

**Division of Humanities
Tentative Course Syllabus**

Course Code: HUMA 2638
Course Title: Peoples and Cultures in Southeast Asia
Course Offered in: Fall 2026
Course Instructor: MA Jianxiong

Course Description:

This course aims to provide students with an interdisciplinary understanding of the cultural diversity in Myanmar, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. We will examine the complex historical development of majority/minority relations and the formulation of cultural identities among different peoples on this borderland. The dynamic relations among religion, ethnicity, tourism and modernity will be discussed in the context of the region's specific political geography.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs):

	Course ILOs
1	Comprehend dynamic relations of ethnic identities and political geography in mainland Southeast Asia.
2	Develop an interdisciplinary perspective on cultural diversity and a macroscopic focus on the course of state formation.
3	Develop a critical understanding of concepts of state and identity in our contemporary social life.

Course Outline:

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1	Introduction
2	Ancient Civilizations
3	Hinduism and Buddhism
4	Colonialism and Western Powers
5	Nation-State Building

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6	Vietnam War and the Golden Triangle
7	Cultures in Highland Southeast Asia
8	Cultures in Laos and Cambodia
9	Overseas Chinese Communities
10	Nation States and Identities
11	Tourism, Politics and Identities
12	Conclusion: Modernity, centers and peripheries & final review
13	General Reviewing

Planned Assessment Tasks:

All students are expected to attend lectures and tutorials. Continual assessment accounts for 50% of the marks. Of this 50%, 30% is based on one term paper (10-15 pages) and the other 20% comes from participation and two review essays on documentaries. The final exam accounts for the remaining 50%.

Suggested Reading:

Keyes, Charles F.

1995 *The Golden Peninsula: Culture and Adaptation in Mainland Southeast Asia*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.