National Consortium for Teaching about Asia
At the Confucius Institute of Chicago
TEACHING ABOUT ASIA SEMINAR
DRAFT SYLLABUS

Course Aims

1) **To examine the history and culture of China, Korea, and Japan from classical times to today in order to deepen our own understanding and enjoyment.** Unlike a full college survey, however, we emphasize up-to-date knowledge useful in the classroom. We listen to debates over the individual, the family, social groups, religion, and government to bring out similarities and differences among China, Japan, and Korea, and accept their peoples as “us” not “them.” We start from the “images” of Asia today – the rising power of China, resurgent Japan, prosperous Korea – and balance them against the classic traditions as they have changed through the ages: samurai, geisha, and Sony executives; the Dao, feng shui, and the lone protestor facing the tank; anime, manga, and landscapes; Confucius, Buddha, beancurd, and Hello Kitty.

2) **To find reliable, teachable materials and prepare ourselves to teach them.** We locate and evaluate teaching resources, especially the evolving Internet; look at the challenge of teaching with film, fiction, and popular culture; introduce Chicago area resources, such as museums, consulates, and other groups; and keep up with Asia in the news.

3) **To share knowledge about teaching and about East Asian within this group, with participants from previous years, and with regional and national NCTA networks.**

Background

The East Asian Studies Center at Indiana University organizes this seminar on behalf of the National Consortium for Teaching about Asia (NCTA), a national initiative supported by the Freeman Foundation. This year we are co-hosted by the Confucius Institute, Chicago.

Indiana University East Asian Studies Center

Center’s website: [http://www.iu.edu/~easc/outreach/educators/seminar/requirements.shtml](http://www.iu.edu/~easc/outreach/educators/seminar/requirements.shtml)

National NCTA Requirements

To get credit, stipend, further money for curriculum materials, and other benefits you must:

- Attend at least 30 hours of class (ten sessions – see below)
- Complete the main reading or viewing assignments before class whenever possible
- Participate in discussion and individual or group presentations
- Present and evaluate appropriate teaching units, books, websites, current events, or other resources.
- Submit a draft of your Teacher Implementation Plan (TIP) made up of three lesson plans, one each for China, Japan, and Korea in the seventh class. The final version of your TIP is due on April 1. For details see 2009-10 NCTA Seminar Program Details.
- Implement these lesson plans in the year following the seminar.
- Follow Up: in the year following our workshop attend at least one follow up event; submit to the IU office an evaluation of how your TIP was used in class

Graduate Credit (optional)

Participants may purchase three graduate credits from Indiana University at the Indiana in-state graduate credit rate. To receive graduate credit you must complete the TIP plus an additional project on a topic arranged with the Instructor, such as an annotated bibliography of 25+ sources. For details, see the Center website.
Attendance Policy
Each participant is required to engage in 30 contact hours. If you miss class for an acceptable reason (such as illness, family or school responsibilities), you may make up the hours by writing a one to two page response paper on the reading from the missed class, a response paper related to another course-related activity, or a similar topic you and I negotiate.

Please reserve March 30. If we cancel a session (e.g., for Chicago weather) we will make it up on this date.

Structure of the Sessions
Sessions generally begin with a presentation from the Instructor or guest. After questions and discussion, we either review a film or performance, introduce a resource, comment on events in the headlines, investigate a teaching unit presented by a guest teacher or members of our group, or pursue further discussion or small group activity. We will also share developments in the news and local Asia related events. There may be quick (ungraded!) class writing, and we will occasionally ask you to report to the class your assessment of a book or teaching resource.

Teaching Materials
Each week we will introduce teaching units, materials, or catalogues from such sources as the Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education (SPICE); National Center for History in the Schools (NCHS); China Books and Periodicals; Japan Clearinghouse, etc.

Websites and Internet Resources
Each week we will introduce websites and resources. We have a file on Delicious, a social bookmarking website, which tags sites of interest. We also have a blog, “Asia: Teaching about, Learning from,” on Google. The East Asian Studies Center also maintains a listserve, IUNCTA, (Indiana University NCTA), to which you will be subscribed.

Reading Assignments
Readings are designed to be useful both to those with backgrounds in Asian history and to those who are building one; I will gladly suggest alternatives or supplements. Please try to read or look through readings by the class, for which they are listed.

Readings (all to be supplied) These are representative titles, some of which will be changed.

- Martin Amster, ed., From Silk to Oil: Cross-Cultural Connections along the Silk Road (China Institute, 2005).
- Teaching Asia/Asia Teaching (2005). Class reader, with handouts as the course develops.
- Further books and films as we explore.

Films for Home Viewing (provided)
- Zhang Yimou, To Live (1994)
- Takahata, Grave of the Fireflies (1988)
- Miyazaki, Spirited Away (2001)

At the successful completion of the workshop you will receive a year’s subscription to Education about Asia (for samples, see Association for Asian Studies website: www.asiasst.org, links to Education about Asia).
TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

1. 1/12 INTRODUCTIONS – WHAT DO WE TEACH WHEN WE TEACH ‘ASIA’?

2. 1/19 CONFUCIUS AND HOW HE CHANGED OVER THE AGES

What does Confucian “tradition” have to say in the modern world? Is “Confucian” the same as “Chinese”? What is the role of language in East Asian culture? How do you write “Chinese characters” (hanzi/ kanji)? What is lost (and gained) in translation?

Please Read: Ebrey, *China*, Chaps 1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 10; readings on language in *Teaching Asia*


3. 1/26 THE VORTEX OF EMPIRE, OR, WHY IS CHINA SO BIG?

The Chinese have claimed continuity from the establishment of the Qin Dynasty (221 BCE) and the consolidation of the Han Dynasty (2nd century BCE-2nd century CE) to the Manchu/ Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). What caused this longevity? Continuity, evolution, change? Will the communist system survive in China or fall apart like the Soviet Union?

Please Read: Ebrey, *China* Chaps. 3, 4, 5, 8, 12; articles in *Teaching Asia* / *Asia Teaching*


Discussion: “Resolved: Confucius Lives!” (Discussion of films and reading).

Website: [http://www.chinainstitute.org/](http://www.chinainstitute.org/)

4. 2/2 THE HEIGHT OF EMPIRE: THE CHALLENGE OF GLOBALIZATION AND THE SILK ROAD

The Tang Dynasty (6th-9th centuries) was a cosmopolitan trade and cultural center which welcomed and tamed Buddhism; the Song Dynasty (10th-12th centuries) was the world’s richest realm. Was this “premodern” or “premodernized”? Was “imperial China” the basis of today’s unity and prosperity?

Please Read: Amster, *From Silk to Oil* (China Institute, 2005) suggested excerpts.

Websites: Wikipedia *City of Cathay/ Along the River During Qingming*; Mongols; Silk Road.

5. 2/9 WHO CREATED THE MODERN WORLD? ASIAN AND EUROPEAN IMPERIALISMS

The Mongols briefly unified much of Eurasia into the largest land empire in world history, then dissolution of their empire led Europeans to connect the seas, establish global trade, and conquer key territory.

Please Read: articles in *Teaching Asia* / *Asia Teaching*; continue on book, film, or resource of choice.

Website: [http://spice.stanford.edu/catalog/](http://spice.stanford.edu/catalog/)

6. 2/16 JAPAN: INVENTING TRADITION, MODERNITY, AND EMPIRE

The Meiji Emperor (r. 1868-1912) presided over a “revolution from above” and the formation of the Japanese nation. This new nation then invaded China andwarred on the United States. Was this combination of modernization and imperialist aggression a fluke or fearful but normal? We will look at samurai, geisha, bushidō, haiku, karate, hara-kiri and then later kamikaze pilots, salary men, and office ladies as they reshaped the “traditional” Japanese family and the emperorship.

Returning Teacher TBA

Please Read: Menton, *Rise of Modern Japan*, Ch 1; articles in *Teaching Asia* / *Asia Teaching*; start Kim, *Lost Names*
7. 2/23 KOREA: KINGDOM, COLONY, AND WAR

Korea in history was a major power; imperial rivalries from the 19th century to 1945 tore it apart; today the two Koreas are rethinking their relations with neighbors China and Japan, with the American dominated world system, and with each other; views of Korean history are likewise changing.

# Guest Specialist TBA; Returning Teacher Presentation

Please Read: Finish Lost Names: Readings on Korea.


8. 3/2 WHAT IS “JAPANESE”? FICTION, FILM, AND POPULAR CULTURE

Japanese have long been debated Japanese identity, first to differentiate from China, then from the West. In the decades after World War II, Japan rethought war responsibility, tradition, and the meaning of modernization; this debate is also revealed in fiction, film, and popular culture.

# Guest Specialist and/or presentations by master teachers from previous workshops.

Please Read: Menton, Rise of Modern Japan Ch 2, 3; articles in Teaching Asia/ Asia Teaching; works suggested by instructor according to your needs

9. 3/9 MAO’S REVOLUTION AND CHINA’S RISE

Mao Zedong’s revolution united (perhaps invented) the Chinese nation in 1949; for many years radical Maoism, especially the Cultural Revolution of 1966-1976, defined China in terms of authoritarianism and economic autarchy. But are recent rapid growth and stability of the “reform period” rooted in the earlier revolutionary years and more representative of China’s history?

Please Read: Edward Vernoff, Peter Seybolt, eds. Through Chinese Eyes Individual Read and report on: works suggested by instructor according to your needs, e.g. Jiang, Red Scarf Girl; “Trial of Mao” (teaching unit); Buck, The Good Earth; Chang, Wild Swans; Pruitt, Daughter of Han.

Home View: Zhang, To Live (1994; 132 min.).

Returning Teacher Presentation

10. 3/16 OPEN SESSION - WE WILL DECIDE TOPICS

# Guest Specialist and/or presentations by master teachers from previous workshops.

Discussion: The Pleasures and Dangers of Using Film and Fiction to Teach Asia

11. 3/23 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF YOUR TIPS

12. 3/30 PLEASE RESERVE THIS DATE!