

GLOBAL FRONTIERS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

ASIA/GEOG 4842

SPRING 2018

TuTh 11:00am–12:15pm

Guggenheim 201E

Instructor: Michael Dwyer

Email: mike.dwyer@colorado.edu

Phone: 510-499-6834

Office: Guggenheim 309

Office hours: Office hours: Tu & Th 1:00–2:00, W 11:00–noon and by appointment



COURSE DESCRIPTION

How did frontier landscapes give way to modern territorial boundaries? How is access to territory changing today as a result of globalization, regional integration, and the pursuit of national development? What is the fate today of old frontiers, and what can we learn about contemporary problems of economic development, regional stability, and environmental sustainability by using a geographically and historically comparative approach?

This course examines these questions through the case of Southeast Asia, one of the most dynamic and globally connected regions of the world. Over the course of the semester, we will use examples from three key modern periods, and across the landscape that stretches from the Chin Hills to the South China Sea, to examine the changing character of political, economic, social and environmental relationships between states, land users, and the natural and built environment. The course uses the theme of the *frontier* to connect the colonial encounter of the 17th–19th centuries, territorial nation building during the 19th and 20th centuries, and globalization/regionalization of the late 20th century and today. Looking comparatively at how frontier spaces emerge, and how they are treated and conceptualized by the various actors involved, provides an entry point to current questions about economic development, human security and environmental governance.

OBJECTIVES

This course has five interlinked objectives:

1. To broaden your understanding of Southeast Asia as a diverse and connected landscape rooted in specific histories and globally connected process.

2. To improve your skills as a geographer in bringing together theory, history and current debates about resource governance, political relations and social processes connected to land, identity, sovereignty and sustainability.
3. To help you become a better reader, not only of difficult texts, but maybe even more importantly, of apparently simple ones.
4. To make you a better analyst and writer, and thus a better researcher. And ...
5. To help you develop a conceptual and factual “toolkit” that, while regionally and historically grounded, is useful outside the immediate context of the course.

REQUIREMENTS

1. **Prerequisites:** This is a senior-level course. It is strongly advised that you have taken one or more of GEOG 1962, 1972, 1982, or 1992 and at least one 3000-level course in Geography or Asian Studies or a related field. If you have not filled these prerequisites, please speak to me. You will be encouraged to stay in the course, but will be responsible for making sure you have a basic understanding of key concepts covered in earlier courses, since we will be building on these.
2. **Reading:** This is a reading-intensive course. You are expected to keep up with the required readings and be prepared to discuss them in class, as well as reflect on them in your writing. Over the course of the semester, we will read a variety of texts, including popular, academic and historical; a number of these are dense and difficult, and may require slow reading and/or more than one pass in order to fully digest them. These will often build on each other, so do not plan to skip readings and still be able to keep up. We will spend significant time in class unpacking the readings, so you do not need to fully understand everything, but you need to spend enough time with them to be able to bring coherent questions to class.
3. **Attendance, in-class participation and discussion:** This course is also discussion-intensive. While there will be lectures every week (and in almost every class), we will spend significant time in conversation about the topics and contents of the lectures and the readings. Please bring questions about lectures and reading to class, as well as information about current events where relevant; this course is intended to examine contemporary issues, places and processes – so even during the historical parts of the course, we will be relating our topics back to the present day. Your contribution to these discussions is essential; *if you need to miss class, please discuss this in advance with the instructor*. Later in the semester, a few of the discussions will be student-led (see details below).

TEXTS

This course does not use a single textbook. Most of the readings will be made available as PDF files through Canvas (yes, Canvas, not D2L).

There are three required books that will not be available on Canvas. We will be reading these in weeks 3–4, 6 and 12, respectively:

- *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (James Scott, Yale University Press, 2009)
- *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (Thongchai Winichakul, University of Hawai'i Press, 1994)
- *China's Asian Dream: Empire Building along the New Silk Road* (Tom Miller, Zed Books, 2017)

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments for this course consist of weekly reading responses, facilitation of in-class discussion during the last few weeks of the semester, and a final assignment that is either a research paper or a book review. There are no exams.

- **Reading responses:** This course is reading intensive. Reading responses help you prepare for in-class discussions and lectures that build on readings, and consist of a mix of summary (in your own words) and critical reflection.
 - Over the course of the semester, you are required to turn in 10 reading responses, each in the range of 800–1000 words (about 2 pages single spaced).
 - Reading responses should be roughly two-thirds summary (synthetic and in your own words) and one-third critical response. We will talk in detail about what this means early in the semester. Also see the slides from lecture 2.
 - Reading responses will be graded with a 0, 1 or 2, and will generally include brief written comments. This grading system is intended to encourage good work without splitting hairs over grading: good responses will earn a 2, which will translate to a 100 (A) over the course of the semester; adequate responses will earn a 1, roughly an 80 (B-/C+); inadequate responses will earn a 0, roughly a 50 (F).
 - Reading responses are due in hard copy on Thursdays at the beginning of class during the week that they are relevant for (i.e., they cannot be turned in late, since this would defeat the purpose of writing them in preparation for class). Please print reading responses double-sided.
- **Facilitation of in-class discussion:** During weeks 13–15, Thursday classes will be student-led. This process will build on earlier discussions we have had all semester, and will allow you a voice in how the course explores particular sub-topics related to contemporary issues examined in the course. Each of the three student-led classes will be led by a group of 4–5 students, who will plan with each other in advance the structure of the class for the day, including readings, any short lectures (by yourselves or, upon request, by me), and the framing and facilitation of in-class discussion. We will discuss details in class.
- **Final assignment:** In lieu of a final exam, you will write a final assignment that is either a research/review paper on a topic of your choice, or a review of a book that is relevant to the course but that we are not reading together. We will discuss this assignment together in class, and you will be expected to discuss your plan individually with the instructor. Assignments will be in the range of 2500–3000 words, and will be due at 5:00 pm on Wed. May 9th (the day of the scheduled final exam) to Guggenheim 309.

GRADING

The grading system will follow university guidelines for A, A-, B+, B, etc. Your grade will be determined as follows:

In-class participation:	25%
Reading responses:	50% (5% each x 10)
Facilitation of in-class discussion:	5%
Final exam or final paper:	20%

More than 2 unexcused absences will affect your participation grade.

EXPECTATIONS

You can expect me to:

- Start and end class on time
- Reply to emails within 24 hours
- Return graded reading responses within one week
- Keep Canvas up to date
- Alert you in class and by email to any changes in the course schedule
- Be accessible by office hours

I will expect you to:

- Come to class
- Do the readings and be prepared to discuss them with your peers
- Be respectful in discussion and in print, even/especially about issues you disagree with
- Ask questions about things you would like to discuss or would like clarification on
- Come to office hours as needed
- Check email and Canvas regularly
- Approach the instructor if you have any problems or concerns, including absences or needing to be late or leave class early
- Not use any unnecessary or disruptive electronic devices in class¹
- Submit assignments on time

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Accommodation for Disabilities:

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/students) (www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/students). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or dsinfo@colorado.edu for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) under the Students tab on the Disability Services website and discuss your needs with your professor.

Religious Holidays

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. If you need to miss class or assignments because of religious observance, please inform me at least one week in advance. Please see the [campus policy regarding religious observances](#) for full details.

¹ No cell phones in class; please contact me if you have a necessary exception. You are welcome to use computers to take notes as long as they do not get in the way (i.e. make noise, distract you, distract others, etc.). If they do, you will be effectively absent and this will count against your participation grade.

Classroom Behavior

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. For more information, see the policies on [classroom behavior](#) and the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. CU's Sexual Misconduct Policy prohibits sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, intimate partner abuse (dating or domestic violence), stalking or related retaliation. CU Boulder's Discrimination and Harassment Policy prohibits discrimination, harassment or related retaliation based on race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct under either policy should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127. Information about the OIEC, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment or related retaliation can be found at the [OIEC website](#).

Honor Code

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to [the academic integrity policy](#). Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, resubmission, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code Council as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the academic integrity policy can be found at the [Honor Code Office website](#).

COURSE SCHEDULE

All readings are on Canvas except weeks 3–4, 6 and 12.

PART I. INTRODUCTION

Week 1 **Contemporary borderlands and frontiers**

Tu 1/16 Introduction to the course
No reading for today

Th 1/18 Critical area studies in Southeast Asia
Read: Deb, “Nowhere Land” (*Harpers*, 8 pp.)
Read: Scott, Preface to *The Art of Not Being Governed* (10 pp. but just skim the last 3½ pages, from “There is a large number...” on p. xv)
Read: van Schendel, “Geographies of knowing...” (*Env. and Planning D*, 22 pp.)

Week 2 **New enclosures, concessions and sovereignties (MD away this week)**

Tu 1/23 **** No class today ****

Read: Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed*, Ch. 1 (39 pp.)

Th 1/25 The return of the concession? (Tim Oakes guest lecture)
Read: Nyiri, “Extraterritoriality...” (16 pp.)
Read: Massey, “A global sense of place” (from *Space, Place and Gender*, 9 pp.)

PART II. THE “ZOMIA” DEBATE

Week 3 **Lowland states, ... (reading not on CANVAS)**

Tu 1/30 States and legibility
Read: Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed*, Ch. 2–3 (58 pp.)

Th 2/1 The discourse of civilization
Read: Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed*, Ch. 4 (29 pp.)

Week 4 **... and upland peoples (reading not on CANVAS)**

Tu 2/6 The arts of evasion
Read: Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed*, Ch. 5–6 (93 pp.)

Th 2/8 The arts of evasion (cont’d)
Read: Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed*, Ch. 6½–9 (119 pp.)

Week 5 **Zomia and its critics**

Tu 2/13 The Southeast Asianists
Read: Chronicle of Higher Education, “The battle over Zomia” (6 pp.)
Read: Lieberman, Review of *The Art of Not Being Governed* (14 pp.)
Read: Dove, Johnsson and Aung-Thwin, “Debate” (15 pp.)

Th 2/15 International discussions
Read: Clunan, Review of *The Art of Not Being Governed* (7 pp.)
Read: Sadan, Review of *The Art of Not Being Governed* (7 pp.)
Read: selections from *Perspectives on Politics* (2011) commentaries

PART III. THE COLONIAL ENCOUNTER

Week 6 Political geographies from mandalas to geo-bodies (reading not on CANVAS)

Tu 2/20 Siam and British Burma: a clash of geographic imaginaries

Read: Thongchai, *Siam Mapped*, Ch. 2–3 (pp. 37–80)

Th 2/22 Siam and the French: a clash of modern powers

Read: Thongchai, *Siam Mapped*, Ch. 4–7 (pp. 81–139)

Week 7 Political economy and the making of modern territory

Tu 2/27 Commodities trade in mainland Southeast Asia

Read: Tagliacozzo, “Ambiguous Commodities, Unstable Frontiers” (*Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 24 pp.)

Th 3/1 The plantation economy in the Dutch East Indies

Read: Stoler, excerpts from *Capitalism and Confrontation in Sumatra’s Plantation Belt, 1870–1979* (Ch. 1 pp. 1–8² and Ch. 2 pp. 14–36³)

Week 8 Indigenous narratives: the view from below

Tu 3/6 Prehistory of the Golden Triangle 1: Political space

Read: Grabowsky & Renoo, *The Chronicle of Chiang Khaeng* (58 pages)

Th 3/8 Prehistory of the Golden Triangle 2: Social networks

Read: Le et al., “Highland Chiefs and Regional Networks” (*Southeast Asian Studies*, 37 pp.)

PART IV. UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT IN TERRITORIAL STATES

Week 9 Non-enclosure in the “Golden Triangle”

Tu 3/13 Opium and the Cold War

Read: McCoy, “Cold War Opium Boom” (Ch. 4 in *The Politics of Heroin*, 67 pp.)

Th 3/15 The Golden Triangle: A non-state space?

Read: McCoy, “The Golden Triangle” (Ch. 7 in *The Politics of Heroin*, 105 pp.)

Week 10 Enclosure in a comparative context

Tu 3/20 Indonesia’s extractive regime

Read: Gellert, “Extractive regimes” (30 pp.)

Th 3/22 Closer to the ground: jungle rubber

Read: Dove “Living rubber, dead land”, (*Bijdr. Taal- Land- Volkenkd* [Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Southeast Asia], 35 pp.)

Spring Break – No class the week of 3/26

Week 11 The Cambodian frontier

Tu 4/3 Background: Legal pluralism in the Cambodian land sector

Read: Adler & So, “Toward equity in development ...” (10 pp.)

² Stop reading at “...contests for power.”

³ Stop reading at “...work for the estates (Bool 1903:50).”

Th 4/5 Commodity frontiers
Read: Padwe, “Cashew, Cash and Capitalism in Northeast Cambodia” (26 pp.)

PART V. FRONTIERS TODAY: OLD TERRITORIES, NEW SOVEREIGNTIES?

Week 12 “Global China” in Southeast Asia (reading not on CANVAS)

Tu 4/10 A regional overview
Read: Miller, *China’s Asian Dream*, Introduction and Ch. 1–3 (124 pp.)

Th 4/12 A regional overview (cont’d)
Read: Miller, *China’s Asian Dream*, Ch. 4 – 6 and Conclusion (123 pp.)

Week 13 China’s southern borderlands

Tu 4/17 Transnational territory?
Read: Guo, “Toward resolution...” (pp. 30–66)
Read: Nyiri, “Enclaves of Improvement” (*Comp. Studies in Society and History*, 30 pp.)

Th 4/19 Student-led class
Read: TBD

Week 14 Energy and resources

Tu 4/24 Looking by sector
Read: Andrews-speed et al., “Chinese engagement in Southeast Asian energy and mineral resources” (*Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 27 pp.)

Th 4/26 Student-led class
Read: TBD

Week 15 The South China Sea

Tu 5/1 Siam (*Mapped*) revisited?
Read: Ong, “The Chinese axis” (27 pp.)

Th 5/3 Student-led class
Read: TBD

Wed May 9 **** Final assignment **** due by 5:00 pm to GUGG 309