

This course is in the field of Social Studies; its focus on Asia enables us to explore the geography, culture, literature, politics and economics of the region. Why study Asia? In light of the increasing importance of the Asia-Pacific sphere both politically and economically on the international scene it becomes necessary to be well informed about this region.

This course proposes an in-depth, balanced approach that will be useful as an introduction for students interested in pursuing careers in economics, political science, and business/commerce. Finances, international business relations, cultural anthropology, literature or religious studies.

As Asia is an immense region we will focus on some countries while only mentioning others; our focus will be on China, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, North & South Korea, Japan, Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar, and Taiwan & Hong Kong.

The course is composed of three (3) units:

Unit 1: September – November

The focus here is on geography and culture as a general introduction; we will explore some of the following things – festivals, cuisine, film, anime/manga culture, art, dance, theater, opera, and Korean & Japanese pop among other things

Unit 2: November – February

The focus here will be on literature; this survey of literary production will include poetry, folktales/fairytales, novels (excerpts), manga and epic historical dramas in order to better understand national view points and the values of the people.

Unit 3: February – June

The focus here will be on socio-economic and political issues; this will include China's shifting economy from low-level manufacturing to high-tech robotics, technology and e-vehicles, Xi Jinping and the Chinese Dream, the One Road Initiative (resurrecting the Silk Road in the age of modern globalization), rising Hindutva (Indian-Hindu nationalism) in India, the India-Pakistan-Kashmir deadlock, Hindu-Muslim communal violence in India, feminism in India, civil war in Sri Lanka, conformity in Japan (Wa), poverty, development, dictatorships, democracy and genocide in Myanmar, Taiwan & Hong Kong's dilemma (One Country, two systems), North & South Korean reunification and nuclear war, Vietnam's development, capitalist-communist government, the Asia Investment & Infrastructure Bank (AIIB).

Competencies to be developed during the course:

- 1) Understanding an issue, form an opinion & sustain a logical argument – **class discussions**

- 2) Deconstructing and analyzing various issues derived from multiple texts such as newspaper articles (Economist news magazine), documentaries, interviews, debates, literature – **comprehension**
- 3) Producing a variety of assignments such as analytical articles, presentations, projects, manga writing and poetry in various styles – **writing**

Objectives of the course:

- 1) To explore the general geography and ecology of the region
- 2) To know and become familiar with the people, ideas & diverse ethnicities of the region
- 3) To gain an understanding of Asia's prominent role in history and economic policies both regionally and internationally
- 4) To understand the foundational elements of Eastern Civilization
- 5) To explore how these foundational ideas are translated into art and culture
- 6) To appreciate the interconnected world of the 21st century.

Material Required:

- 1) 2" binder
- 2) Section dividers