 27/1 Winter, (2003-04), pp 129-144.

### **Week 4**

International Relations: Pakistan

#### Reading/s

Ayesha Jalal, *The sole spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League, and the demand for Pakistan*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

Hasan Askari Rizvi, *Pakistan and the geo-strategic environment: a study of foreign policy*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993.

**\*\* Books for review and themes for term paper/ research essay to be discussed by course participants with course instructor\*\***

**Week 5**

International Relations: Bangladesh

Reading/s

Willem van Schendel, *A history of Bangladesh*, Cambridge.: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Sreeradha Datta, *Bangladesh: A Fragile Democracy*, New Delhi: Shipra, 2004.

**\*\* Books for review and themes for term paper/ research essay to be finalized by course participants \*\***

**Week 6**

International Relations: Sri Lanka

Reading/s

Jayadeva Uyangoda, *Ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka: Changing dynamics*, Washington,D.C.: East West Centre, 2007.

Nira Wickramasinghe, *Sri Lanka in the modern age: a history of contested identities*, London: Hurst and Company, c2006.

**Week 7**

International Relations: Nepal, Bhutan and Maldives

Reading/s

To be announced in Week 1

**Week 8**

Analyzing the international relations of South Asia

Debate and Discussion session

**\*\*Submission of book review's and two page abstracts detailing themes chosen for research essay\*\***

**Week 9**

Mid-term test

**Week 10**

The State in South Asia 1

Reading/s

Sunil Khilnani, *The Idea of India*, New York: Farrar Strauss Giroux, 1999.

Atul Kohli, *Democracy and Discontent: India's growing crisis of governability*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2007. (Electronic Resource)

Imtiaz Ahmed (ed.), *Understanding terrorism in South Asia : beyond statist discourses*, New Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 2006.

**Week 11**

The State in South Asia 2

Issues of Development, Environment, Human Rights and Civil Society

Readings to be announced in Week 1

**Week 12**

Regional Institutions in South Asia

Reading/s

Eric Gonslaves and Nancy Jetly, *The dynamics of South Asia: regional cooperation and SAARC*, New Delhi: Sage, 1999.

Kishore C. Dash, *Regionalism in South Asia: negotiating cooperation, institutional structures*, London: Routledge, 2008.

### **Week 13**

South Asia and the world

#### Reading/s

Ramesh Thakur and Oddny Wiggen (eds.) *South Asia in the world: problem solving perspectives on security, sustainable development, and good governance*, Tokyo; New York: United Nations University Press, c2004.

Peter R. Lavoy ed. *Asymmetric warfare in South Asia: the causes and consequences of the Kargil Conflict*, Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Waheguru Pal Singh Sidhu, Bushra Asif, Cyrus Samii (eds.) *Kashmir: new voices, new approaches*, Boulder, Colo. : Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006.

Rajiv Sikri ; foreword by Chinmaya R. Gharekhan, *Challenge and strategy : rethinking India's foreign policy*, New Delhi, India : SAGE Publications India ; Thousand Oaks, Calif. : Sage, 2009.

P.R. Kumaraswamy ed., *Security beyond survival: essays for K. Subrahmanyam*, New Delhi ; Thousand Oaks, CA : Sage Publications, 2004.

### **Week 14**

Deciding foreign policy in South Asia

#### Reading/s

Kishan S. Rana, *Asian diplomacy: the foreign ministries of China, India, Japan, Singapore, and Thailand*, Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, c2009.

C. Raja Mohan, *Crossing the Rubicon: The Shaping of India's Foreign Policy*, New York: Palgrave, 2004.

Hussain Haqanni, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military*, Washington: Carnegie Endowment, 2005.

### **Week 15**

Non-conventional security issues in South Asia

#### Readings to be announced in Week 1



***Week 16***

Does South Asia need new paradigms of enquiry?

Debate and Discussion session

***Week 17 ,***

Concluding lecture to be followed by research essay presentations.

***Week 18***

Research essay presentations