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PSC 195.01: Asia Beyond the Headlines

Steven Levine

The University Of Montana, steven.levine@umontana.edu

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HEADLINE ASIA
(Asia Beyond the Headlines)

Course Outline

Objective and Scope: Headline Asia, offered as a one-credit course that meets once-a-week for one 50-minute class period, is intended to offer students an intellectual opportunity to engage a range of political and social issues dealing with contemporary Asia. The objective is to achieve a historically-grounded understanding of contemporary political and other issues beyond that which is provided in media coverage even by the better-quality American newspapers and newsmagazines. Specific issues are selected to represent different regions within Asia, and the topics include security, political leadership, ethno-nationalist separatism, and the environment.

Format: Each of the seven issues comprising the course will be examined on two separate occasions during the semester. During the first half of the course, the background and main contours of each topic will be presented in class, either by the instructor or by a well-informed guest lecturer. During the second half of the course, the same topics will be revisited and discussed either in terms of policy alternatives where policy choices are involved or in terms of regional and/or international impacts where policy choice is not of paramount concern.

Reading: Students will be required to read Asia-related daily news in a quality newspaper like *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *the Los Angeles Times* or *the Christian Science Monitor*. Course reading assignments will be selected from such on-line journals as *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, and *International Security* to name just a few, and reports written by specialists at organizations such as the International Crisis Group, the Brookings Institution, Center for Strategic and International Studies, the World Health Organization, the Carnegie Endowment and similar institutions.

Class Assignments:

1. Each student will choose one of the course topics and:
 - a) Be prepared to help lead class discussion during the second round study of the topics.
 - b) Write a short (2-3 pp. op-ed type paper on the chosen topic.
2. Each student will be expected to participate actively in classroom discussions.

Exams: There will a one-hour final exam.

Instructor: Prof. Steven I. Levine, Associate Director, Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center.

Class location: The Mansfield Center Seminar Room, 4th Floor Mansfield Library.

Office hours: Thursday, 1:00-3:00 pm and by appointment.

Contact information: Office: Mansfield Center, Rm. MLIB 458; telephone: 243-2278; e-mail: Steven.Levine@mso.umt.edu

Course Outline

August 30 Introduction and Overview of Contemporary Asia

Sept. 6 Is the Taliban Winning in Afghanistan?

Sept. 13 What Are the Prospects for a Restoration of Democracy in Pakistan?

Sept. 20 China and Global Climate Change

Sept. 27 The Seventeenth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party: Is Political Reform on the Agenda?

Oct. 4 Japan's Response to the Worldwide Moratorium on Commercial Whaling

Oct. 11 North Korea's Nuclear Weapons and East Asian Security

Oct. 18 Human Trafficking in Asia

Oct. 25 Afghanistan: A Closer Look

Nov. 1 Pakistan's Pres. Musharraf in the Eye of the Storm

Nov. 8 China and Global Climate Change, Part II

Nov. 15 How Stable Is the Chinese Communist Regime?

Nov. 22 **Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class**

Nov. 29 North Korea's Nuclear Weapons and East Asian Security, Part II

Dec. 6 Human Trafficking in Asia: Alternative Policy Options

Dec. 13 **Final Exam**