

**PPOL6100N**  
**The Rise, Fall, and Contemporary Resurgence of the East Asian  
Developmental State Model**

**Instructor:**

**Dr. Michael Tyrala**

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Room 4339, 4/F, Academic Building  
(Office hours by appointment)

**Teaching Assistant:**

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**Time:** Wednesdays, 15:00-17:50

**Place:** Room 1410, Lift 25-26 (60)



## Course Description:

The East Asian developmental state model represents a unique blend of state-led macroeconomic planning, heavily interventionist industrial policies, severe labor suppression, and capitalist markets. Despite intermittent financial crises, cronyism, and corruption, it has been credited with producing the most impressive economic growth miracles of the 20th century, including but not limited to that of Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and even Mainland China since Deng Xiaoping's experiments with reform and opening up, leading many experts and policymakers to refer to the region as the "growth driver" and "anchor of stability" of the global economy. The model has dominated the political and economic landscape of East Asia from the end of World War II to the mid-1980s, when the rise of neoliberalism gradually shrunk the policy space for state intervention, and successive waves of democratization, as incomplete and flawed as they sometimes were, placed limits on the severity of labor suppression, putting in question the continued feasibility and even desirability of the model. However, in the 21st century, at least three major developments have resulted in the contemporary resurgence of the East Asian developmental state model, albeit in an evolved form: (1) greater acceptance and even demand for increased state intervention following neoliberalism's retreat in the aftermath of the global financial crisis; (2) increased protectionism as an integral part of the new Cold War race for technological supremacy between the United States and Mainland China (especially in terms of advanced semiconductors and artificial intelligence); and (3) the deglobalization and regionalization of value chains following the Covid-19 pandemic. In this course, we will analyze the historical and contemporary application of the East Asian developmental state model in a wide variety of political and economic contexts, its merits and demerits in these contexts, and its potential to further evolve and adapt to new geopolitical and geoeconomic realities. The course will be useful to those pursuing a career in the public and private sectors, international organizations, journalism, or academia, with a particular focus on state-market relations, industrial and labor policies, and technological upgrading.

## Course Objectives:

This course is designed to equip students with fundamental theoretical and practical knowledge of the East Asian developmental state model, and the complex historical and geopolitical circumstances that precipitated its rise, fall, and contemporary resurgence. The course covers the different ways in which this model was implemented in Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia, Mainland China, and Vietnam, and evaluates its future growth prospects in a constantly shifting global environment.

Upon successfully completing the course, students will be able to:

- Identify common patterns and differences in state planning and intervention in East Asia aimed at promoting rapid development and industrial upgrading.
- Understand the role of authoritarian developmentalism in the process of industrialization and development in East Asia.

- Explain the reasons for the success of some economies in East Asia in achieving high levels of modernization, and the failure of others to achieve this goal.
- Assess the political implications of economic development in East Asia, particularly as they relate to possibilities of further democratization as well as of autocratic backsliding.
- Recognize how the contemporary transformations of the global economy affect the role of states and markets in industrial and labor policies in East Asia.

## Course Structure:

This course combines lectures, class and online discussions, short documentaries, expert guest speakers, and individual and group work to familiarize students with the various multifaceted issues related to the rise, fall, and contemporary resurgence of the East Asian developmental state model. The approach is multidisciplinary, drawing on insights and methods from public policy, political science, global political economy, international relations, and development studies, and blends theory with practice through exposure to numerous real life case studies. The course is open to MPP, MPM, and other PG/UG programs.

## Overview of Assessment:

Assessment Task	Weight	Date
Attendance and Active Participation (Discussions of lectures, required readings, etc.)	20%	Throughout
Individual Lightning Presentation (A 5–6-minute presentation summarizing and critically analyzing an assigned reading using no more than 4 slides)	10%	Depends on the readings
Research Paper (A 1,500–2,000-word research paper on the historical evolution of a particular policy in one of the East Asian developmental states covered in the course)	30%	April 28
Final Quiz (A combination of multiple choice, short-answer, and long-answer questions based on material from the whole course)	40%	May 8

## Explanation of Assessment:

### (1) ATTENDANCE AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION (20%)

Attendance is mandatory, unless the student in question has a well-documented reason, which should ideally be provided to my teaching assistant **Ms. Li Ying Hillary Giam** at [lyhgiam@connect.ust.hk](mailto:lyhgiam@connect.ust.hk) before the missed class, or in cases of emergencies as soon as possible after the missed class.

Lectures will frequently be interspersed with and followed by class discussions, and the Canvas discussion board will be available to contribute to on a weekly basis as well.

There is a substantial amount of required readings to be done individually by each student in this course (on average around 40-45 pages per lecture week). Students are expected to set aside sufficient time to complete this required reading load before each meeting, and use the class discussions and the weekly Canvas discussion boards to demonstrate that they have done so. Only students that actively participate on a regular basis through clear, concise, and insightful comments, and by asking pertinent questions that enhance the debate will be able to receive full credit for this part of the assessment. The quantity of engagement matters, but so does its quality, so while any and all eligible participation is welcome and will be counted, not all interventions will necessarily be worth the same.

### (2) INDIVIDUAL LIGHTNING PRESENTATION (10%)

Every student is required to give a 5–6-minute lightning presentation summarizing and critically analyzing an assigned supplementary reading (on average around 30 pages). The presentation should use no more than 5 slides (1 title slide and 3-4 content slides, each using a reasonably-sized font) and should be sent to me before the class so that I can upload it to Canvas, where it will serve as a valuable resource for the other students. The presentation grade will be based on: (1) how well the assigned supplementary reading was summarized and critically analyzed vis-à-vis relevant themes of the course (covered in the lectures and the required readings up to that point); (2) how useful the slides are as a resource for the other students; and (3) how confidently the content was presented. The supplementary readings will be assigned randomly by the end of the lecture in Week 2 (February 7).

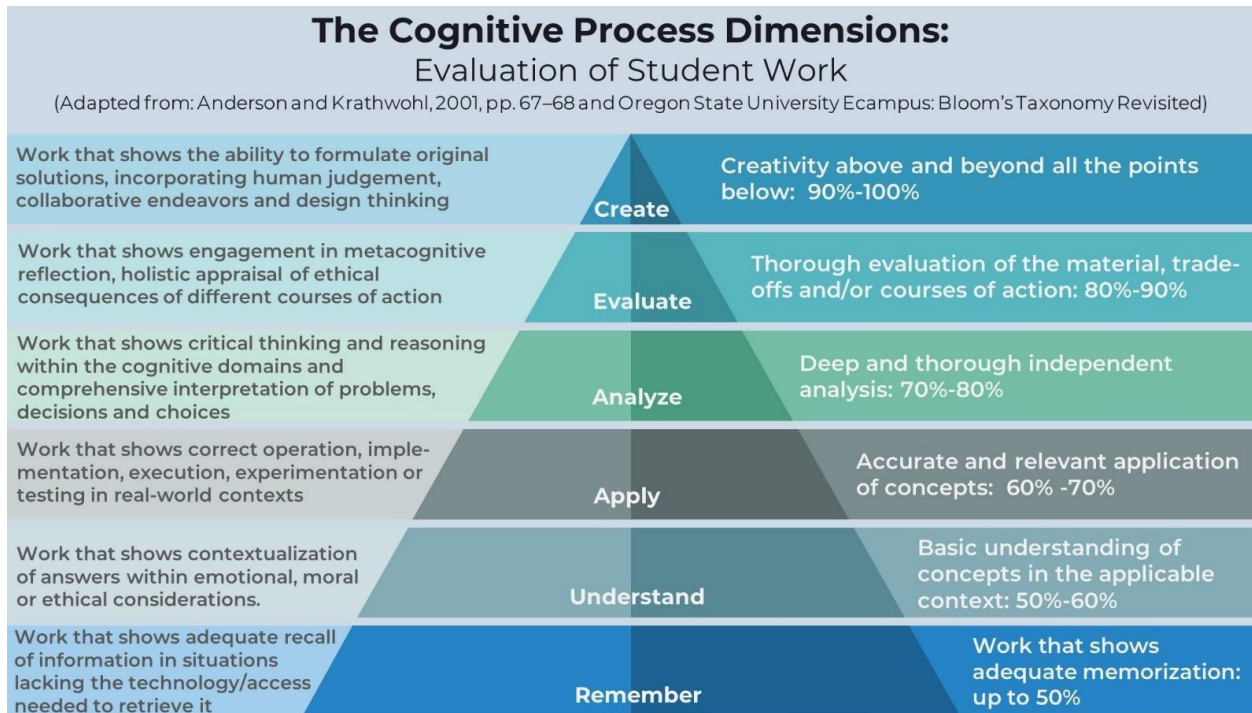
### (3) RESEARCH PAPER (30%)

Every student is required to write and submit to Canvas a 1,500–2,000-word research paper on the historical evolution of a particular policy in one of the East Asian developmental states covered in the course (Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong, Thailand, the Philippines, Mainland China, and Vietnam). The chosen policy must be related specifically to the developmental state model of the chosen country/jurisdiction, and the chosen country/jurisdiction must be different from that of the student's citizenship (e.g., Mainland Chinese students cannot choose Mainland China, Hong Kong students cannot choose Hong Kong, etc.). Since this is a research paper, students should mostly use academic sources. Credible institutional, policy, think tank, and media sources are permitted as well, but they should not constitute a majority of the sources. Overall, students must meaningfully use at least 20 English language sources (including a minimum of 8 of the required or supplementary readings). All foreign language sources must be fully translated into English. The research paper is due on April 28 by 23:59.

**(4) FINAL QUIZ (40%)**

In Week 15 (May 8), a 3-hour open book final quiz will be administered in class. It will consist of 8 multiple choice questions, 4 short-answer questions (around 200-word answers each), and 2 long-answer questions (around 600-word answers each), all based on material from the required readings and the lectures from the whole course.

**Course Grading:**



**Course Schedule:**

<b>LECTURES</b>	
<b>Time: Wednesdays, 15:00-17:50</b>	
<b>Place: Room 1410, Lift 25-26 (60)</b>	
<b>WEEK 1</b>	<b>(Jan 31): Course introduction – In what sense can and cannot East Asia be understood as a region?</b>

<b>PART I: THE HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND TO THE RISE OF THE EAST ASIAN DEVELOPMENTAL STATE MODEL</b>	
<b>WEEK 2</b>	<b>(Feb 7): Authoritarian developmentalism and political change in East Asia – What has been the relationship between developmental states, authoritarianism, and modernization in East Asia?</b>
<b>PART II: THE EAST ASIAN DEVELOPMENTAL STATE MODEL’S “CONSENSUS” CASES</b>	
<b>WEEK 3</b>	<b>(Feb 14): Japan as Asia’s first authoritarian developmentalist regime and post-war democracy with a once booming but now stagnating economy – What has been the significance of the Japanese model for East Asia?</b>
<b>WEEK 4</b>	<b>(Feb 21): Authoritarian developmentalism and democratization in South Korea and Taiwan – How can the South Korean and Taiwanese “miracles” be explained, and how do they relate to democratization and changing industrial and labor policies? + Presentation [1]</b>
<b>WEEK 5</b>	<b>(Feb 28): Successful authoritarian developmentalism in Singapore – In what sense is Singapore the “quintessential” authoritarian developmental state? + Presentations [2], [3], and [4]</b>
<b>WEEK 6</b>	<b>(Mar 6): From laissez-faire authoritarianism to experiments in authoritarian developmental support in Hong Kong – How has Hong Kong’s unique role as a colonial entrepôt and a gateway between Mainland China and the world affected the trajectory of its developmental state model, and how has it been evolving since the handover to the present day? + Presentations [5], [6], and [7]</b>
<b>PART III: THE EAST ASIAN DEVELOPMENTAL STATE MODEL’S “CONTROVERSIAL” CASES</b>	
<b>WEEK 7</b>	<b>(Mar 13): Quasi-developmentalism and oscillation between authoritarianism and democracy in Thailand – Have Thailand’s flirtations with developmentalism been an economic success despite the political turbulence that has frequently beset the country? + Presentations [8] and [9]</b>
<b>WEEK 8</b>	<b>(Mar 20): Failed authoritarian developmentalism and problematic democratization in the Philippines – Why did authoritarian developmentalism fail in the Philippines, and what impact did it have on democratization and the changing industrial and labor policies in the country? + Presentations [10], [11], and [12]</b>

<b>WEEK 9</b>	<b>(Mar 27): From flawed experiments in state socialism to successful authoritarian developmentalism in Mainland China and Vietnam – How did state socialism become the basis for successful authoritarian developmentalism in Mainland China and Vietnam? + Presentations [13] and [14]</b>
<b>WEEK 10</b>	<b>(Apr 3): Mid-Term Break (NO CLASS)</b>
<b>WEEK 11</b>	<b>(Apr 10): Partocracy and technological deepening in Mainland China – Can Mainland China avoid the middle-income trap and become an advanced economy while centralizing authoritarian rule? + Presentations [15] and [16]</b>
<b>PART IV: THE FALL AND CONTEMPORARY RESURGENCE OF THE EAST ASIAN DEVELOPMENTAL STATE MODEL</b>	
<b>WEEK 12</b>	<b>(Apr 17): The future of authoritarian and democratic developmentalism in East Asia and beyond – How have contemporary patterns dominating the global economy impacted the evolution of the East Asian developmental state model in general, and its industrial and labor policies in particular? + Presentations [17] and [18]</b>
<b>WEEK 13</b>	<b>(Apr 24): Reading Week (NO CLASS)</b>
<b>WEEK 14</b>	<b>(May 1): Labor Day (NO CLASS)</b>
<b>WEEK 15</b>	<b>(May 8): FINAL QUIZ</b>