National Consortium for Teaching About Asia
At the Confucius Institute of Chicago

TEACHING ABOUT ASIA SEMINAR
SYLLABUS

For Social Studies and Humanities Teachers, Grades 6-12

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 appreciation. Unlike a full college survey, however, we emphasize up-to-date knowledge useful in the classroom and sharing with our colleagues. We listen to debates in China, Japan, and Korea over the individual, the family, social groups, religion, and government to bring out similarities and differences among, and recognize 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 changed through the ages: samurai, geisha, and Sony executives; the Dao, feng shui, and the lone protestor facing the tank; haiku, anime, manga, and landscapes; Confucius, Buddha, and Hello Kitty. We explore how traditions change in order to endure and ask how – or whether – they are related to Asia’s and the world’s future.

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; exchange tips on how to promote Asia outside the classroom; and keep up with Asia in the news.

3. To build ways to continue sharing within this group, with participants from previous years, and with regional and national NCTA networks.

Background

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

Indiana University East Asian Studies Center

Center’s website: http://www.iub.edu/~easc/outreach/educators/seminar/index.shtml

National NCTA Requirements

For credit, stipend, money for curriculum materials, & 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.
- Implement these lesson plans in the year following the seminar.
- Follow Up: in the year following our seminar 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 are eligible to 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 and Fulfilling the Thirty Hour Requirement

To help you fulfill the attendance requirement, we have eleven three hour sessions (plus one backup). In addition, if you miss class for an acceptable reason (such as illness, family or school responsibilities), you may make up the hours (not more than twice) by writing a one to two page response paper on the reading from the missed class, a course-related activity (such as a film or an art exhibit), 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 will be quick (ungraded!) class writing, and we will occasionally ask you to share your assessment of a book or teaching resource.

Teaching Materials

Each week we will introduce teaching units, materials, or catalogues from such sources as 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 website references on Delicious, a social bookmarking website, which tags and organizes sites of interest; a blog, Asia: Teaching About, Learning From on Google; and the East Asian Studies Center also maintains a listserv, IUNCTA, (Indiana University NCTA), to which you will be subscribed.

Reading Assignments

Readings should be useful both to those with a background 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 before the session.

Books (all to be supplied)

• Current History (September 2009).
• Menton et al., Rise of Modern Japan (Hawaii 2002). History text for secondary schools.
• Martin Amster, ed., From Silk to Oil: Cross-Cultural Connections Along the Silk Road (China Institute, 2005).
• Teaching Asia/Asia Teaching (Chicago 2010). Class reader, with handouts as the course develops.
• Further materials as we explore.

Films For Home Viewing (provided)

• Zhang Yimou, To Live; Lee, Eat, Drink, Man, Woman: Takahata Grave of the Fireflies; Lee, The Way Home.

At the successful completion of the seminar you will receive a year’s subscription to Education About Asia (for samples, see Association for Asian Studies website: www.asianst.org, link to Education About Asia).
DRAFT SCHEDULE

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

   Website o’ the week: Asia Society (New York): http://www.asiasociety.org/

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

   What is Confucian “tradition” 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 (gained?) in translation?

   Please Read: Ebrey, China, Chaps 1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 10; readings in Teaching Asia; articles in Current History.

   Websites o’ the week:
   1) Asia for Educators (Weatherhead East Asian Institute, Columbia University) http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/

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

   The Chinese have claimed continuity from the Shang Dynasty and certainly 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? Circular reasoning? Is the People’s Republic the heir or a generic modern nation? 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

   Home View: Lee, Eat, Drink, Man, Woman (Taiwan, 1995); optional: Lee, The Way Home (Korea, 2002)

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

   Website o’ the week: 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 but turned inward. Was this “premodern” or “premodernized”? Was “imperial China” an obstacle to modernization or the basis of today’s unity and prosperity?

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

   Website o’ the weeks: “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 unified Eurasia into the largest land empire in history and destroyed traditional Asian cultures; in China, they established the Yuan Dynasty; dissolution of the Mongol empires blocked the new trade routes and led Europeans to explore, connect the seas, establish global trade, and control overseas territory.

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

   Website o’ the week: 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” which constructed Japan as a nation. This nation then invaded China and vied with the United States. Was this combination of modernization and imperialist aggression a fluke or normal? We will look at the images of samurai, geisha, bushidō, haiku, karate, hara-kiri and then later kamikaze pilots, salary men, office ladies, and Hello Kitty as they reshaped the “traditional” Japanese family and the emperorship.
Returning Teacher: Kelly McKee, Lake Forest High

Please Read: Menton, *Rise of Modern Japan*, Ch 1; articles in *Teaching Asia/Asia Teaching*; start Kim, *Lost Names*

Website o’ the week: Japan Society [http://www.japansociety.org/about](http://www.japansociety.org/about)

7. 2/23 WHAT IS “JAPANESE”? FICTION, FILM, AND POPULAR CULTURE

Japanese have long debated the nature of 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.

Laura Miller (Loyola University) and/or presentations by master teachers from previous seminars.

Please Read: Menton, *Rise of Modern Japan* Ch 2, 3; articles in *Teaching Asia* works according to your needs.

Website o’ the week: TBA

8. 3/2 MAO’S REVOLUTION AND CHINA’S RISE

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

# Guest Specialist: Victor Shih, Political Science, Northwestern University


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.).

9. 3/9 KOREA: KINGDOM, COLONY, AND WAR

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

# Susan Flickinger, Returning Teacher Presentation.

Website o’ the week: Korea.net (Korean Culture and Information Service) [http://www.korea.net/korea/korea.asp](http://www.korea.net/korea/korea.asp)

Please Read: Finish *Lost Names*; *Teaching Asia* readings on Korea.


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

# Guest Specialist and/or presentations by master teachers from previous seminars. We might also schedule a visit to the CHINATOWN MUSEUM or ART INSTITUTE.

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!
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