

# GEO 240 Geography of East Asia



Waterfront in Guangzhou  
early 20th Century



Waterfront in Guangzhou  
early 21st Century

## DETAILS

Fall 2017  
Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:30 - 11:45  
Room D 203

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## DESCRIPTION

Contemporary economic and cultural development in Asia derives from ancient patterns of conflict and cooperation. For thousands of years, China profoundly influenced geographies of language, culture, and religion throughout East Asia. Both variously contested by and intricately subsumed into nationalistic rhetoric, the intended and unintended consequences of 20<sup>th</sup> century Japanese imperialism remain palpable throughout the region. This course allows students to gain understanding of this complex region at multiple scales—interpersonal, societal, and economic—and from multiple perspectives—historical, cultural, and political. Considering the everyday lives of ordinary North Koreans proffers fine-grained insight of complex relationships between this retrograde nation and its neighbors. Studying patterns of urbanization in China and Japan, particularly the organization of public space and patterns of land use, allows students to examine the impacts of urban planning on the lives of ordinary people. Exploring the rise of civil society, specifically neighborhood organizations and protest movements, offers students insight into how grassroots organizations are forcing states throughout East Asia to reevaluate the rationale of maintaining rigid top-down relationships with their constitutive societies. Finally, mapping the geographies of ラメン (ramen) students will learn how cultural geographies and Cold War geopolitical systems interacted to produce this iconic dish. This course is pivots on two pedagogical tools: lectures and seminar discussions. Using perspectives offered by political geography, historical geography, and urban geography lectures focus on patterns of urbanization, territoriality, and East Asian cultural complexes.

The seminar discussions emerge directly from the required readings and foreground two regions: North Korea and the French Concession in Shanghai.

## OBJECTIVES

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Upon completion of this course students will:

1. Have learned fundamental geographical concepts and theories.
2. Have improved their reading comprehension skills.
3. Be comfortable using geographical terminology in written and verbal discourse.
4. Be able to think, write, and argue critically about geographical problems.
5. Have learned to recognize interdisciplinary relationships between geography, history, economics, and anthropology.
6. Have deepened their understanding of the political and urban geographies of East Asia.
7. Have gained insight into how these political geographies and urban geographies are affects and are coproduced cultural complexes.

## READING

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### Required Texts

Barbara Demick (2010) *Nothing to Envy: Ordinary Lives in North Korea*  
 Rob Schmitz (2016) *Street of Eternal Happiness: Big City Dreams Along a Shanghai Road*

### Additional Readings

Readings selected from my library are posted on AIMS under the appropriate week.

## ASSESSMENT

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Seminar	40
Participation	15
Midterm Exam	20
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>25</u>

Total Points Possible	100
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### Seminar Discussion Questions

Unlike those constituting the second half of the semester, seminars during the first half of the semester will be run along the lines of a true seminar. This format requires that both the instructor and each of the students, initiate, contribute to, and catalyze an class-period long discussion. In order to facilitate robust discussions to which every one contributes, I will distribute, via AIMS, discussion questions. The answers to these questions as well as a series of questions that each student has about the reading will be due at the beginning of each of these type of seminar sessions. Like the seminar papers, discussion questions will be graded.

### **Seminar Papers**

The presentation of seminar papers will form the basis of seminar discussions during the second part of the semester. I expect to read well organized papers that include the following: an introduction, a body comprising a logical argument, and a conclusion. Scholarship of others, if included, must be adequately cited. The citation style is at the authors' discretion. Papers must be double spaced. Seminar papers should be between 1000 and 1500 words (four to six pages).

Seminar papers must accomplish four tasks. First, they must be well written. That is, they must lack distracting grammatical, syntactical, semantical, and spelling errors. And they must be written in such a way that engages the reader. Second, authors must then select **one** compelling aspect/event/outcome/etc. from the reading and briefly summarize it. Third, each paper's argument must be based in a geographic theory. Finally, the paper must synthesize the compelling aspect/event/outcome/etc. of the reading within this theoretical argument. This fourth component is essentially an processes of assembly and critique, whereby authors insert examples drawn from the reading into the theoretical construct they chose to work with and then argue why the theory facilitates a fuller understanding of the summarized compelling aspect/event/outcome/etc..

### **Participation**

Because this course is based in large measure on discussion, the consistent attendance and engaged participation of each student is essential to its success. I will maintain a log detailing each student's engagement in seminars and during lectures. Collaboratively and critically engaging with ideas may lead to disagreement. Colleagues can disagree *and* maintain respect for each other and one another's views. I insist that students strive to learn from the differences that manifest while debating the merit of theoretical and empirical evidence by maintaining an atmosphere of civility during discussion.

### **Midterm Exam**

The midterm will cover material presented in lectures and in the reading assignments. It will cover *terms, concepts, and theories* as well as *regional specifics* presented during the first part of the semester. It will comprise multiple-choice, short answer, true/false and essay questions. Aside from an exceptional situation as outlined in the Student Handbook, There will be no chance to make up the midterm exam.

### **Final Exam**

The final will cover material presented in lectures and in the reading assignments during the entire semester. It will cover *terms, concepts and theories* covered during the entire semester and *regional specifics* presented during the second part of the semester. It will comprise multiple-choice, short answer, true/false and essay questions. Aside from an exceptional situation as outlined in the Student Handbook, There will be no chance to make up the final exam.

## ASSESSMENT POLICIES

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### **Format Requirements**

All written assignments must include the following in the upper left corner of the first page: Student's name, student ID number, assignment name, and due date. All assignments must be formatted in the following manner: double spaced, font size of 11 or 12 point, standard margins, and an indented first line for each paragraph.

### **Submission Requirements**

Unless otherwise instructed, students are expected to submit written assignments on the AIMS platform. I will only accept Word (.doc or .docx) or PDF (.pdf) formats. All files submitted must be saved in the following manner: Student Name\_Assignment Name.docx. I expect assignments to be submitted on time. Assignments due in class must be turned in at the beginning of class. I reserve the right to deduct points for late submissions and I reserve the right to determine the percentage to be deducted.

### **Makeup Work**

Aside from *exceptional situations*, there will be no chance to make up missed exams or quizzes or turn assignments in past their due day/time. Proof of an exceptional situation must be submitted to me in writing and signed by the appropriate authority within 24 hours of the due date. I reserve the right to define an exceptional situation and furthermore to make all final decisions relating to amending, redoing, or making up late or incomplete work.

## GENERAL POLICIES

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### **Academic Honesty**

Academic dishonesty consists of plagiarism, cheating, fabrication and falsification, multiple submission of the same work, misuse of academic materials, and complicity in the academic dishonesty of others.

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated; the consequences of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to failing an assignment, failing the class, and possibly dismissal from the university. Students are responsible for being observant of and attentive to Akita International University's policies about academic honesty.

### **Attendance**

Learning is an ongoing process; one that builds upon previously acquired insights and skills. Consistent and engaged attendance is vital for success in this course. I reserve the right to deal with exceptional or extended absences on a case-by-case basis.

### **Special Needs**

If you require accommodations, please alert me of your needs on the first day of class so that I can work with the administration to meet them.

**Civility & Classroom Decorum**

Silence all cell phones, beepers, etc. during class. Speaking on cell phones, texting, or using electronic equipment in any way that is not directly related to class is strictly prohibited.

**SCHEDULE**

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<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Foundations</b>
Sept 5	Course Overview
Sept 7	Lecture - What is Geography
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Foundations</b>
Sept 12	Lecture - The Social Production of Space
Sept 14	Lecture - First Effective Settlement - Rice & Zomia
Reading	TBA
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>Historical Geographies of China</b>
Sept 19	Lecture - The Great Walls of China
Sept 21	Lecture - Chinese Urbanization
Reading	TBA
<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Historical Geographies of China</b>
Sept 26	Lecture - Chinese Urbanization
Sept 28	Seminar
Reading	Nothing to Envy – Chapters 1-3
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Historical Geographies of China</b>
Oct 3	Lecture - Chegzhongcun - Urban Villages
Oct 5	Seminar
Reading	Nothing to Envy – Chapters 4-6
<b>Week 6</b>	<b>Historical Geographies of China</b>
Oct 10	<b>NO CLASS</b>
Oct 12	Seminar
Reading	Nothing to Envy – Chapters 7–10
<b>Week 7</b>	<b>Historical Geographies of Korea</b>
Oct 17	Lecture - A Shrimp Among Whales
Oct 19	Seminar
Reading	Nothing to Envy – Chapters 11-13
<b>Week 8</b>	<b>Historical Geographies of Korea</b>
Oct 24	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>
Oct 26	Lecture- Korean Nationalism
<b>Week 9</b>	<b>Historical Geographies of Korea</b>
Oct 31	Lecture - Reconciling Korean Nationalism with Japanese Nationalism
Nov 2	Seminar
Reading	Nothing to Envy – Chapters 14-17

<b>Week 10</b>	<b>Historical Geographies of Taiwan</b>
Nov 7	Lecture - Taiwan's Surveillance State
Nov 9	Seminar
Reading	Nothing to Envy – Chapters 18-Epilogue
<b>Week 11</b>	<b>Historical Geographies of Japan</b>
Nov 14	Lecture - Tokugawa Urbanizaation
Nov 16	Seminar
Reading	Street of Eternal Happiness – Chapters 1-3
<b>Week 12</b>	<b>Historical Geographies of Japan</b>
Nov 21	Lecture - Tokyo Slums
Nov 23	<b>NO CLASS</b>
Reading	Street of Eternal Happiness – Chapters 4-6
<b>Week 13</b>	<b>Historical Geographies of Japan</b>
Nov 28	Lecture - Planning for Authenticity in Kyoto
Nov30	Seminar
Reading	Street of Eternal Happiness – Chapters 7-10
<b>Week 14</b>	<b>Historical Geographies of Japan</b>
Dec 5	Lecture - ラーメン (Ramen) Geographies
Dec 7	Seminar
Reading	Street of Eternal Happiness – Chapters 11-13
<b>Week 15</b>	<b>Historical Geographies of Japan</b>
Dec 12	Lecture - ラーメン (Ramen) Geographies
Dec 14	Seminar
Reading	Street of Eternal Happiness – Chapters 14-15
<b>Week 16</b>	<b>Exam Week</b>
Dec 19	<b>FINAL EXAM (10:30 - 11:45, room D 203)</b>