Introduction to Cambodian History, Politics, and Society

Text/Materials:


** Instructors may also find the following useful:


Description of Course:

This course provides an introduction to Cambodian history, politics, and society with a focus on post-WWII Cambodia. The course combines an examination of Cambodia’s historical context and development as a nation with a thematic analysis of issues confronting contemporary Cambodian. Areas covered include the colonial period, Buddhism, the Khmer Rouge, the rise of Hun Sen, human rights, corruption, Cambodia’s economic status, poverty, the Khmer Rouge trials, and the Cambodian Diaspora.

Course Objectives:

Objective 1: Students will explain the historical development of Cambodian identity and nationhood, including the Angkorean period, the influence of external powers, and the French colonial period.

Objective 2: Students will explain Buddhism and the role it plays within Cambodian society.

Objective 3: Students will describe the development and policies of the Khmer Rouge.

Objective 4: Students will evaluate the policies of the Khmer Rouge and the impact of those policies on Cambodian society.

Objective 5: Students will recognize the influence of Hun Sen in shaping contemporary political and civil society life in Cambodia.
Objective 6: Students will evaluate various contemporary Cambodian issues, including human rights, poverty, corruption, foreign aid, the Khmer Rouge trials, and the Cambodian Diaspora.

Course Schedule:

Week 1: Overview and Introduction to Southeast Asia and Cambodia


Week 2: Cambodia in Historical Context

- Website: [Culture of Cambodia](#). Countries and Their Cultures.

Additional Resources:

- Websites:
  - [Cambodian Folk Stories from the Gatiloke](#)
  - [Angkor - UNESCO World Heritage Centre](#)

Week 3: Buddhism

Week 4: Cambodia and External Powers

**Vietnam**


**French**


Week 5: The Sihanouk Years


Week 6: The Rise of the Khmer Rouge


Week 7: The Khmer Rouge - Democratic Kampuchea - Policies

Week 8: The Khmer Rouge – The Killing Fields


Additional Resources:

- **Websites:**
  - [Cambodian Genocide Program – Yale University](#)
  - [The Documentation Center of Cambodia](#)
  - [National Cambodian Heritage Museum & Killing Fields Memorial](#)

- **Videos/Films:**

- **Supplemental Readings/Documents:**

**Week 9: The Fall of Democratic Kampuchea and the Vietnam Invasion**


**Week 10: Cambodia’s Transition**

- Website: United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC)

**Week 11: The Rise of Hun Sen**


**Week 12: Economics and Poverty**


Additional Resources:

- Websites:
  - Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations - Cambodia
  - Human Development Index - Cambodia
  - National Institute of Statistics - Cambodia
  - Open Development - Cambodia
  - World Bank - Cambodia
  - UN Data - Cambodia

- Supplemental Readings/Documents:

Week 13: Natural Resources and Corruption


Week 14: Cambodia and Human Rights


Additional Resources:

> Websites:
> • [Amnesty International - Cambodia](#)
> • [ECPAT Cambodia, End Child Prostitution, Abuse and Trafficking in Cambodia](#)
> • [Friends International](#)
> • [Human Rights Watch - Cambodia](#)
> • [U.S. State Department, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2015, Cambodia](#)

Week 15: Minority and Ethnic Groups


Indigenous Populations


Cham


Chinese

Weekly Reading:


Week 16: The Lasting Impact of Democratic Kampuchea

**The Extraordinary Chambers of the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC), Khmer Rouge Trials**


Additional Resources:

- **Websites:**
  - Cambodia Tribunal Monitor
  - Civil Parties Before the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia
  - Documentation Center of Cambodia
  - Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC)
  - United Nations Assistance to the Khmer Rouge Trials

- **Videos/Films:**
Supplemental Readings/Documents:


The Cambodian Diaspora


Additional Resources:

- Websites:
  - [Cambodian Association of Illinois](http://www.cambodianassociation.org)
  - [Cambodian Community History & Archive Project (CamCHAP)](http://www.cambodianhistory.org)
  - [National Cambodian Heritage Museum & Killing Fields Memorial](http://national cambodian heritage museum.org)
  - [Pete Pin](http://www.petepin.com)