

## Sustainable Development & Public Policy in Asia

### Section 1

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#### 【Course Outline / Description】

In recent years, sustainable development has gained currency as the core concept of development in the worlds of scholars, practitioners, political leaders, the media, and the general public alike. Gone are the days of states pursuing their socioeconomic developments at the expense of the environment, the climate, the energy, and the people. Also gone are the days of the international community acquiescing to such modes of socioeconomic growth. In the era filled with grave concerns such as global pandemics, climate change, financial crisis, and persistent obstacles to realize full human development, “sustainable” is the new buzzword here to establish resilient and responsive environment, infrastructure, and mechanism at local, national, regional, and international levels so as to address such global challenges holistically and systematically. Adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development essentially anchors such efforts towards sustainable development. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which call for urgent, concerted action by all countries in a global partnership. In its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020, the United Nations reiterated the need for a sense of urgency to tackle global issues: “we are not here to celebrate. We are here to take action. Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter, we are here to ensure the future we want and the United Nations we need.” In 2021, Secretary-General António Guterres echoed this sentiment: “the choices we make, or fail to make, today could result in further breakdown, or a breakthrough to a greener, better, safer future. The choice is ours to make; but we will not have this chance again.”

Against this background, students will engage with the world of sustainable development and Sustainable Development Goals in this course (both in general and in the Asian context). What is sustainable development? What are Sustainable Development Goals? What have been the prominent issues for the world and Asia? What have been the main achievements and challenges thus far in the world and in Asia? How have Asian countries addressed each SDG? What can we do at the individual level to help achieve these SDGs? Where do we go beyond the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development? Such are the main research/discussion questions for this course.

### Section 2

#### 【Course Objectives/Goals/Learning Outcomes】

This course is designed to help students attain the following learning outcomes:

1. To learn and understand the essence of sustainable development, Sustainable Development Goals, and relevant public policies in Asia
2. To understand prominent sustainable development issues and challenges in general and in Asia
3. To critically analyze how to address global concerns and challenges at different levels
4. Link theoretical and empirical studies and apply analytical tools to countries of students' interests
5. Sharpen analytical, presentation, and writing skills on sustainable development

## Section 3

## 【Textbooks/Reading Materials】

Readings will be assigned for each week. Students are required to keep up with a full schedule of readings. Reading assignments will be the basis for informed classroom discussions. Students are thus expected to answer questions about the readings when called upon to do so in class. Failure to demonstrate the understanding of readings could affect students' participation grade.

## 【Class Schedule/Class Environment, Literature and Materials】

**NOTE 1: A more detailed syllabus will be shared with students later.**

NOTE 2: In each session, we will start with small presentations on sustainable development-related news by students.

Lesson	Topics	Readings
1	Course Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Please make sure to read the detailed syllabus carefully before the class!</li> <li>- Slobodan Perdan (2004), Introduction to Sustainable Development</li> </ul>
2	What Is Sustainable Development?	<p>Vision (<u>OPTIONAL READING</u>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gro Harlem Brundtland. <a href="#">Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future</a> (1987).</li> </ul> <p>Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kates, Parris, and Leiserowitz (2005), What Is Sustainable Development? Goals, Indicators, Values, and Practice.</li> </ul> <p>Concept and Definition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Susan Baker (2006), Sustainable Development (Ch. 2: The Concept of Sustainable Development)</li> <li>- Additional Readings</li> </ul> <p>Theory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Armin Grunwald (2014), What Kind of Theory Do We Need for Sustainable Development – and How Much of It?</li> </ul>
3	History and Various Dimensions of Sustainable Development 1  History and Actors	<p>History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stephen A. Roosa (2007), Sustainable Development Handbook (Ch. 1: What Is Sustainable Development?; <u>Read Only P. 26-54</u>)</li> <li>- Additional Readings</li> </ul> <p>Actors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Petrică Nițoiaia and Gabriel Camară (2018) Roles of Actors in Promoting Sustainable Development</li> <li>- Additional Readings</li> </ul>
4	History and Various Dimensions of Sustainable Development 2  Various Dimensions of Sustainable Development	<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jennifer A. Elliott (2012), An Introduction to Sustainable Development (<u>Read Only</u> the Sub-Section Titled “Framing the Concept of Sustainable Development”)</li> <li>- Additional Readings</li> </ul> <p>Economic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leslie Paul Thiele (2016), Sustainability (Ch. 6: Sustaining Economics)</li> </ul> <p>Environmental</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stephen Roosa and Matt Hanka (2007), Sustainable Development Handbook (Ch. 3: The Environment and Sustainable</li> </ul>

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		Development) Social - Kristen Magis and Craig Shinn (2008), <i>Emergent Principles of Social Sustainability</i>
5	Current State of Sustainable Development 1  Failures/Pitfalls	- Sherry Cable (2012), <i>Sustainable Failures: Environmental Policy and Democracy in a Petro-Dependent World</i> - Frances C. Moore (2011) <i>Toppling the Tripod: Sustainable Development, Constructive Ambiguity and the Environmental Challenge</i> - Additional Readings
6	Current State of Sustainable Development 2  Achievements/Prospects	How to Achieve Sustainability - Rogers, Jalal, and Boyd (2008), <i>An Introduction to Sustainable Development</i> ( <u>Read Only</u> P. 23-28) Environment - Rogers, Jalal, and Boyd (2008), <i>An Introduction to Sustainable Development</i> (Ch. 6: Environmental Management: Trends and Policies) Energy - Margaret Robertson (2017), <i>Sustainability Principles and Practice</i> (Ch. 9: Energy) Education & Individuals - Margaret Robertson (2017), <i>Sustainability Principles and Practice</i> (Ch. 16: Education and Ch 17: Working as Agents for Change)
7	Challenges 1  Challenges in General	How Big Is Your Environmental/Ecological Footprint? - Using <a href="#">this website</a> , find out how many planets we would need if everybody lives like you! Overview - Jennifer A. Elliott (2012), <i>An Introduction to Sustainable Development</i> (Ch. 2: The Global Challenges of Sustainable Development) Strong vs. Weak Sustainability - Jérôme Pelenc and Jérôme Ballet (2014), <a href="#">Brief for GSDR 2015 – Weak Sustainability versus Strong Sustainability</a> . Politics and Law - Leslie Paul Thiele (2016), <i>Sustainability</i> (Ch. 5: The Political and Legal Challenge) Measurement - Thomas M. Parris and Robert W. Kates (2003), <i>Characterizing and Measuring Sustainable Development</i>
8	Challenges 2  Challenges in Asia	Overview - Kioe Sheng Yap (2011), <i>A Region of Contrasts: Urban Development, Housing and Poverty in Asia</i> - Additional Readings Human Resources - Hay, Oshima, and Lewis (1999), <i>Capacity Building for Sustainable Development in Asia</i> Environment - Debashis Chakraborty and Sacchidananda Mukherjee (2018), <i>Environmental Challenges in Asia</i> Energy - Reiji Takeishi (2018), <i>Energy Situation in Asia</i>
9	SDGs – History and Overview	Vision - United Nations (2021), <a href="#">The Future We Want</a> History and Overview - Eric A. Friedman and Lawrence O. Gostin (2016), <i>The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: Achieving the Vision of</i>

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		<p>Global Health with Justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Additional Readings</li> </ul> <p>State of Affairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Browse through <a href="#">SDG Tracker</a> to see where we stand with each goal</li> <li>- United Nations (2022), <a href="#">The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2022</a></li> <li>- Additional Readings</li> </ul>
10	Sustainable Development and SDGs in Asia	<p>Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ramesh Sunam et al (2018), Implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific: Insights from Voluntary National Reviews</li> <li>- Additional Readings</li> </ul> <p>Japan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hiromi Masuda et al (2021), SDGs Mainstreaming at the Local Level: Case Studies from Japan.</li> </ul> <p>China</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Junjie Zhang (2012), Delivering Environmentally Sustainable Economic Growth: The Case of China</li> </ul>
11	SDG 1 – No Poverty  Poverty in General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">SDG Tracker for Goal No. 1</a> (Browse through it to understand the big picture)</li> <li>- Paul Collier (2007), The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It</li> <li>- Barry B. Hughes et al (2021), Reducing Global Poverty: Patterns of Potential Human Progress Vol. 1 (Introduction)</li> </ul>
12	SDG 1 – No Poverty  Poverty in Asia	<p>Asia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- John Malcolm Dowling and Yap Chin-Fang (2009), Chronic Poverty in Asia: Causes, Consequences and Policies (Ch. 2: What Determines Chronic Poverty in Asia?)</li> <li>- Additional Readings</li> </ul> <p>China</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- John Malcolm Dowling and Yap Chin-Fang (2009), Chronic Poverty in Asia: Causes, Consequences and Policies (Ch. 7.1: China)</li> </ul> <p>India</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- John Malcolm Dowling and Yap Chin-Fang (2009), Chronic Poverty in Asia: Causes, Consequences and Policies (Ch. 7.2: India)</li> </ul> <p>Bangladesh</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Browse through the website of <a href="#">Grameen Bank</a> as a way to eradicate poverty at the grassroots level</li> </ul>
13	SDG 2 – No Hunger  Hunger in General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">SDG Tracker for Goal No. 2</a> (Browse through it to understand the big picture)</li> <li>- Jenny Eaton Dyer and Cathleen Falsani, eds (2019), The End of Hunger: Renewed Hope for Feeding the World (Read Chs. 2, 20-22, and 28)</li> <li>- Frances Moore Lappé and Joseph Collins (2015), World Hunger: 10 Myths (Skim through all 10 myths)</li> <li>- Additional Readings</li> </ul>
14	SDG 2 – No Hunger  Hunger in Asia	<p>Asia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Asia Society and International Rice Research Institute Task Force Report (2010), Never an Empty Bowl: Sustaining Food Security in Asia (<a href="#">Read Only P. 8-19, 58-66</a>)</li> <li>- Additional Readings</li> </ul> <p>Japan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Toshiyuki Kako (2009), Sharp Decline in the Food Self-Sufficiency Ratio in Japan and Its Future Prospects</li> </ul>

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		<p>China</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brooke Jardine (2021), Food Security in China: Challenges, Policies, and Projections</li> </ul> <p>India</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Preethi Krishnan and Mangala Subramaniam (2014), Understanding the State: Right to Food Campaign in India</li> </ul>
15	<p>SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-Being</p> <p>Health and Well-Being in General</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">SDG Tracker for Goal No. 3</a> (Browse through it to understand the big picture)</li> <li>- Amir Abdul Khaliq and Raymond A. Smego (2007), Global Health: Past, Present, and Future</li> <li>- Yasushi Katsuma (2023), Diffusion of UHC Through Global Health Diplomacy</li> <li>- Additional Readings</li> </ul>
16	<p>SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-Being</p> <p>Health and Well-Being in Asia</p>	<p>Japan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Magdalena M. Wilson (2011), Suicide: A Unique Epidemic in Japan</li> </ul> <p>China</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- China Joint Study Partnership (2016), Deepening Health Reform in China: Building High-Quality and Value-Based Service Delivery (<u>Read Only</u> Ch. 1: Background: Impressive Gains in Health Outcomes But Substantial Challenges Remain)</li> </ul> <p>India</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pascaline Dupas and Radhika Jain (2021), Women Left Behind: Gender Disparities in Utilization of Government Health Insurance in India</li> </ul> <p>The Philippines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Elena Avramovska (2021), Diffusion of SRHR and Local Constraints: The Philippines</li> </ul>
17	<p>SDG 4 – Quality Education</p> <p>Quality Education in General</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">SDG Tacker for Goal No. 4</a> (Browse through it to understand the big picture)</li> <li>- Kremer, Branne, and Glennerster (2013), The Challenge of Education and Learning in the Developing World</li> <li>- Peter F. Orazem and Elizabeth M. King (2007), Schooling in Developing Countries: The Roles of Supply, Demand and Government Policy</li> <li>- Additional Readings</li> </ul>
18	<p>SDG 4 – Quality Education</p>	<p>Readings</p> <p>Access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- William E. Myers (2004), Child Labour and the Right to Education in South Asia: Needs versus Rights?</li> </ul> <p>Quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Raj Kumar Dhungana (2020), Paradoxes of Quality Education in South Asia</li> </ul> <p>Gender</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Abigail Murphy (2018), Gender-Based Education Inequality in China and India</li> </ul> <p>Inclusive Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leonardo P. Jimenez and Toshiro Ochiai (2005), Inclusion Versus Institutionalization: Japan's Educational Challenge</li> </ul>
19	<p>SDG 5 – Gender Equality</p> <p>Gender Equality in General and in Asia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">SDG Tacker for Goal No. 5</a> (Browse through it to understand the big picture as well as the status of gender in Asia)</li> <li>- Seema Jayachandran (2015), The Roots of Gender Inequality in Developing Countries.</li> <li>- Asian Development Bank (2015), Women in the</li> </ul>

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		<p>Workforce: An Unmet Potential in Asia and the Pacific</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Additional Readings</li> </ul>
20	<p>SDG 5 – Gender Equality</p> <p>Group Exercise – How Can We Reduce Gender Gaps in Japan?</p>	<p>Readings</p> <p>Discouraging Statistics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">116<sup>th</sup> out of 146 Countries by WEF's 2022 Global Gender Gap Report</a> (See P. 10)</li> <li>- <a href="#">104<sup>th</sup> out of 190 Countries by World Bank's Report on Women, Business and the Law 2023</a> (See P. 4)</li> </ul> <p>Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gill Steel (2019), Introduction: Changing Women's and Men's Lives in Japan</li> </ul> <p>Politics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Yuki Tsuji (2019), Women and the Liberal Democratic Party in Transition</li> </ul> <p>Civil Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kamata, An, and Gao, <a href="#">Japan: A Laggard in Gender Equality in Public Administration among OECD Countries</a></li> </ul> <p>Society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Melanie Belarmino and Melinda R. Roberts (2019), Japanese Gender Role Expectations and Attitudes: A Qualitative Analysis of Gender Inequality</li> </ul> <p>Employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kumiko Nemoto (2016), Too Few Women at the Top: The Persistence of Inequality in Japan (Ch. 1: Sex Segregation in Japanese Business)</li> </ul> <p>Group Presentations</p> <p>The primary objective of this group exercise is to help students understand and critically analyze the persistent issue of gender inequality in Japan and brainstorm policy reforms to address related challenges and issues.</p> <p>See the detailed syllabus for more details.</p>
21	<p>SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure (Focusing on Innovation)</p>	<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Vittoria Tuzzi et al (2020), Innovation for Sustainability (Read Chs. 1-3)</li> <li>- Laura Diaz Anadon et al (2015), Making Technological Innovation Work for Sustainable Development</li> <li>- Additional Readings</li> </ul> <p>Asia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Noriko Sakamoto (2020), Local Energy Initiatives in Japan</li> <li>- Additional Readings</li> </ul> <p>Assignment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Be prepared to present innovations that you found in Asia</a></li> </ul>
22	<p>SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities</p>	<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">SDG Tracker for Goal No. 10</a> (Browse through it to understand the big picture as well as the status of inequality across Asia)</li> <li>- David S. Landes (1998), The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some Are So Rich and Some So Poor (Read Chs. 14, 22, 23, and 29)</li> <li>- Hernando De Soto (2000), The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else (Read Ch. 7: By Way of Conclusion)</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Additional Readings</li> </ul> <p>Case of Lao PDR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mana Southichack (2017), <a href="#">LDC Status Graduation, The Ways Forward for Lao PDR</a></li> <li>- Warr, Rasphone, and Menon (2015), Two Decades of Rising Inequality and Declining Poverty in the Lao People's Democratic Republic</li> </ul>
23	SDG 13 – Climate Action  Climate Action in General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">SDG Tracker for Goal No. 13</a> (Browse through it to understand the big picture)</li> <li>- Margaret Robertson (2017), Sustainability Principles and Practice (Ch. 5: Climate)</li> <li>- Additional Readings</li> </ul>
24	SDG 13 – Climate Action  Climate Action in Asia	<p>Southeast Asia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nguyen Huu Ninh et al (2021), Social Vulnerability to Climate Change in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam</li> </ul> <p>Japan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- World Bank (2018), Building Regulation for Resilience – Converting Disaster Experience into a Safer Built Environment: The Case of Japan</li> <li>- Yuichiro Tsuji (2020), Climate Change Action and Adaptation in Tokyo</li> </ul> <p>China</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Xiaodong Pan and Zhenshan Li (2011), Climate Change and Cities' Actions in China</li> </ul>
25	SDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions  Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions in General	<p>Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">SDG Tracker for Goal No. 16</a> (Browse through it to understand the big picture)</li> <li>- <a href="#">World Justice Project Rule of Law Index</a> (Browse through it to understand the big picture of the rule of law in the world today)</li> </ul> <p>Equal Access to Justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Vapnek, Boaz, and Turku (2016), Improving Access to Justice in Developing and Post-Conflict Countries: Practical Examples from the Field</li> </ul> <p>Independent Judiciary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tom Ginsburg (2003), Judicial Review in New Democracies: Constitutional Courts in Asian Cases</li> </ul> <p>National Human Rights Institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Paris Principles</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">Accreditation Status as of April 2023</a></li> <li>- Croina Lacatus and Valentina Carraro (2023), National Human Rights Institutions: Independent Actors in Global Human Rights Governance?</li> </ul> <p>Legal Pluralism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tilmann J. Röder (2012), Informal Justice Systems: Challenges and Perspectives</li> </ul>
26	SDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions  Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions in Asia	<p>Rule of Law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Albert H.Y. Chen (2014), The Achievement of Constitutionalism in Asia: Moving Beyond 'Constitutions without Constitutionalism'</li> </ul> <p>Equal Access to Justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gary Chan Kok Yew (2008), Access to Justice for the Poor: The Singapore Judiciary at Work</li> </ul> <p>Independent Judiciary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tom Ginsburg (2009), Judicial Independence in East Asia: Lessons for China</li> </ul> <p>National Human Rights Institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Silvia Croydon (2017), Progress or Prevarication: The Move Towards the Establishment of a Human Rights Commission</li> </ul>

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		in Japan Legal Pluralism - Noah Coburn and John Dempsey (2010), Informal Dispute Resolution in Afghanistan
27	Group Final Paper Presentations	No Assigned Readings
28	Group Final Paper Presentations	No Assigned Readings
29	Where Do We Go from Here? (or Group Final Paper Presentations)	- Stephen A. Roosa (2007), Sustainable Development Handbook (Ch. 12: What the Future Holds: Creating a Sustainable World) - Dillard, Dujon, and King (2008), Reflection and Directions for the Future - Jan Servaes (2017), Conclusion: Are the SDGs “Sustainable”? - Additional Readings
30	Wrap-up and Final Exam Preparation	No Assigned Readings (But Please Make Sure to Review All Areas Covered in the Semester and Bring Any Questions That You May Have)

### Section 4

#### 【Learning Assessments/Grading Rubric】

- Participation: 30%
- 2 Small Presentations on Sustainable Development-Related News: 5%
- Final Exam: 20%
- Group Final Paper: 30%
- Group Final Paper Presentation: 15%

NOTE: The instructor reserves the right to modify/update the grading criteria and scale during the semester.

### Section 5

#### 【Additional Information】

### Syllabus

To the extent possible, we will proceed with our class in accordance with the course schedule stated above. Should the needs occur, however, the instructor reserves the right to modify the course syllabus during the semester (including the grading criteria and scale). In such cases, the instructor will strive to inform students of any changes well in advance.

### Academic Integrity

You are expected to adhere to the standards upheld by Kansai Gaidai University. Violations of academic integrity include cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, interference, violation of course rules, and facilitating academic dishonesty. When you submit an assignment with your name on it, you indicate that the work contained therein is yours, unless otherwise cited or referenced. Any ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral use must be fully acknowledged. If you are unsure about the expectations for completing an assignment or taking a test or exam, be sure to seek clarification from the instructor in advance.

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### **Participation**

Students are expected to come to class having completed all the required readings for that day and be ready to discuss and ask questions about them. As indicated in the grade percentage, this class takes students' active participation seriously. Keep in mind that quality (not necessarily quantity) and consistency of class participation is the key.

Given this context, students are expected to post (1) reflections and (2) questions for class discussion on Blackboard, based on the readings of each session. Please bear in mind that this is half of the participation grade (15%). The main objective of this activity is not only to make sure that students keep up with the assigned readings but also to create a forum where they can exchange comments, thoughts, and questions with each other AND ensure lively debates in the classroom. As such, please post them prior to each session (at least a day before each session). Both reflections and discussion questions do NOT need to be extensive; short responses will suffice for this purpose. If you so prefer, you can simply list down your thoughts and questions.

### **Positive Learning Environment**

As your instructor, one of my primary responsibilities in our classroom is to create a positive learning environment for all. I take this responsibility very seriously and highly encourage all students to actively take part in class debates. In fact, I have prepared sample class debate questions in the detailed syllabus. As such, any act of discrimination or harassment based on race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, or disability will not be tolerated in this course. Let's show utmost respect for each other and create a positive learning environment together.