

SKSU 6274	MALAYSIA AND SMALL-STATE STRATEGY
Course Classification	Elective
Instructors	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kuik Cheng Chwee

Synopsis

The study of “smaller states” (the non-great powers) is a relatively neglected area of inquiry in International Relations. This course aims to fill this gap by exploring the unique situation and value of smaller states in world politics, with Malaysia as a case study. The course consists of three parts. The first part focuses on the conceptual and analytical tools needed to explain various dimensions of small-power statecraft, especially concerning how weaker states survive in a world dominated by stronger powers, and why they pursue certain policy approaches the way they do. The second part examines Malaysia’s strategic concerns and diplomatic aspirations at the regional and global levels. Attention is paid on how and why, despite its inherent predicaments and vulnerabilities, the smaller state has endeavoured to punch above its weight on the evolution of ASEAN, the institutionalisation of East Asian cooperation, the creation of developing-countries-oriented initiatives, and the participation in the United Nations and the peacekeeping operations. The third part provides opportunity for students to present their case studies on smallpower statecraft in different regions.

Week	Topics
1	Introduction: Why Study Smaller States?
2	Power and Power Asymmetry: Measurements, Consequences, and Instruments of Statecraft
3	Smaller States in Historical and Contemporary Perspectives
4	Malaysia Aspirations, Limitations, and Policy Options: External and Internal Determinants
5	Malaysia and the Big Powers
6	Malaysia, ASEAN and the ASEAN-based Institutions
7	Malaysia and the Institutionalisation of East Asia
8	Malaysia and the Developing and Islamic World
9	Malaysia and UN and PKO: How Far Could Smaller States Punch Above Their Weight?
10	Case Studies in International Relations: Methods and Approaches
11	Case Studies (I): Smaller States in South and Southeast Asia
12	Case Studies (II): Smaller States in Central Asia and Middle East
13	Case Studies (III): Smaller States in Latin America
14	Towards “Middlepowership”?