

American Councils for International Education

TRADITION AND MODERNITY IN TAIWAN

Tamkang University

Course Title	Taiwanese History and Culture
Instructor	Chung-Hsuan Yang
Class Periods	September to December 2026. In total 15 weeks.
Objectives	
To understand Taiwan's history and how to shape her multiple culture, students may have a better understanding on the world's impact on this island, whose location has always held a high strategic value to many nations throughout centuries.	
Course Description	
Differed from traditional Chinese and Taiwanese perspectives, this course applies an international perspective to understand Taiwan's history, not focus on Taiwan only, nor the relations with China and Japan only, but also the relationship with the world. Therefore, this course would not only describe the development of Taiwan, but also explain the economic situations and geopolitics at that given moment. In other word, this course does not just state the history of Taiwan's, but explains why all of these happened.	
Textbooks and Teaching Materials	
Self-made teaching materials	
Requirements and Grades	
◆ Attendance : 20 % ◆ Mark of Usual : % ◆ Midterm Exam : 25 % ◆ Final Exam : 25 % ◆ Other : 30 % (Final Paper)	

Course Outline		
	Subject/Topics	Discription
Week 1	Orientation	1. “Who Gets What, When, How”: Introduce this course and grading policy. 2. When and why was this island called “Taiwan”? 3. The Age of Discovery: “Formosa”.
Week 2	The Zheng and Qing Eras: Migration, Governance, and Social Change	1. International Competition 2. Zheng’s “Kingdom” 3. Qing Dynasty’s Rules.
Week 3	Japanese Colonial Period	1. “Republic of Formosa” 2. Modernization: Education, Infrastructures and Healthcare 3. Local Revolutions.
Week 4	Ethnic Conflicts and Religions	1. Aboriginal Tribes, Hans from Quanzhou and Zhangzhou, Hakka, and Japanese. 2. Previous Immigrants vs. Newcomers 3. Taoism and Christian
Week 5	Tour	1. Taking advantage of TKU’s location. 2. Visit Fort Santo Domingo, MacKay’s Heritage and Qing’s Customs Officers Residence. 3. Review our previous lessons.
Week 6	Political Parties in the early 20 th century	1. Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) 2. Taiwan People’s Party under Japanese colonial Government 3. Communist International: Japanese, Chinese and Taiwanese communist parties.
Week 7	World War Two	1. Taiwan’s role during the War. 2. After the War: Recovery? 3. Civil War in China: 228 and KMT’s retreat.
Week 8	The Republic of China on Taiwan	1. Korean War, Vietnamese War and two triumphs at Kinmen. 2. “Containment”: Taiwan’s strategic role. 3. Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States of America and the Republic of China in 1955
Week 9	Mid-term Exam	
Week 10	UN and US aids	1. UN issues and aids as a founding nation: organizations and challenges. 2. US aids: “Marshall Plan”-like extension in the East Asia 3. UN Assembly’s Resolution 2758.

Week 11	Economic Growth	1. Land and financial reforms 2. Flying geese paradigm: 4 Asian Tigers (Dragons) 3. Enrich foreign exchange reserves
Week 12	Cross-Strait Relations	1. Extreme Rivalry: No Contact, No Negotiation, No Compromise. 2. Ice-breaking in 1987: both sides allowed non-governmental communications, based on humanitarianism. 3. Taiwan's investment on Mainland China
Week 13	Democratization	1. Martial Laws Era (1947-1991) 2. Tiananmen Square massacre and student/social movements in Taiwan. 3. The birth of Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)
Week 14	After the End of Cold War	1. Without its "Big Brother", China has risen and changed its political and economic strategies. 2. Missile crisis in 1996: Rivalry across the Strait had risen again. 3. National Identity issue caused by the rivalry.
Week 15	Final Exam and Paper Due	

References

Core References:

1. Copper, John F. Taiwan: Nation-State or Province? Westview Press.
2. Rubinstein, Murray A. (ed.). Taiwan: A New History. M.E. Sharpe, 2007.
3. Roy, Denny. Taiwan: A Political History. Cornell University Press, 2003.

Supplementary Readings:

1. Lin, Emily Y. "U.S. Aid and Taiwan's Economic Development, 1950–1965." *Modern Asian Studies* 46(5), 2012.
2. Ching, Leo T.S. *Becoming "Japanese": Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation*. University of California Press, 2001.
3. Chang, Bi-yu & Lin, Pei-yin (eds.). *Positioning Taiwan in a Global Context*. Routledge, 2019.