

GEOG 338: Geography of Asia (3 Crs)

Spring 2009

Professor: Dr. Wei Luo
Office: Davis Hall 120
Telephone: 753-6828
e-mail: wluo@niu.edu
Office hours: T Th 11:00 AM - 12:00 Noon or by appointment. The best way to reach me is by email.

Class Meetings: T Th 9:30AM - 10:45AM, Davis Hall 103

Required Text: Weightman, B. A., 2006, *Dragons and Tigers – A Geography of South, East and Southeast Asia*, 2nd edition, Wiley & Sons.

Website: <http://webcourses.niu.edu>

BlackBoard website will be used intensively in this course. You will need to use this website frequently to download lecture notes, to obtain announcement, to check your grades, to communicate with your classmates and me, and much more. **Be sure to access the site often.**

You will need to use your NIU z account to access this website. If you haven't used this before, please visit the website and click on the Student Help button for more information. You can also call 753-8100 or email helpdesk@niu.edu for assistance.

Course Description:

This course will provide an overview of the Geography of Asia, focusing on East and Southeast Asia (commonly known as Pacific Asia). Topics will include natural environment and resources, natural hazards, history and cultures, agriculture and rural development, demographic changes, urbanization and urban problems, industry and trade, tourism, areas of political conflicts. Current issues, problems and prospects of major countries of this region will be discussed from a multidisciplinary and geographic perspective.

Many course materials will be taken, with permission, from Dr. Rodrigue, J-P (2006) *The Geography of East and Southeast Asia*, Hofstra University, Department of Economics & Geography. (http://people.hofstra.edu/faculty/Jean-paul_Rodrigue/course_eastsoutheastasia.htm)

Selected videos will be shown and discussed in class. Guest speakers may be invited to talk about certain topics.

Course Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, the students should be able to:

1. appreciate the natural landscape, environment, culture and people of Asia;
2. explain the uniqueness and diversity of cultures of this region and their relationships with natural environment;
3. describe the environmental issues and sustainable development;
4. discuss the population growth and urbanization issues;
5. explain the impacts of globalization on the economy and trade in this region;
6. recognize the roles of this region in global politics;
7. know the tourist attractions.

Evaluation:

You will be evaluated based on the following: Warm-up exercises (5%), Mini-projects (20%), Mid-term (37.5%), and Final (37.5%). A total percentage will be calculated according these weights and will be converted to a letter grade according to the following scale:

Grade	% of maximum possible overall score
A	>90%
B	80%-89%
C	70%-79%
D	60%-69%
F	< 60%

The lower limit for each grade range will not move up. If your overall score is very close to the break point, your grade *may* be elevated to the next higher grade *only if* there is a natural breaking/clustering in the score distribution at the instructor's discretion. So you should set your goal well above the lower limit of the grade you wish to obtain.

The online warm-up exercise is designed based on the "Just-in-time teaching" pedagogy and is intended to engage students in active learning. The warm-up exercise will be composed of a few (2-4) short questions related to the content that will be covered or to the content of the immediate previous lecture. I will adjust my teaching based on your answers and your needs. It is due **9:00 AM on Thursday** weekly. After the deadline, you won't be able to access that warm-up exercise. It should only take about 10-15 minutes to complete it. For the questions related to the content that will be covered, the **grading will be based more on your effort and less on the correctness of your answer**. In other words, if you make your best effort to answer the questions, you will get the full credit even if you are wrong. For the questions related to the immediate previous lecture, which will be mostly multiple choice questions, they will be automatically graded based on the correctness of the answer. The warm-up exercises account for 5% of your course grade. *You may miss two warm-up exercises without affecting your grade.* Completing the warm-up exercises on time will not only ensure that you get the 5% of your grade, but also improve your understanding of the lecture material and thus help you in your exams. In fact, previous experiences show that students who keep up with their warm-up exercises in general also do well on their exams.

Exams will be close-book and may be composed of multiple choice, true or false, labeling maps, and essay questions. A number of on-line practicing quizzes will be given but will NOT enter the calculation of the course grade. They are designed to help you understand the material and prepare for the exams.

There will be no make-up exams after the scheduled exams are given. Should you have an emergency or schedule conflict, you must contact me BEFORE the exam date as soon as possible so that alternative arrangement can be made. Otherwise students who miss an exam without first contacting me will get zero for that exam. It is simply not fair to the students who prepared and took the exam on time to allow other students to have extra time to prepare and/or discuss what was on the exam with others in the class.

Late assignments will be penalized as follows: 10% of the total points for the assignment will be deducted for each day assignment is handed in late. No assignment will be accepted 7 days after the due date or after the graded assignment is handed back to students, whichever is earlier.

Plagiarism Statement: "The attempt of any student to present as his or her own work that which he or she has not produced is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense.

Students are considered to have cheated if they copy the work of another during an examination or turn in a paper or an assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else. Students are guilty of plagiarism, intentional or not, if they copy material from books, magazines, or other sources or if they paraphrase ideas from such sources without acknowledging them. Students guilty of, or assisting others in, either cheating or plagiarism on an assignment, quiz, or examination may receive a grade of F for the course involved and may be suspended or dismissed from the university." *Northern Illinois University Undergraduate Catalog*.

Receiving Assistance: If you have any questions concerning course materials or procedures, please contact me promptly. **Do not wait until the end of the semester to bring problems to my attention.** If you have a disability or any other special circumstance that may have some impact on your course work and for which you may require accommodations, please contact me privately early in the semester so that arrangements can be made with the Center for Accessibility Resources (CAAR).

Tentative Schedule: (Contents on specific dates may change. **Exam dates are fixed. Please mark your calendar and don't miss an exam.** Guest speakers may be invited to talk about relevant topics. Videos will also be shown and discussed for selected topics)

Week	Dates	Topic	Reading
1	1/13,1/15	Introduction; Regional Overview of Pacific Asia (definition & significance)	Ch. 2
2	1/20,1/22	Introduction; Regional Overview of Pacific Asia (landscape, climate, resources, hazards)	Ch. 2
3	1/27,1/29	Historical development, cultures and diversity	Ch. 1, 9, 13
4	2/3,2/5	Historical development, cultures and diversity	Ch. 1, 9, 13
5	2/10,2/12	Economy and Society (social landscape: religion, rice, demography, social problems, urbanization)	Ch. 3, 4
6	2/17,2/19	Economy and Society (development: comparison, factors, globalization, problems)	Ch. 3, 4
7	2/24,2/26	Japan (Geography, Development, Corporate and Industrial Hegemony)	Ch. 11
8	3/3, 3/5	review (3/3) and MIDTER (3/5)	
	3/10,3/12	<i>Spring Break, No Class</i>	
9	3/17,3/19	China (overview)	Ch. 10
10	3/24,3/26	China (development)	Ch. 10
11	3/31,4/2	China (problems and issues)	Ch. 10
12	4/7,4/9	East Asian Tigers: Taiwan, South Korea and Hong Kong	Ch. 12
13	4/14,4/16	Southeast Asia (Maritime Southeast Asia)	Ch. 14, 15
14	4/21,4/23	Southeast Asia (Continental Southeast Asia)	Ch. 14, 15
15	4/28,4/30	The Excluded: North Korea, Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia	Ch. 14, 15
16	5/7	FINAL (Thurs. May 7, 10-11:50 a.m.)	