

# East Asia

Thurs 4-6:45, MS 227  
randlett@unr.edu

Dr. Victoria Randlett  
Office hrs by appt

## Course description

A comparative physical, political-economic and cultural geography of China, Japan, and Korea. The course will primarily cover the 500 year modern period, focusing on the 19<sup>th</sup> through 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. We will pay special attention to historical paths of development and contemporary economic and geopolitical issues.

## Books to buy:

*The Pacific Century: the emergence of modern Pacific Asia*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Mark Borthwick, (on reserve at KC)

*Historical Perspectives on Contemporary East Asia*, Merle Goldman and Andrew Gordon, eds., Harvard, 2000

*The Sextants of Beijing: Global Currents in Chinese History*, Joanna Waley-Cohen, WW Norton, 2000

*China Road*, Rob Gifford, Random House 2008

## Other required readings:

Chapters and articles as announced, on WebCampus

## Grading

1. **Class Participation (20%)** This course will be conducted as a seminar. All students are expected to keep up with the reading and to participate in both structured and unstructured class discussions. Each week, I will give you a series of questions on the week's readings and film, which we will then discuss.

2. **Readings Journals (30%)** You will be required to keep a readings journal in which you review and respond analytically to each week's reading assignments. This journal should include your notes on- and some **analysis** of - the readings. As the semester progresses, your comments should include comparisons with other readings, and should discuss:

- your grasp of historical progression and geographical interrelationships
- your sense of how the readings relate to course themes or discussions
- which readings you particularly like or dislike, and why
- how and why the readings have (or haven't) been effective for you in deepening your understanding of East Asia

All journal pages **must** be numbered. All journals **must** include a readings checklist (table of contents) showing all readings assigned, all completed, and the pages in your journal where each assignment is discussed.

**Bring your journals (with completed entries) to class each week.** I will collect at least one each week, and if yours is not available when called for, you will receive a zero for that component of your journal grade. Each journal will be collected twice during the semester.

I will comment on and evaluate your journal, but will not award a letter grade until the final review. Your final journal entry should include the grade you think you should receive for your journal.

3. **2 Short Papers (25% ea)** You will write 2 short (8-10 pp) papers for this class, on any subject relevant to course themes and materials. You must submit a short proposal at least 2 weeks before the paper is due – see schedule below! **Subject to advance approval**, you may submit a project in place of a paper.

## Topics Outline

### Wk 1 Jan 22

Course introduction

### Wk 2 Jan 29

East Asia in the pre-modern world: Mongol, Ming, and Samurai

**Wk 3 Feb 5**

East Asia encounters Europe: feudalism gives way to trade and modernization

**Wk 4 Feb 12**

Manchu (Qing) China and Meiji Japan

**Wk 5 Feb 19**

Early 20<sup>th</sup> century: new imperialism; revolution and nationalism

**Wks 6 Feb 26**

Sino-Japanese relations and the Second World War

**Proposal due, 1<sup>st</sup> paper**

**Wks 7 & 8 Mar 5 & 12**

Cold War world I: American occupation of Japan, Mao's China, Korea divided

**1<sup>ST</sup> PAPER DUE**

**Wk 9 Mar 19 SPRING BREAK**

**Wk 10 & 11 Mar 26, Apr 2**

Cold War world 2: détente and Deng Xiaoping, Japan leads the emerging "tigers"

**Wks 12 & 13 Apr 9 & 16**

Post-Cold War world: Crisis and recovery for the tigers, Japan slows down as China speeds up, North Korea defiant, Hong Kong returned

**Wks 14 & 15 Apr 23 & 30**

Superpower struggles: China and No. Korea flex their muscles, new geopolitics and economies

**Apr 23 – proposal due, 2<sup>nd</sup> paper**

**Wk 16 May 7 4:30-6:30 pm**

Final meeting

**2<sup>ND</sup> PAPER DUE; ALL JOURNALS DUE**