

SYLLABUS GEO 635: Geography of Asia

Credit: 3 hours Instructor: Dr. Susan Walcott (email: smwalcot@uncg.edu);
Office: Graham 443; Tel: 334-5382; Office Hours: Tu 1:30-2:30
Class: Wednesday 6-8:50 Graham 402

Catalog description: This course examines dynamic economic, sociocultural, and political changes in Asia by looking at their roots in physical and human resources influencing rapid modernization within an ancient cultural framework.

This primarily lecture course includes geography videos developed on individual countries, a unit on Asian food, in-class discussions, two tests and two short projects.

- Project 1 involves analyzing an Asian video on geographic criteria as noted in assignment. Assessment of assignment will be based on the accuracy of application of these criteria, and insightfulness of evaluation of geographic aspects (effect of setting, cultural issues specific to place or degree of universality, type of transportation, other indicators of development level, transferability of story, effect of location shift, etc.);
- Project 2 involves stating a testable research hypothesis and writing an annotated bibliography suitable for use in a research paper on this subject. This is a process-oriented assignment requiring familiarity with a range of materials and the ability to assess their contribution to specific aspects at issue. Literature referenced should be sufficiently pertinent and of high quality. Evaluations should be of sufficient length to indicate enough has been read and digested to properly evaluate their contribution to the research topic.
- It is necessary to complete reading assignments before the class period listed in order to participate in class discussion and benefit from the lectures. Three discussion questions on the readings are required per week;

- A news article on the country currently being examined, with brief written description of the issue and its importance along with short in-class presentation, earns one extra examination point. Limit of ten per semester, one per week. See handout for suggested media sources.

Evaluation and Grading: A=100-93; A- = 92-90; B+=89-87; B=86-83; B- = 82-80; C+=79-77; C=76-73; C- = 72-70; F=less than 70. Midterm and Comprehensive exams = 25% each, two projects = 15% each. Class participation (articles, weekly questions, and discussion participation) = 20%. The exams should demonstrate mastery of underlying concepts, familiarity with key terms, and appropriate application to contemporary events. The midterm will include a regional map section; the final exam will be comprehensive. Short essay questions will be assigned in advance for your preparation, and responses written without notes during the scheduled in-class examination time.

Required Text: Weightman, B. 2006. *Dragons and Tigers: A Geography of South, East and Southeast Asia.* NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Other assigned readings posted on Blackboard:

Anderson, E.N. 1988."Chinese Foodstuffs Today". *The Food of China*, pp.137-181. New Haven:Yale University Press.

Bowen, J. T. 2000. "Singapore". In Leinbach and Ulack, *Southeast Asia: Diversity and Development,* pp. 379-407.

Collinwood, D. 2008. Hong Kong. In *Japan and the Pacific Rim, Global Studies 9th edition, McGraw-Hill, p.60-64.*

McColl, R. 2004. The geography and political economics of Inner Mongolia Beyond 2000. In C. Hsieh and M. Lu, eds. *Changing China: A Geographic Appraisal.* Cambridge, MA: Westview Press, 397-410.

Shakya, T. 1999. "Introduction". *The Dragon in the Land of Snows: A History of Modern Tibet Since 1947.* NY: Columbia University Press, pp. 1-32.

Toops, S. 2004. "Xinjiang (Eastern Turkistan): Names, regions, landscapes, and Futures". In C. Hsieh and M. Lu, eds. *Changing China: A Geographic Appraisal.* Cambridge, MA: Westview Press, 411-421.

Ulack, R. and T. Leinbach. 2000. "An Opening View" and "A Closing View". In *Southeast Asia: Diversity and Development.* Pp. 1-4, 548-553. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Veeck, G., C. Pannell, C. Smith, and Y. Huang. 2006. *China's Geography*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Zurick, D. and P. Karan. 1999. "Himalaya Under Siege". *Himalaya: Life on the Edge of the World.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Course Calendar

Wk	Date	Topic	Reading
1	1/21	**East Asia**: Physical and Cultural	Weightman, pp. 1-75
		Setting, Geographic Basics	
2	1/28	Urban **China**: economic development engine, challenges & regional differences	Veeck pp.127-156, 233-262
3	2/4	**China**: Agriculture & Industry, rural & rustbelt; Roots and unrest	Veeck pp.205-232, 263-290
4	2/11	**China**'s Periphery: **Mongolia, Xinjiang, Tibet**	
		Student will choose one reading from the following to represent as "area specialist", and consider core-periphery effects:	McColl/ Mongolia; Shakya/ Tibet; Toops/ Xinjiang
5	2/18	**Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong**: Three little Tigers, island global	Weightman, assorted; Bowen 379-407,
		development models	Collinwood 60-64
6	2/25	**N. and S. Korea** and **Japan**:	Weightman
		Uneasy rivals for the Rim, historical roots	
7	3/4	**Japan**: Asian development model, early	Weightman
		Modernizer success	
		SPRING BREAK	
8	3/18	**MIDTERM/ India**: South Asia Giant	Weightman
		Historic cultural/physical basics	
9	3/25	**Association of American Geographers**	**Convention**
10	4/1	**India**: Development Dynamo	Weightman
		PROJECT 1 DUE	
11	4/8	**Himalayan Rim/ SEA Overview**: Mountains to monsoon	Zurick & Karan; Leinback
12	4/15	**Burma** and **Thailand**: Contrasts	Weightman
		Asian Food Geography: physical environment, human migration effects; in-class video, sampling, discussion	Anderson
13	4/22	**Indonesia** and **the Philippines**:	Weightman
		SEA Archipelago/ **PROJECT 2**	
14	4/29	**Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia** and	Weightman
		Malaysia: Shatterbelt?	
15	5/11	COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION	7pm

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend all class meetings and participate in class discussion with thoughtful and relevant comments. Students who miss class do not do well on exams, since material covered in class supplements as well as emphasizes important points made in the text. A roll sheet may be circulated on random days as a check on attendance. Office hours are for students who need assistance with material covered in classes they attend. Make-up exams will not be given without verifiable evidence of extreme unforeseeable hardship. It is necessary to complete reading assignments before the class period listed in order to participate in class discussion and benefit from the lectures. Students who do not attend class during the first two weeks will be dropped from the roll.

Comprehensive Examination: The second examination will cover major themes covered in the course, requiring synthesis and analysis of overall trends in major areas with specific country examples. Short essay topics will be distributed in advance for response preparation. Instructor will chose from these topics for the in-class, no notes written test on the day noted in the syllabus.

Academic Honor Code: Tests and written projects will include the student's signature indicating compliance with the Academic Integrity Policy.

Additional Requirements: Turn off all electronic items before class begins. No food inside the classroom except on day assigned.