Course Overview and Goals
This course introduces the politics of South Asia, a region that is large, complex, and full of contradictions. Nearly one out of every four people in the world resides in South Asia. The region is home to one of the most successful cases of democracy in the developing world, but historically has also included military dictatorships and absolute monarchies. Despite the region’s growing economic and political clout, riots, insurgencies, terrorism, and the possibility of nuclear conflict persist. South Asia claims several dozen billionaires as well as more than 40% of the world’s poor. The region’s population is divided along linguistic, regional, caste, tribal, and religious lines.

The course introduces the politics of this region by identifying what we mean by the term “South Asia” and describing the region’s colonial legacy and contemporary political institutions. It then proceeds to political overviews of the countries in South Asia. Next, the course considers the many ways in which the region’s diversity—whether through caste, religion, language, or gender—has influenced politics. Finally, it concludes by focusing on the many challenges facing South Asia, including corruption, poverty, and violence. Although the course covers all South Asian countries, it places greater emphasis on the more populous countries in the region, paying greatest attention to India, followed by Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Disclaimer
The syllabus is subject to change throughout the semester. Any and all changes to the syllabus will be announced in class, and an up-to-date syllabus will always be available on the course website.

Learning Objectives
In successfully completing this course, students will:

• Gain basic literacy in South Asian politics, such that they can critically consume of news stories, op-eds, and academic articles related to the region;

• Understand the major differences between and within countries in South Asia and some of the major causes of these differences;

• Appreciate how politics in South Asia differs from politics in other countries (such as the U.S.), with which students may be more familiar;

• Learn how to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of a social science claim.
**Course Requirements**

**Class Participation (5%):** Students are encouraged to participate in class discussion and ask questions. Students are expected to come to class prepared, having read the assigned reading for each class. Please come to class on time. Habitually coming to class late will be penalized. Cell phones must be turned off. If your phone rings in class on more than one occasion, I will ask you to leave class.

**Map Quiz (10%):** On Friday, September 17, there will be a short (20 minute) in-class map quiz. Information about what will be covered on the quiz will be available on the course website in the first week of class.

**Midterm Exam (25%):** On Wednesday, October 15, there will be an in-class exam on material covered through October 10. The exam will consist of some combination of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer questions.

**Paper (30%):** On Wednesday, November 19, students will turn in a paper of between five and seven pages (12-point Times New Roman, double-spaced, one-inch margins). Topics will be distributed on Friday, November 7. A hard copy of the paper is due **when class starts**.

**Final Exam (30%):** The format for the final exam will be similar to the midterm exam, but it will cover material from the entire semester.

**Grading Policies**

Exams and paper deadlines may not be rescheduled except 1) under extenuating circumstances that arise at the last minute (e.g., grave illness, death in the family) and are properly documented or 2) in prior consultation with the instructor because of a legitimate conflict (e.g., athletic meet, religious observance). Any requests for rescheduling must occur in the first two weeks of the semester. Requests made after the first two weeks will not be accommodated.

Students who do not appear for an exam and who have not received permission to take the exam at an alternate time will receive a 0. For papers, grades are docked a partial letter grade for each day that it is late. Thus, a paper that would otherwise have received an A- would receive a B+ if it were turned in after class starts on November 19 but before 2:20pm on November 20. When turning in late papers, students should turn in a hard copy to me (slide it under the door if I am not in my office) and email me so as to verify the time that it was turned in.

If you wish to dispute a grade on a paper or exam, please email me at least 24 hours after papers/exams have been handed back indicating the nature of your concern. We can then set up a time to discuss the exam or paper in question. I will not discuss paper or exam grades immediately after they are handed back.

For work that receives a letter, rather than numerical, grade I use the following scale to calculate grades: A = 95, A- = 92, B+ = 88, B = 85, B- = 82, C+ = 78, C = 75, C- = 72, D+ = 68, D = 65, F = 55.
Disabilities and Tutoring
Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. Such accommodations should be discussed as soon as possible at the beginning of the semester. For additional information please refer to: http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/

Academic Integrity
By taking this course, you are agreeing to abide by the University’s Code of Academic Integrity. It states: “Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one’s own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” For the remainder of the code, see: http://studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity. If you are unsure about any aspect of this policy the Writing Center (http://www.gwu.edu/~gwriter/) can provide assistance on citation or other aspects of writing papers. Claiming ignorance about how or when to cite sources is not an excuse for academic dishonesty. If I find that you have knowingly engaged in academic dishonesty, you will automatically fail the class.

Electronic Etiquette
I aim to be responsive to student emails. You should expect that I will respond within 24 hours to any emails sent between Monday morning and Friday afternoon. You should not expect responses on weekends. I may respond more quickly, but doing so remains my prerogative. All email correspondence should be appropriately professional. You should not expect responses to emails that ask questions whose answers are on the syllabus or to queries about your current grade in the class. Based on the grades that you receive on your assignments and the weighting of assignments in the syllabus, your grade calculations will be no different than mine.

Required Books
There are two books required for this course.


All remaining readings are posted on the course website unless they are accompanied by a link on the syllabus, in which case they can be found online.

Lecture Topics and Reading

Introduction

August 27 (W): What is South Asia and why does it matter?
August 29 (F): The colonial inheritance
  - RH, Chapters 2 & 3

September 3 (W): Democracy in South Asia

September 5 (F): Democratic institutions
  - GP, Chapter 3, pp. 44-54, 62-78
  - GP, Chapter 9
  - GP, Chapter 15, pp. 262-63, 272-275
  - GP, Chapter 20

Political Overview

September 10 (W): India—Congress dominance

September 12 (F): India—The BJP

September 17 (W): India—Smaller parties and the coalition / Map Quiz

September 19 (F): Pakistan—From independent to Zia
  - GP, Chapter 10
  - GP, Chapter 12, pp. 217-222

September 24 (W): Pakistan—The 1990s to today
  - GP, Chapter 12, pp. 223-235

September 26 (F): Bangladesh
  - GP, Chapter 14, pp. 255-261
  - GP, Chapter 15, pp. 263-272
October 1 (W): Sri Lanka and the Maldives
- RH, Chapter 8
- GP, Chapter 19, pp. 331-337
- GP, Chapter 21, pp. 359-368

October 3 (F): Nepal and Bhutan
- RH, Chapter 9
- GP, Chapter 25, pp. 399-405

Politics and Diversity in South Asia

October 8 (W): Caste and its equivalents
- GS, Chapter 2, pp. 32-34
- GS, Chapter 19, pp. 340-342
- GS, Chapter 25, pp. 405-412

October 10 (F): Reservation

October 15 (W): Midterm Exam

October 17 (F): Religion

October 22 (W): Religious conflict
- RH, Chapter 18, pp. 262-63, 268-71

October 24 (F): Language and region
- RH, Chapters 15 & 16

October 29 (W): Gender

**Political Challenges in South Asia**

October 31 (F): Clientelism and patronage

November 5 (W): Corruption and criminality
− RH, Chapter 25

November 7 (F): Economic growth / **Paper topics distributed**

November 12 (W): Poverty and inequality

November 14 (W): The military and terrorism
− RH, Chapter 24

November 19 (W): Maoism in India and Nepal / **Papers due**
− GP, Chapter 28, pp. 459-468

November 21 (F): Insurgencies
− RH, Chapter 19

November 26 (W): Thanksgiving break

November 28 (F): Thanksgiving break
December 3 (W): Indo-Pak relations and the nuclear threat

December 5 (F): Wrap-up