ASIAN 275: Great Cities of Asia

CHINA’S GLOBAL CITIES

Instructor: Dr. Emily Wilcox (eewilcox@umich.edu)
Course Time and Location: Mon/Wed 2:30-4:00pm, 2260 USB
Instructor Office Hours: Tues 2:00-4:00pm or by appointment, 5159 South Thayer
GSI: Katherine Dimmery (kdimmery@umich.edu)
GSI Office Hours: TBD

Course Description: In her landmark book “The Global City,” sociologist Saskia Sassen argued that New York, London and Tokyo are “global cities” – that is, command centers in the global economy defined by cross-border dynamics and strategic transnational networks. In this course, we consider the possibility of the global city in China, past, present and future; modern cities serve as points of departure for exploring historical moments of the formation of a cosmopolitan Chinese urban culture. Starting with Xi’an, China’s ancient capital, we ask how the Silk Road formed a kind of global exchange route in ancient times, making China a hub for cross-cultural exchange and economic growth. Next, we examine the rise of the colonial city in China, through two major port cities and centers of Chinese fashion and film culture: Shanghai and Hong Kong. Finally, we examine the role of the city in China’s modern political culture, taking wartime Chongqing, the communist reconstruction of Beijing, and the post-1949 Sinification of Taipei as case studies. There are no prerequisites, but some background knowledge in the history and culture of China is recommended.

Readings: All required course readings and viewings will be provided electronically via CTools. No purchased readings are required for this course.

Grading: Requirements include quizzes, lecture and section attendance, in-class activities, a reading journal, a final paper, and discussion. Missed or late assignments may not be made up without a documented, official medical or other excused absence.

Lecture and Section Attendance 10%
Section Participation (includes one section presentation) 15%
Weekly Reading Journal 25%
Quiz 1 10%
Quiz 2 10%
Quiz 3 10%
Final Paper 20%

Lecture and Section Attendance: Attendance will be taken at all class meetings and will account for 10% of the overall grade. More than five unexcused absences total will result in a failing grade for the course. To receive an excused absence, students must email the
GSI with official documentation of a medical or other excuse.

**Section Participation**: Students are expected to participate in section activities and discussions. Each student will be required to give one formal section presentation during the semester, which will account for 1/3 of the section participate grade.

**Weekly Reading Journal**: Weekly reading journals must be uploaded in the Assignments section on Ctools and are due at the start of section each week. Journals should include the following content: 1) bibliographic citation for the assigned reading/viewing(s), taken directly from the course syllabus; 2) 200-500 word summary of the main content of the assigned materials; 3) 200-500 word critical reflection, based on your own reactions to the course materials. Journals are worth 10 points total, evaluated as follows:

- 10: Outstanding – shows completion of the assignment in its entirety and insightful original reflection based on independent critical thought;
- 9: Excellent – shows grasp of the main points of the assignment and some original reflection or critical thought;
- 8: Good – shows sincere effort but lacks understanding of major points, or offers original reflections without evidence of completing the assignment;
- 7: Acceptable – completes the assignment but lacks some major content, either in the summary, bibliography, or in the critical response;
- 0: No submission

**Quizzes**: Three quizzes will be given during the course of the semester, taking the place of midterm and final exams. These quizzes will not be cumulative; they will include only material covered in the particular section of the course in which they take place. Quizzes will be given in class, and they will consist of short answer, multiple choice, and essay components. Content for quizzes will be drawn from lectures, required readings/viewings, and section discussions. A study guide will be provided one week prior to each quiz.

**Final Paper**: Students will complete one 8-10 page final paper for this course. Select a noteworthy landmark (palace, memorial, tower, park, bridge, theater, etc.) from one of the great cities discussed in this course. Explain the historical and contemporary significance of the landmark as a part of Chinese urban culture. Is the landmark an important representative of the city today? Can the landmark be considered global? Students will be expected to analyze the landmark in the context of knowledge learned in the course, as well as using scholarly sources gained through outside research. Papers will be submitted on CTools and will be due at the time of the officially scheduled final exam for the course. Detailed requirements and guidelines for the final paper will be distributed the week after Spring Break.

**Office Hours**: Office hours are a precious opportunity to meet and talk with your professor and GSI -- take advantage of them! You can use office hours to talk about ideas for your research presentation and/or final project, to get feedback on a recent
assignment, or to talk about the class and your interests in general. Times and locations can be found at the top of this syllabi.

Disabilities and Special Accommodations: This course is intended to be accessible to students with all abilities and special circumstances. Students needing special accommodations for documented disabilities or other reasons should present requests via email within the first two full weeks of classes in order to ensure plans can be made to comply with these needs.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: Plagiarism will result in an automatic failing of this course and possible disciplinary action by the University. It is your responsibility to understand the rules of plagiarism and to cite your sources appropriately in assignments for this course. For your own benefit, please read the following explanation of plagiarism as defined by the UM:
http://www.lib.umich.edu/academic-integrity/understanding-plagiarism-and-academic-integrity

Laptop Policy: In order to encourage distraction-free learning and classroom participation, no laptops will be allowed during lecture for this course. Laptop use during section discussions is also discouraged but may be allowed in special cases, at the discretion of the GSI.

SCHEDULE

Week 1: Introduction to the Course

Wednesday, Jan 8
Introduction to the Course

Week 2: China’s Global Cities

Monday, Jan 13
What is a Global City?

Wednesday, Jan 15
Six Chinese Cities: Xi’an to Taipei


Unit One: Historical Cities (Xi’an)

Week 3: Tang Dynasty Cosmopolitanism

Monday, Jan 20
No class – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Wednesday, Jan 22
Chinese Cosmopolitanism in the Tang Dynasty


**Week 4: Silk Road as Global Exchange**

Monday, Jan 27
Economic Exchange on the Silk Road

Wednesday, Jan 29
Cultural Exchange on the Silk Road


**Week 5: Life in the Ancient Capital**

Monday, Feb 3
Everyday Life in the Tang Dynasty Capital

Wednesday, Feb 5
Art, Music, and Performance in the Tang Capital


**Week 6: Modern Xi’an and the Global City in Historical Imagination**

Monday, Feb 10
Global History in Modern Xi’an

Wednesday, Feb 12
Ancient Cities in Modern Chinese Culture

Week 7: Chinese Cosmopolitanism in Film

Monday, Feb 17
Film Screening: *House of Flying Daggers*

Wednesday, Feb 19
Quiz 1

Unit Two: Colonial Cities (Hong Kong, Shanghai, Chongqing)

Week 8: Hong Kong and Shanghai as Colonial Cities

Monday, Feb 24
European Colonialism and the Transformation of Asia

Wednesday, Feb 26
Shanghai and Hong Kong as Colonial Cities


Week 9: Spring Break

Monday, March 3
No class – Spring Break

Wednesday, March 5
No class – Spring Break

Week 10: Urban Culture in the Chinese Jazz Age

Monday, March 10
Art, Music, and Performance in 1930’s Shanghai

Wednesday, March 12
Shanghai and Hong Kong in Film


Week 11: Japanese Invasion, Gender, and the Chinese City

Monday, March 17
World War II and Cities Under Siege
Wednesday, March 19
Everyday Life in Wartime Chongqing


Week 12: Modern Chongqing and Industrial Urbanism

Monday, March 24
Modern Chongqing, Car Capital of China

Wednesday, March 26
Quiz 2

Unit Three: Politics and the Chinese City (Beijing, Taipei)

Week 13: The Communist Rebuilding of Beijing

Monday, March 31
China’s Communist Transformation

Wednesday, April 2
Beijing as a Modern Chinese Capital


Week 14: Urban Culture in the People’s Republic

Monday, April 7
Everyday Life in Communist Beijing

Wednesday, April 9
Art, Music, and Performance in Communist Beijing


Week 15: Creating Chinese Taipei

Monday, April 14
The Nationalist Transformation of Taiwan
Wednesday, April 16
Film Screening: *Good Men, Good Women* (1995)


**Week 16: Course Wrap-up**

Monday, April 21
Quiz 3

**Final Paper due on Ctools on Tuesday, April 29th at 12:00 NOON.**