

Geography of East Asia

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Office hours: Fridays 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM or by appointment

Course description

This course provides an overview of East Asia from a critical geographic perspective. The course begins by asking what constitutes East Asia and what makes East Asia an emerging world region. While acknowledging that 'East Asia' is a highly porous and a fluid concept, we use the term to refer to a group of countries (China, Taiwan, Mongolia, South Korea, North Korea, and Japan) that are not only geographically proximate but also closely connected historically, culturally, ethnically, politically, and economically. Students will explore and engage with various historical and contemporary issues of the region, with a particular focus on China, South Korea, and Japan, through readings, case studies, discussions, and debates. Critical geography is concerned about the relations between space and society in terms of how knowledge-power is produced and enacted, and is inevitably drawn into the questions of differences, unevenness, and inequality. With this in mind, students will learn and apply key theoretical lenses in geography, which include modernity, uneven development, developmental state, (post)-colonialism, nationalism, neoliberalism, transnationalism, and geopolitics.

Learning objectives and outcomes

- 1) Describe the ideas and forces that have emerged East Asia as a world region
 - Locate major geographic features of the region
 - Describe major historic events and discuss their significance in shaping East Asia today
 - Explain different models of development and apply developmental and post-developmental state theory to the context of East Asia

- 2) Identify current issues of each country in East Asia and explain their interconnectivity
 - Describe major economic, political, social, cultural, and environmental issues of each country that constitutes East Asia
 - Examine how national issues are related to each other in regional and global political economy

- 3) Apply key geographic lenses to analyze major debates and transformations taking place in East Asia today
 - Define neoliberalism and examine how neoliberalism as a response to the reactions to recent economic crises is transforming East Asia
 - Identify major environmental debates of East Asia and assess how the current socio-ecological

transformations would shape the future of the region

- Describe major geopolitical debates of East Asia and assess how recent geopolitical events would shape the future of the region

Resources

This class does not have a required textbook. Readings for each week will be announced and posted on Canvas in advance.

Readings for this class:

Chu, Y. W. (Ed.). (2016). *The Asian developmental state: Reexaminations and new departures*. Springer.

Shapiro, Judith (2016). *China's environmental challenges*. John Wiley & Sons.

Sze, Julie. (2015). *Fantasy islands: Chinese dreams and ecological fears in an age of climate crisis*. Univ of California Press.

Yeh, Emily T. (2013). *Taming Tibet: landscape transformation and the gift of Chinese development*. Cornell University Press.

Park, B.-G., Hill, R. C., & Saito, A. (Ed.). (2012). *Locating neoliberalism in East Asia: neoliberalizing spaces in developmental states*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Manabe, N. (2015). *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised: Protest Music After Fukushima*. Oxford University Press.

Ong, A. (2006). *Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty*. Duke University Press.

Roy, A., & Ong, A. (2011). *Worlding cities: Asian experiments and the art of being global*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Robinson, Michael Edson. (2007). *Korea's twentieth-century odyssey*. University of Hawaii Press.

Watson, James L. (2006). *Golden arches east: McDonald's in East Asia*. Stanford University Press.

Ainslie, M. J. 2016. K-dramas across Thailand: Constructions of Koreanness and Thainess by contemporary Thai consumers. *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 14 (7).

Bartal, O. (2016). From Hiroshima to Fukushima: Comics and Animation as Subversive Agents of Memory in Japan. In *Interdisciplinary Handbook of Trauma and Culture* (pp. 101–115).

Golley, J. (2016). China's environmental challenges: under the dome with no way out? *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, Volume 14, Issue 22, Number 3.

Otmazgin, N. 2016. A New Cultural Geography of East Asia: Imagining A'Region'through Popular Culture. *The Asia-Pacific Journal | Japan Focus* Volume 14 (7).

Pow, C. P. (2018). Building a Harmonious Society through Greening: Ecological Civilization and Aesthetic Governmentality in China. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, 108(3), 864–883.

Shin, H. B., & Kim, S. H. (2016). The developmental state, speculative urbanisation and the politics of displacement in gentrifying Seoul. *Urban Studies*, 53(3), 540-559.

World Bank. (1993). *The East Asian Miracle*. World Bank Policy Research Report, 1, 1–347.

World Bank and The Development Research Center of the State Council, P. R. China. (2014). *Urban China: Toward Efficient, Inclusive, and Sustainable Urbanization*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Gregory, D., Johnston, R., Pratt, G., Watts, M., & Whatmore, S. (Eds.). (2011). *The dictionary of human geography*. John Wiley & Sons.

Marston, S. A., Knox, P. L., & Liverman, D. M. (2016). World regions in global context: Peoples, places, and environments (6th ed.). Prentice Hall.

Regional media:

China Dialogue (<https://www.chinadialogue.net>)

Korea Exposé (<https://koreaexpose.com/>)

The Asia-Pacific Journal Japan Focus (<http://apjif.org/>)

News media:

New York Times <http://www.nytimes.com> (Go to nytimes.com/passes for free access for FIU students)

NPR <http://www.npr.org/sections/news/>

BBC News <http://news.bbc.co.uk>

Course structure

In-classroom lecture and activities: There is a 110-minute in-classroom lecture and activities each week. Students are required to attend all scheduled class periods and will be responsible for all material presented in lecture during exams. There will be material presented in class that is not found in the readings, so students must make arrangements to get any information they may have missed.

Readings and reflections: Mandatory weekly readings include book chapters, journal articles, websites, etc., all of which are available on Canvas. The required readings for each week will be announced and posted in advance on Canvas. Readings will complement, not repeat, the lectures and other in-classroom activities. At times, you will also be required to search recent news articles relevant to the corresponding week's theme and share your thoughts. You will submit weekly reflections on the required readings and additional news articles of your choice. Reading reflections should be a concise, specific, and coherent essay that integrates the key arguments of each reading and contains your critical opinion/argument on the topic of the week. Specific prompts will be given in advance regarding how to structure each week's reading reflections.

Canvas activities: This course uses the Canvas system as a course webpage. Students are expected to submit weekly assignments through Canvas before attending each class. The online activities are designed to complement and enhance in-classroom learning. Along with readings, other class materials as well as the latest version of the syllabus and assignment instructions will be posted here. If you experience problems with accessing Canvas, contact ETS in the Green Library for support (GL 152a).

Course evaluation

<i>Graded Item</i>	<i>% of Grade</i>	<i>Due date</i>
1. Weekly assignments	20%	Every Thursday (11:59 PM)
2. Midterm Exam	20%	March 8
3. Term paper presentation	10%	April 12, 19, or 26
4. Final term paper	15%	April 26
5. Case-study presentation	20%	Friday (Date of presentation)
6. In-class participation & attendance	15%	Every Friday

Grade scale (Modified from the FIU recommended scale effective Fall 2016)

Letter Grade	Points Per Credit Hour	Range (%)
A	4.00	93 or above
A-	3.67	90-92.99
B+	3.33	87-89.99
B	3.00	83-86.99
B-	2.67	80-82.99
C+	2.33	77-79.99
C	2.00	70-76.99
D	1.00	60-69.99
F (Fail)	0.00	Less than 60

Class policies

Attendance

In general, no in-class activity or exam can be made up, and no late work will be accepted. However, if you **ABSOLUTELY** must miss class, you must notify myself **before** the date and get approval. Unexcused absence will only be made for serious reasons (i.e., emergency, death of an immediate family member, acute illness). In either case, official documentation is required. Exceptions to this policy will be given **no make-up** for exams, assignments, or participation.

Electronic device

Phones are to be either **silenced or turned off AND removed from your desk** during class. You are **not allowed to use a laptop** *unless* you get an in-advance approval to use one for taking notes. If it is found more than three times that any of you do personal tasks, you as a class will no longer be allowed to use a laptop.

Plagiarism and academic misconduct

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter, with severe consequences that range from probation to expulsion. If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Academic Integrity Committee. Please do not plagiarize. If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me or consult FIU academic misconduct webpage at <http://academic.fiu.edu/academicbudget/misconductweb/1acmisconductproc.htm> .

University resources

Students with Disabilities

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Disability Resource center at 305-

348-3532 in GC 190 (<http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/student-success/disability-resource-center/>) to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

Counseling and Psychological Services

If you suffer from stress, sleep problems, anxiety, depression, interpersonal concerns or alcohol use that damages your academic performance, you are not alone. Students who have these issues are encouraged to contact the Counseling and Psychological Services at 305-348-2277 in SHC 270 (<http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/wellness/counseling-and-psychological-services/services/index.php>).

Center for Excellence in Writing

As an upper level course in geography, you will be required to make your arguments clearly and coherently. The FIU Center for Excellence in Writing offers various services that will help improve your writing skills. If you feel you need assistance, visit their website (<http://writingcenter.fiu.edu/>) for making an appointment.

Schedule of readings and assignments

**Subject to change. Additional readings for each module are announced separately during class before the week.*

***Instructions for each module's assignments are given during class before the week. Assignments are due every Thursday 11:59 PM.*

Module	Date	Theme	Readings (before class)*	Assignments (before class)**
Module 1	January 11	Introduction: What is geography? What is East Asia?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course syllabus • 'Geography' & 'Orientalism' (Dictionary of Human Geography) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit Canvas course webpage
Module 2	January 18	An overview of East Asian countries from a comparative perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World regions in global context, Ch 8 (East Asia) • 'Development' (Dictionary of Human Geography) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistical comparisons using an online country profile database (World Bank, WTO, OECD, FAO, or CIA)
Module 3	January 25	Colonial history, modernization, and the developmental state <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case study: Japan's post-war economic miracle and the "Lost Decade" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The East Asian miracle: economic growth and public policy (World Bank, 1993) • The Asian Developmental State, Ch. 1 (Chu, 2016) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflections on the readings
Module 4	February 1	From developmentalism to neoliberalism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case study: South Korea's 1997-8 IMF crisis & the 2016 candle light protest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locating neoliberalism, Ch. 4 (Choi, 2012) • The Diplomat article (2014) • Koreanexpose.com article (2016) • NYT article (2016) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflections on the readings
Module 5	February 8	Urbanization & gentrification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case study: Beijing's experience of urban expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban China (World Bank, 2014) • Speculative urbanization and gentrification (Shin & Kim, 2016) • Guardian article on Beijing fire (2017) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflections on the readings
Module 6	February 15	Geopolitics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case study: North-South Korea Summit 2018 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Korea's twentieth-century odyssey, Ch. 7 (Robinson, 2007) • Liberty in North Korea website • Time article (2016) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflections on the readings

Module 7	February 22	Globalization, transnationalism, and the East Asian Pop Culture • Case study: The Korean Wave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News article on the 2018 Summit • A new cultural geography of East Asia (Otmazgin, 2016) • K-dramas across Thailand (Ainslie, 2016) 	• Reflections on the readings
Module 8	March 1	Nuke in East Asia – past, present, and future • Case study: Japan’s 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nuclear past and present (Manabe, 2015) • From Hiroshima to Fukushima (Bartal, 2016) • News article on Fukushima nuclear meltdown 	• Reflections on the readings
	March 8	Mid-term	• Mid-term review handout	• Mid-term prep
	<i>March 15</i>	<i>No Class (Spring Break)</i>		
Module 9	March 22	China’s environmental challenges • Case study: China’s air (PM 2.5) pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China's Environmental Challenges, Ch. 2 (Shapiro, 2011) • Under the dome with no way out? (Golley, 2016) • News article on China’s air (PM 2.5) pollution 	• Reflections on the readings
Module 10	March 29	Climate change & China’s path to sustainability • Case study: Dongtan Eco-City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fantasy Islands, Ch. 1 (Sze, 2015) • Building a harmonious society through greening (Pow, 2018) • NYT article (2017) 	• Reflections on the readings
Module 11	April 5	[Film] Under the Dome		• Reflections on the film (after-class assignment)
Module 12-1	April 12	Term paper presentation I		
Module 12-2	April 19	Term paper presentation II		
Module 12-3	April 26	Term paper presentation III		• Final term paper due