

Law 370 Syllabus:

This course covers the laws and legal systems of SE Asia in comparative and socio-legal perspective, dealing with the legal issues of greatest importance in the region, as well as introducing the legal systems of the jurisdictions covered. The course covers the 10 ASEAN countries and East Timor, but with a general emphasis on Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. We will also of course cover ASEAN itself.

To begin with the course will ask general questions, such as: How we should approach the study of law in South East Asia? What was indigenous South East Asian law like in pre-colonial and colonial times? How have the modern states of the region dealt with issues of ethnicity, religion, gender, colonialism, economic development, political change and legal pluralism? How have the legal systems of the region developed over time? What are their sources and how are they structured?

We then proceed to look at some more specific contemporary issues in law and society. Here we will respond to developments in the region as well as student interest. In general this part of the course will focus on contemporary issues of legal reform and legal change in a globalised world, such as Islamisation in Malaysia , *doi moi* in Vietnam , and *reformasi* in Indonesia . Note that the course does not deal with business and commercial law as such (eg company law, intellectual property), nor with North East Asian legal systems such as those of Japan and China.

Objectives:

The course aims to provide students with a working knowledge of law and legal systems in SE Asia. It aims to provide an understanding of the historical, political and cultural context of law, the region's many legal traditions, and the legal issues of contemporary importance. It also aims to introduce students to the developing legal literature of the region.