

Geog383: Physical and cultural geography of China — Course outline (Fall 2015)



Section / Number	A01 / 11834
Term	September 9 to December 4, 2015
Lectures	Tue, Wed, Fri: 13:30 to 14:20
Room	COR B111
Instructor	Dr Bernard Henin
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Course web page:	coursespaces.uvic.ca

Course description and objectives

This course is an introduction to the physical and human geography of China. Topics include physical environment, culture, demographics, agriculture, urbanization, industrialization and environmental challenges. The goal is to examine the geographical aspects of modernization and development in China. The specific objectives are to develop a critical understanding of the processes of change in China and to expand skills and techniques in regional analysis.

Textbooks and course materials

Veeck, G., Clifton P., Smith C. J. and Huang, Y. 2011. *China's Geography: Globalization and the Dynamics of Political, Economic, and Social Change*, 2nd Edition. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

This is a comprehensive textbook on China's geography. It covers most of the themes explored in the lectures, including environment, culture, demographics, agriculture, industrialization and urbanization.

Wu, Weiping and Gaubatz, Piper. 2013. *The Chinese City*. London and New York: Routledge.

This insightful book addresses the urbanization process in contemporary China. It investigates the challenges faced by China's cities.

Other readings

Readings from books and journals will be assigned during lectures. These will be available through the UVIC library and websites in the public domain.

Videos

A number of videos will be shown in class to illustrate the course material and stimulate discussions in class. Most of these videos are available on-line.

Course requirements

Tests in class

The lecture material will be the subject of FOUR written tests during the term (dates are indicated in the timetable).

Term paper

You will research an issue related to the content of the course and write a term paper based on this research. The paper should be a critical essay on the topic chosen.

Short presentation

This exercise consists in presenting the essence of your research to the class at the end of the term. You will have 5 minutes to present the issues investigated and your research objectives (4 PPT slides allowed). The presentations are scheduled for the last three days of classes (see timetable).

The research paper and presentation assignments are described on the webpage for the course (Moodle). Consult the write-ups for details.

Note: You must hand in a valid paper to pass the course.

Evaluation scheme

4 tests in class (midterms)	Total: 60% (15% each)
Term paper	35%
Short presentation (of term paper)	5%
Total	100%

Course syllabus

The course syllabus is available on the website for the course. You will find all information related to the course: schedule of activities, summaries of each topic, reading lists, and assignment descriptions (tests, term paper, presentations).

List of topics covered in class

Topic 1. China's physical environment

Topic 2. History, culture and politics

Topic 3. Population

Topic 4. Agriculture

Topic 5. Industry, resources and trade

Topic 6. Urbanization

Topic 7. Regions, spatial inequality and ethnic minorities

Topic 8. Environmental problems

Topic 9. Conclusion: China's prospects and challenges

Timetable

Week	Date (Tue)		Date (Wed)		Date (Fri)	
1			Sep 9	Topic 1	Sep 11	Topic 1
2	Sep 15	Topic 1	Sep 16	Topic 2	Sep 18	Topic 2
3	Sep 22	Topic 2	Sep 23	Topic 3	Sep 25	Test 1: Topic 1 & Topic 2 (15%)
4	Sep 29	Topic 3	Sep 30	Topic 3	Oct 2	Topic 4
5	Oct 6	Topic 4	Oct 7	Topic 4	Oct 9	Topic 5
6	Oct 13	Topic 5	Oct 14	Test 2: Topic 3 & Topic 4 (15%)	Oct 16	Topic 5
7	Oct 20	Topic 6	Oct 21	Topic 6	Oct 23	Topic 6
8	Oct 27	Topic 6	Oct 28	Topic 6	Oct 30	Topic 7
9	Nov 3	Topic 7	Nov 4	Topic 7	Nov 6	Test 3: Topic 5 & Topic 6 (15%)
10	Nov 10	BREAK	Nov 11	BREAK	Nov 13	Topic 8
11	Nov 17	Topic 8	Nov 18	Topic 8	Nov 20	Topic 9
12	Nov 24	Topic 9	Nov 25	Presentations *	Nov 27	Office day
13	Dec 1	Presentations	Dec 2	Presentations	Dec 4	Test 4: Topic 7, 8, 9 (15%)
Tuesday, Dec 8		Paper (35%) due 12:00pm (Word file by Email) — Can be sent at an earlier date, but late papers will normally <u>not</u> be accepted.				

(*) Note on presentations: 5 minutes per student; 4 slides allowed; attendance is expected.

Performance report

The instructor will provide students with an updated report on their performance on a regular basis. Students are advised to consult the instructor before the last withdrawal day to ensure all available options have been reviewed.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism in writing term papers will not be tolerated. Plagiarism detection software will be used in case of doubt.

Accessibility

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Resource Centre for Students with a Disability (RCSD) as soon as possible. The RCSD staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations (<http://rcsd.uvic.ca/>). The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

Positivity and safety

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.

Course Experience Survey (CES)

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed via MyPage and can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. I will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please be thinking about this important activity during the course.

Geography undergraduate grade scale

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	D	F
90-100%	85-89%	80-84%	77-79%	73-76%	70-72%	65-69%	60-64%	50-59%	0-49%

Geography Department information

Geography Department website: <http://geography.uvic.ca>

Degree planning guide:

<http://www.uvic.ca/socialsciences/geography/undergraduate/advising/Plan%20Your%20Geography%20Degree/index.php>

Undergraduate Advising: contact main office (SSM B203) at geoginfo@uvic.ca or 250.721.7327

Graduate Advisor: Dennis Jelinski (jelinski@office.geog.uvic.ca)