

Spring 2020

**GEOG/ASIA 320**  
**Asian Cities**

Class Meeting Time: Mondays, 7-10pm  
Class Meeting Location: Carnegie 105

Instructor: I-Chun Catherine Chang  
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TAs: Julia Evelyn & Selma Osman  
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**Course Introduction**

Since the last century, Asia has experienced rapid urbanization. It is now home to over half of the world's most populated cities. By 2010, the urban population in the Asia-Pacific region has surpassed the population of the United States and the European Union combined. In this course, we will focus on cities in East, Southeast and South Asia. We will first contextualize the rapid urbanization in the region's changing political economy, and identify urban issues that are unique to this region. We will further explore different theoretical approaches to understand Asian cities; several of them challenge mainstream urban theories rooted in the experiences of West European and North American cities. Upon the completion of this course, students will acquire substantive knowledge on contemporary trends of urban development in Asia and develop familiarity with related ongoing theoretical debates. In addition, students will conduct individual research projects to develop a deeper and more concrete understanding of the contemporary urbanization processes in Asia.

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Identify the significance of Asian cities in contemporary urban research;
- Describe and appreciate the complexity and diversity of Asian urbanism;
- Apply geographical approaches and concepts to examine the uneven development in Asian cities;
- Analyze how urban development in Asia interacts with the local social, cultural, and political contexts;
- Critically discuss problems pertaining to contemporary Asian cities, and analytically assess the merits of proposed solutions.
- Complete an independent research paper and present it at a professional conference.

## Attendance and Participation

*Attendance and participation are required.* This course is a research-oriented seminar, and you will learn through in-class discussions, workshops, and various activities designed to help you improve your independent research project. Handouts will be distributed from time to time in class. *If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to catch up with the course materials. The instructor and the TAs are not responsible for providing handouts for students who are absent from class.*

## Producing a Positive Learning Environment

To give students the opportunity to think about Asian cities in new ways, we will have to work together to create a positive learning environment. For this to happen, I expect your cooperation in at least three ways:

- The first expectation is to respect the rights of other students to learn.
- The second is to acknowledge and respect the diversity of participants in this class. Discussion of controversial issues is encouraged. Even if you do not agree with the points of view of others, as citizens of this class we all share a responsibility for respecting all individuals as fair-minded persons. Diversity is a strength in our society at large and here at Macalester College. In this class you will be asked to maintain an open mind to the differences around you, and place positive value on that diversity.
- The third expectation is attendance and participation. You are expected to be present at the beginning of class and stay until the end, and to fully participate in class discussions and activities. You are asked to turn off your cell phone before entering the classroom and not to use electronic devices for activities unrelated to the course.

In return, I promise to be on time, to address your questions and concerns, to give you feedback on your performance, and to return graded materials in a timely manner. You can expect the TAs and I reply to your emails within 48 hours, and you are encouraged to meet with us and discuss your questions and concerns during our office hours.

*Students with special needs:* All of us learn in different ways and with varying degrees of success. If you know of any factors in your life that may hinder your abilities to learn up to your potential in this course, please notify me as soon as possible. You should also contact Disability Services (phone: 651-696-6874; email: [disabilityservices@macalester.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@macalester.edu)) or the MAX Center's Disability Accommodations (phone: 651-696-6121, coordinator's email: [lucking@macalester.edu](mailto:lucking@macalester.edu)), both located on the first floor of Kagin Commons, who have more expertise than I do in determining what special steps need to be taken to enable you to participate fully.

*Mental health and wellbeing:* All of us may feel anxious and stressed from time to time during the semester. If you need support for mental health and wellbeing, visit the Laurie Hamre Center for Health and Wellness in the Leonard Center, or call 651-696-6275 to reach them by phone.

## The Organization and Expectation of the Seminar, Student Work, and Evaluation

The class will meet once a week on Monday evenings. Each class meeting comprises two parts. The first part is the seminar discussion, focusing on key literatures of Asian urbanism; the second part of the class is the research workshop, focusing on research methods and your independent research projects.

The readings for the seminar discussion of each week will be posted on the course Moodle site. For the research workshop, we will use the following book:

Ward, Kevin (ed.) 2014. *Researching the City*. London: Sage.

Students are expected to have completed the required readings prior to each class. Students will also be responsible for formulating questions as the basis for in-class discussions and analysis of these materials. All students are expected to fully participate in all class activities.



### Short lectures on the urbanization patterns in three sub-regions

This course is a research semester intended for junior and senior students, or students with prior knowledge of urban theories and/or Asia. Since students of this course may come with different levels of background knowledge, on 02/03 we will go over the basics about Asian Cities in class together. Students will be divided into three groups, and each group will be responsible for preparing a 30 minute short lecture to teach the class about the urbanization patterns of the sub-region of Asia assigned to the group.

### Seminar discussion

Starting from 02/10, every student is required to formulate three questions for discussion each week based on the readings of the week. Discussion questions may seek for clarification, but it would be more meaningful if they can facilitate substantive and theoretical debates. Good discussion questions generally come from comparative analysis across the readings and tend to allow for different opinions to be introduced. Discussion questions should be posted to the Moodle site no later than 8pm on the Sunday prior to the class meeting.

Each student will be designated as discussion leader at least twice over the semester. The discussion leaders will develop a discussion agenda with a set of written questions for discussion based on the questions submitted by all students. The leaders should email the discussion agenda to the instructor and all the participants by 5pm on Monday prior to the class meeting. The discussion leaders will also be responsible for leading discussion in class around those topics.

The discussion leaders are expected to: 1) collectively sort the reading questions into an organized discussion agenda; 2) lead the class to conduct a productive discussion that addresses the major themes and debates in the assigned readings; 3) help provide take-away points to conclude the discussion; and 4) manage the time of discussion reasonably.

### Response paper to seminar readings

You will also prepare a short response paper to the readings for the week when you are the discussion leader. The response paper should not exceed 1,000 words. It should include a summary of the main points of the readings as you perceive them, comparisons across the different readings, a critical assessment of the merits and clarity of the readings, and any questions that might have arisen. The response paper is due a week after the discussion. Late assignments will be penalized 10% per day. Each student will submit two response papers over the semester.

### Research workshop discussion

We will read and discuss eight major urban research methods in our research workshops: archival research, interviews, urban ethnography, questionnaires, discourse analysis, diaries, GIS, and photography and videos. Each student will sign up for two methods over the semester. For each method, the students who sign up for it will: 1) do a short presentation about the method, 2) lead the discussion about the method, focusing on its merits and limitations, and 3) use their own independent research as an example to explain how they may employ that method and seek the class' feedback.

### Research Paper

A major component of this seminar is to undertake a research paper. This will entail posing an interesting problem or question related to studies of Asian urbanism, and setting out to answer this question through library research, first- and second-hand data collection, and the analysis of relevant archives and data. For example, a research paper can analyze a series of case studies (that other authors have already published) in order to answer a question from a perspective that had yet to be examined in this manner. The research paper can also reinterpret a situation by analyzing a set of data (either quantitative or qualitative, or both) or relevant literature from a different angle. Primary data collected during a study abroad experience is acceptable for the use in this paper. If you plan on interviewing persons during the term of this paper, you may need to get clearance from the Social Science Institutional Board (SSIRB). Information about the SSIRB review application and process at Macalester can be found here:

<https://www.macalester.edu/committees/irb/social-sciences-IRB/>. The deadlines for applications this semester are: the fourth Wednesday of the semester, the day before spring break, and the third Thursday in April. If your research needs SSIRB clearance, you should aim for the first deadline because you will not be able to start your research until your SSIRB application is approved.

Your paper will be graded for content and ideas as well as effectiveness of writing (organization, clarity, citations, spelling, punctuation). In order to facilitate the research and writing process, and limit the possibility of a last minute effort, a number of intermediary due dates are scheduled for the submission of: 1) the research topic and description, 2) the preliminary bibliography, 3) the annotated bibliography and paper outline, 4) a research paper draft, 5) a peer review exercise, and 6) the final research paper. All written assignments must be printed out and turned in on time. Deadlines for the assignments are specified in the following sections. Late assignments will

be penalized 10% per day. Your final research paper is expected to be a paper between 3,500 to 4,000 words and comply with an academic format (APA style preferred).

### Peer review exercise

In addition to receiving feedback on your draft paper from the course instructor, each of you will provide feedback for and receive comments from at least two other class members. Peer review will take place in class during the research workshop on 04/13. The written comments are due at 12pm on 04/16, the Thursday following the in-class peer review exercise.

### Research presentation

You will be required to present your research paper findings either in class on 04/27 and 05/04, or at the Midwest Undergraduate Geography Symposium on April 25th, 2020, if you would like. You will have 12-15 minutes for your presentation (depending on which venue you choose to present), followed by a 3-5 minute Q&A period.

## Academic Honesty

It is necessary to remind everyone that academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. Honesty and integrity is expected at all times. Cases of academic dishonesty will be handled according to the College's guidelines. You are responsible for learning about these policies (<http://www.macalester.edu/academicprograms/academicpolicies/academicintegrity/>), so that you can meet the responsibility. By participating in this course, *you agree to submit your assignments in digital form if requested*, enabling the instructor to ensure they are not plagiarized from other materials available on the Internet and elsewhere.

## Grading

Students taking the course on an A-F basis will be graded as follows:

- A – achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
- B – achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
- C – achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
- D – achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to fully meet the course requirements.
- S – achievement that is satisfactory (equivalent to a letter grade of at least C-).
- F – NC, signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit, or (2) is incomplete and with no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an “I”.
- I – Incomplete. A grade of incomplete may be awarded at the discretion of the instructor, if requested by the student, under the following conditions: (1) at least three-quarters of the required work for the course has been completed, (2) unforeseen circumstances beyond the student's control (usually restricted to illness or family emergency) preclude completion of the remaining work for the course by the semester deadline, and (3) the student is not on strict academic probation. Note that poor planning or having a lot of work to complete at the

end of the term are not, in fairness to other students, considered circumstances beyond a student's control.

Grades for the course will be assigned based on the following scale:

A 93-100%	B+ 87-89.9%	C+ 77-79.9%	D+ 67-69.9%	F 0-59%
A- 90-92.9%	B 83-86.9%	C 73-76.9%	D 63-66.9%	
	B- 80-82.9%	C- 70-72.9%	D- 60-62.9%	

### Grade Allocation and Deadlines

Participation and attendance	10%	
Sub-region urbanization pattern lecture	5%	02/03
Discussion leadership	10%	Assigned
Two response papers	20%	1 week after discussion
Topic and brief description	2%	02/10
Preliminary bibliography	3%	02/24
Annotated bibliography and paper outline	5%	03/23
Draft	10%	04/13
Peer review	5%	04/16, 12pm in mailbox
Paper presentation	5%	04/25, 04/27 & 05/04
Final paper	25%	05/07, 12pm in mailbox

## Course Outline and Readings

*Any suggestions that will enhance learning are welcome. Please note that the class schedule and readings may be subject to change. It is your responsibility to keep up with any changes.*

[\*Optional reading]

### 01/27: Course overview

Syllabus; discussion assignments.

### 02/03: The basics

Chatterjee, I., G. Pomeroy and A. Dutt. 2012. Cities of South Asia, in Brunn, S., Hays-Mitchell, M., and Ziegler, D. (eds) *Cities of the World*, Rowman & Littlefield Education, 381-424. (chapter 9)

Chan, K. W. and A. Boland. 2012. Cities of East Asia, in Brunn, S., Hays-Mitchell, M., and Ziegler, D. (eds) *Cities of the World*, Rowman & Littlefield Education, 471-522 (chapter 11)

Tyner, J. and A. Ortega. 2012. Cities of Southeast Asia, in Brunn, S., Hays-Mitchell, M., and Ziegler, D. (eds) *Cities of the World*, Rowman & Littlefield Education, 425-470. (chapter 10)

*Assignment due in class:* Student lectures on sub-regions' urbanization patterns

### 02/10: Cities in the global South

Sheppard, E. 2014. Globalizing capitalism and southern urbanization, in S. Parnell and S. Oldfield (eds) *The Routledge Handbook on Cities of the Global South*. New York: Routledge, pp. 143-154.

Parnell, S. and J. Robinson. 2012. (Re)theorizing cities from the global South: looking beyond Neoliberalism, *Urban Geography*, 33(4): 593-671.

Sheppard, E., Leitner, H., and Maringanti, A. 2013. Provincializing global urbanism: a manifesto, *Urban Geography*, 34(7): 893-900.

University College London, Thinking across boundaries videos

- Part 1: Why call it the “urban global south”?
- Part 3: What kind of theory is required for the urban global south?
- Part 2: What kind of planning practices does it call for?

*Research workshop:*

Ward, K. (ed) 2014. *Researching the City*, London: Sage. (Chapter 1 & 2).

*Assignment due in class:*

A paragraph describing your research project that includes answers to the following questions:

- What is your planned topic? Why do you think this topic is important and worth your time to conduct a research?
- What is your research question?
- What kinds of first- and second-hand materials do you plan to use?
- What kinds of research methods will you apply?
- At the end of the paragraph, please list three key words for your research.

02/17: Significance and theorization of Asian Cities

- Bunnell, T., D. P. S. Goh, C. K. Lai and C. P. Pow. 2012. Introduction: Global urban frontiers? Asian cities in theory, practice and imagination, *Urban Studies* 49 (13): 2785-2793.
- Kong, L. and L. Law. 2002. Contested landscapes, Asian Cities, *Urban Studies* 29 (9): 1503-1512.
- Roy, A. and A. Ong. 2011. Introduction, in A. Roy and A. Ong (eds.) *Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of being Global*, Wiley Blackwell, 1-26.

*Research workshop:*

Library research session: meet at Library at 7pm. (Location TBD; Discussion on the readings will take place after we return from the library).

02/24: Living in the city

- Roy, A. 2011. Slumdog cities: Rethinking subaltern urbanism, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 35 (2): 223-38.
- Datta, A. 2020. The “Smart Safe City”: Gendered Time, Speed, and Violence in the Margins of India’s Urban Age, *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, DOI: 10.1080/24694452.2019.1687279
- Wang, J. 2012. The developmental state in the global hegemony of neoliberalism: A new strategy for public housing in Singapore, *Cities* 29 (6): 369-378.
- Pow, C. P. 2007. Securing the ‘civilised’ enclaves: Gated communities and the moral geographies of exclusion in (post-)socialist Shanghai, *Urban Studies*, 44 (8): 1539-1558.
- \*Nakamura, S. 2014 Impact of slum formalization on self-help housing construction: A case of slum notification in India, *Urban Studies*, 51(16): 3420-3444.

*Research workshop:*

Ward, K. (ed) 2014. *Researching the City*, London: Sage. (Chapter 3 & 4).

*Assignment due in class:*

Revised Research Questions, Description, data collection plan  
Preliminary bibliography

03/02: Gentrification

- Shin, H.B., L. Lees and E. López-Molrales. 2016. Introduction: Locating gentrification in the Global East, *Urban Studies*, 53(3): 455-470.
- Shin, H.B. 2016. Economic transition and speculative urbanisation in China: Gentrification versus dispossession, *Urban Studies*, 53(3): 471-489.
- Shin, H.B. and S. H. Kim. 2015. The developmental state, speculative urbanisation and the politics of displacement in gentrifying Seoul, *Urban Studies*, 53(3): 540-559.
- \*Waley, P. 2015. Speaking gentrification in the languages of the Global East, *Urban Studies*, 53(3): 609-614.
- \*Forrest, R. 2015. Commentary: Variegated gentrification? *Urban Studies*, 53(3): 615-625.

*Research workshop:*

Ward, K. (ed) 2014. *Researching the City*, London: Sage. (Chapter 5 & 6).



03/09: Beyond dispossession

- Doshi, S. 2013. The politics of the evicted: redevelopment, subjectivity, and difference in Mumbai's slum frontier, *Antipode*, 45(4), 844-865.
- Ghertner, D. A. 2014. India's urban revolution: geographies of displacement beyond gentrification, *Environment and Planning A*, 46(7), 1554-1571.
- Sarkar, S. 2015. Beyond dispossession: the politics of commodification of land under speculative conditions, *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 35(3), 438-450.
- \*Chang, I. C. 2019. Livelihood Transitions During China's Ecological Urbanization: An Ethnographic Observation, in X. Zhang (ed.) *Remaking Sustainable Urbanism: Space, Scale, Governance in the New Era*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 161-183.

*Research workshop:*

Ward, K. (ed) 2014. *Researching the City*, London: Sage. (Chapter 7 & 8).

03/16: Spring break

03/23: Developing research project

*Research workshop:*

Ward, K. (ed) 2014. *Researching the City*, London: Sage. (Chapter 9, 10, 11).  
Individual meetings

*Assignment due in class:*

Paper outline and annotated bibliography (with at least 12 academic papers)

03/30: Urban mega projects/events

- Shin, H. B. 2012. Unequal cities of spectacle and mega-events in China, *City: Analysis of Urban Trends, Culture, Theory, Policy, Action*, 6 (6): 728-744.
- Ren, X. and W. Liza. 2013. Urban governance, mega-projects and scalar transformations in China and India, in *Locating Right to the City in the Global South*, Routledge.
- Whitson, D., J. Horne and W. Manzenreiter. 2006. Underestimated costs and overestimated benefits? Comparing the outcomes of sports mega-events in Canada and Japan, *Sociological Review*, 54 (2): 71-89.
- Sun, J., and L. Ye. 2010. Mega-events, local economies, and global status: What happened before the 2008 Olympics in Beijing and the 2010 World Expo in Shanghai, *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, 39(2): 133-165.

*Research workshop:* Individual meetings

04/06: Research week, not meeting in class

[Catherine is away for the annual meeting of American Association of Geographers]

04/13: Urban sustainability

- Hoffman, L. 2011. Urban modeling and contemporary technologies of city-building in China: The production of regimes of green urbanisms, in A. Roy and A. Ong (eds.)

- Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of being Global*, Wiley Blackwell, 55-76.
- Chang, I.C. and E. Sheppard. 2013. China's eco-cities as variegated urban sustainability: Dongtan eco-city and Chongming eco-island, *Journal of Urban Technology*, 20(1), 57-75.
- Low, M. 2013. Eco-cities in Japan: past and future, *Journal of Urban Technology*, 20(1), 7-22
- Shwayri, S. 2013. A model korean ubiquitous eco-city? The politics of making Songdo, *Journal of Urban Technology*, 20(1), 39-55.
- \*Tan, P. Y., J. Wang and A. Sia. 2013. Perspectives on five decades of the urban greening of Singapore, *Cities*, 32: 24-32.

*Assignment due in class*: Research paper draft  
*Research workshop*: Peer review research paper draft

04/20: Policy circulations

- Phelps, N. A., T. Bunnell, M. A. Miller and J. Taylor. 2014. Urban inter-referencing within and beyond a decentralized Indonesia. *Cities*, 39: 37-49.
- Pow, C. P. 2014. License to travel: Policy assemblage and the "Singapore model, *City*, 18 (3): 287-306.
- Chang, I. C. 2017. Failure matters: reassembling eco-urbanism in a globalizing China, *Environment and Planning A*, 49(8): 1719-1742.

*Research workshop*: Individual meetings

04/25 (MUGS), 04/27 & 05/04: Research paper presentation

We will also do course evaluation on 05/04.

05/07: Final paper due

12pm in Catherine's mailbox.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Seminar Discussion</b>	<b>Research Workshop</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
01/27	Course overview		
02/03	The basics		Student lectures on sub-regions' urbanization patterns
02/10	Cities in the global South	Research topic	Research topic and description
02/17	Significance and theorization of Asian Cities	Library research session	
02/24	Living in the city	Research methods: archival research, interviews	Revised Research Questions, Description, data collection plan Preliminary bibliography
03/02	Gentrification	Research methods: urban ethnography, Questionnaires	
03/09	Beyond dispossession	Research methods: discourse analysis, diaries	
03/16	Spring break		
03/23	Developing research projects	Research methods: GIS, photography and video Individual meetings	Paper outline and annotated bibliography
03/30	Urban mega projects/events	Individual meetings	
04/06	Research week: not meeting in class		
04/13	Urban sustainability	Peer review research paper draft	Paper draft Written peer review comments due on 4/16 (Thur) at 12pm in Catherine's mailbox
04/20	Policy circulations	Individual meetings	
04/25 (MUGS)	Research paper presentation		Presentations
04/27			
05/04			
05/07			Final paper due at 12pm in Catherine's mailbox