



The Beijing Center

北京中国学中心

TBC 1100 **Engaging China: Silk Road Excursion**

Please Note: This is a sample syllabus, and the course schedule is subject to change. Students will receive the updated syllabus prior to the start of first class.

Course Description

The purpose of the ENGAGING CHINA: Silk Road Excursion is to familiarize the student with the geography and history of the Qin through Qing Dynasties of China. Upon the conclusion of this course, students will have a broad understanding of the history, culture, and current situation of the societies and places in Western China and Central Asia. Students will develop skills for doing field observations, ethnographic research, and the use of printed and digital sources. Students will analyze this data and present their findings both in presentation and in either written or audiovisual form.

Learning Outcomes

Upon the conclusion of this course, students will have a broad understanding of the history, culture, and current situation of the societies and places in Western China and Central Asia. Students will develop skills for doing field observations, ethnographic research, and the use of printed and digital sources. Students will analyze this data and present their findings both in a presentation and in either written or audiovisual form.

Textbook

Reading materials will be given to students

Grading Policy

Students must attend all pre-departure lectures, all "in-situ" student presentations, lectures during travel and post-trip lectures. Students should complete all reading assignments before coming to class and should be prepared to participate actively in class discussions. Classes consist of a combination of lecture and discussion with site visits.

12% Quiz

28% Participation

Preparation is essential to participation. Readings must be done before the class session. Reading responses (and the occasional quiz) will no doubt contribute to your motivation to plow through it, but I also feel that to truly get something out of this course and to promote an atmosphere of lively discussion and debate in the class, it is imperative that you have done the day's reading and carefully considered the information in the overall context of the class and the course in general.

30% Presentation

Your presentation should be a coherent and cogent summary of a particular aspect of your chosen topic. The format can be done as a presentation (“Ted Talk”) or as a video documentary. It should demonstrate solid research using primary sources and observations contextualized with a carefully curated selection of the most authoritative secondary scholarship.

30% Final Paper

Your paper will be a deeper dive into your topic which will further contextualize your research. It should demonstrate in-depth research using primary sources and observations contextualized with a widely and carefully curated selection of the most authoritative secondary scholarship. The paper will also include appropriately formatted footnotes and a bibliography.

DEADLINE EXTENSIONS must be requested in advance and will be granted only in exceptional cases. If you are not granted an extension in advance, your grade will be lowered by one step for every 24-hour period after the due date. Reading Response assignments lose one step (check plus becomes check, etc.) for every 24-hour period late with a maximum of three days. Homework overdue by more than 72 hours will not be accepted for credit.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INSTRUCTOR

Our job is to be your guide through the Silk Road, to advise you on your research, and to grade your papers and responses. We will conduct class as a mixture of both lecture and discussion and work to foster an environment for discussion, debate, and questioning. We are always available to answer any questions and to work with you on your written assignments. Instruction on how to maintain a land-based empire in Asia is also available for a small surcharge.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENT

Students will be required to attend every meeting and to be prepared to participate in discussions. Participation means that you have not only read the material and brought the readings with you but will also have thought about the readings within the broader context of the course. You will be committed to doing quality research and to contributing to a wider scholarly conversation on the topic you have chosen. Having the insight and travel skills of Xuanzang, while useful, is not a course prerequisite.

Attendance Policy

Participation in the Excursions is mandatory. No exceptions. A student cannot enroll in the course unless s/he can undertake these trips. Participation during the travel includes not only attendance, but contributing to reflection dinners, asking questions of presenters and lecturers. Absences must be excused prior to missing class or other meetings.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest, and responsible manner. Academic integrity is a guiding principle for all academic activity at The Beijing Center (TBC), and all members of the TBC community are expected to act in accordance with this principle. Please refer to [Academic Integrity – The Beijing Center](#) for a detailed description of our policy.

Tentative Schedule

During orientation week

(Pre-trip) Silk Road Excursion Lecture

Mid-trip

- EXAMEN: Mid-Trip Reflection Sharing Conversation in the Jesuit Tradition
- Short Quiz
- Presentation

Class Meeting

- Short Quiz
- Check-in for paper Outline

Class Meeting

- Final Reflections and the Future
- Individual Presentations

Final Papers