



SYLLABUS

GEOGRAPHY 5503

URBAN CHINA: SPACE, PLACE, AND URBAN TRANSFORMATION
AUTUMN 2022 – In person

MW 12:45pm-2:05pm

COURSE OVERVIEW

Instructor

Instructor: Max D. Woodworth

Email address: woodworth.42@osu.edu

Phone number: (614) 247-6899

Office hours: by appointment

Course description

China crossed a threshold in 2011: in that year, more than 50 percent of the country's population had come to reside in cities. This historic transition from an agrarian society to a majority urban one testifies to the radical changes that have transformed China starting in the early twentieth century, continuing through the Republican (1911-1949) and state socialist (1949-1978) periods, and gathering strength during the period of "reform and opening up" (1979-present). Given the scale, pace, and intensity of change, China's urban transformations present fundamental challenges for the country's future development and for global society.

This is a course in human geography that examines the variable roles of cities within China's social, economic, political, and cultural transformations since the end of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911CE). The purpose of the course is to provide a detailed empirical view of China's urbanization and a rigorous conceptual understanding of city development through close readings of key works in the field of Chinese urban studies and urban theory.

The readings for this class are often complex. It is ok to not understand everything upon first read; bring your questions to class, sit with the ideas, read them a second time, and do your best to think them through. Listen to your classmates. My hope and objective for this class is to make the classroom a community for shared learning and intellectual growth. You are expected to do your part by completing the readings and coming to class ready to share with and learn from each other.

Course learning outcomes

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Identify key historical moments in China's urban development
- Correctly parse differing theoretical stances on urban development
- Analyze the different forces driving China's urban development
- Connect Chinese urbanization to national and global issues

How your grade is calculated

ASSIGNMENT CATEGORY	POINTS
Weekly précis (10x, 3pts each)	30
Final paper	40
Participation and attendance	30
Total	100

See course schedule below for due dates.

Late assignments

Late submissions will not be accepted. Please refer to Carmen for due dates and stay alert to deadlines.

Grading scale

93–100: A
 90–92.9: A-
 87–89.9: B+
 83–86.9: B
 80–82.9: B-

77–79.9: C+
73–76.9: C
70 –72.9: C-
67 –69.9: D+
60 –66.9: D
Below 60: E

Instructor feedback and response time

I am providing the following list to give you an idea of my intended availability throughout the course. (Remember that you can call **614-688-HELP** at any time if you have a technical problem.)

- **Grading and feedback:** For any written assignments, you can generally expect feedback within **7 days**.
- **Email:** I will reply to emails within **24 hours on days when class is in session at the university**.

Explanation of graded assignments

Précis

You are expected to turn in a précis ten times during the semester. A précis is a short (1-2 pages single-spaced) written reflection on the week's readings. An effective précis does the following: provides a concise summary of the reading(s), identifies and accurately articulates core argument(s), and provides a cogent and logical discussion of the content of the text(s). A sample précis will be provided in Carmen.

Précis are due **Wednesday evening before noon** and should be submitted through Carmen. An additional **hard copy should be brought to class that day**. On some weeks, you may be asked to share your précis hard copy with colleagues in class as part of group work. It is essential that you bring it to class!

Précis are graded on the usual grading scale.

Participation and Attendance

Students are expected to arrive to class ready to learn and to share ideas. For this, reading the assigned texts is essential. Students who cannot commit to read all texts for class should NOT enroll in this course. It is a reading-intensive class. Part of the participation grade will be

submission once or more times per term (determined by total enrollment) of discussion questions based on the readings. Students assigned this task for the week should share their questions on the class discussion board by the same deadline as the précis (Sundays, 8pm).

Final Paper

The final paper is expected to be 5-6 single-spaced pages in length. Papers can analytically examine a set of literature on a given topic or can be an original research paper. Paper topics should be contemplated early in the semester. We will spend time in class brainstorming paper ideas. A tentative abstract and outline of the paper along with an initial set of readings and sources will be due near the mid-way point of the semester.

Additional Notes:

Is attendance mandatory?

Yes. Every class meeting is important. Students must make a commitment to attend and be actively involved in this class, as long as they are feeling well. If you have any flu-like symptoms, please do NOT come to class. If I have any symptoms, depending on severity, I will hold class on Zoom. If an unavoidable conflict occurs, please be in communication with me.

Do I have to talk in class?

Yes. This is an upper-division, reading-intensive seminar. Active participation is required. Articulating your ideas with comments and questions will help you better understand the course material. I will call on students to comment if it seems they are too shy to volunteer. My point is not to put students on the spot, but to give them a chance to speak. There is no expectation that anyone be familiar with China. Given this, it is essential that we, as a class, make sure that no one feels unwilling to ask a question or offer comment. It's a cliché but it's true: there are no bad questions. Ask away!

Will late assignments be accepted?

Absolutely no late assignments will be accepted without a valid excuse (i.e., a medical or family emergency). No exceptions. Please do not request an exception.

What should I do if I am struggling with the material?

The course material is challenging and there is no expectation that you will grasp every detail upon first read. That is okay. Part of the educational enterprise is to tackle challenges piece by piece and derive from the material what you can. Many of the readings will reveal themselves

to you upon several readings and over a longer span of time than this semester. If you struggle with the material, always feel free to raise questions in class and do not hesitate to seek further clarification of the material from classmates or from me during office hours.

What if I receive special accommodations?

This class is intended to be accessible to all students. If you require specific accommodations, let the instructor know as soon as possible. Please do not wait until the end of the semester to make such a request.

What about my electronic gadgets?

Laptops and tablets can be used in class for note-taking and accessing the readings. Unfortunately, these same devices offer endless opportunities to check out of class and browse the news, go shopping, chat with friends, see what's up on social media, and so on. Class is 80 minutes. Please exercise self-discipline to focus in class and minimize distractions.

What about formatting for written assignments?

Please use the following standard format for all assignments: 12-point Times New Roman font, single-spaced, 1-inch margins on all sides. Please name all your submitted documents using the following format: Familyname_Precis1.docx.

OTHER COURSE POLICIES

Discussion and communication guidelines

The following are my expectations for how we should communicate as a class. Above all, please remember to be respectful and thoughtful.

- **Writing style:** In any written assignments, you should remember to write using good grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- **Tone and civility:** Let's maintain a supportive learning community where everyone feels they can express themselves freely and where people can disagree amicably. Intentionally demeaning language will not be tolerated in the class.
- **Citing your sources:** When we have academic discussions, please cite your sources to back up what you say.

Academic integrity policy

POLICIES FOR THIS ONLINE COURSE

- **Written assignments:** Your written assignments should be your own original work. In formal assignments, you should follow **MLA** style to cite the ideas and words of your research sources. You are encouraged to ask a trusted person to proofread your assignments before you turn them in—but no one else should revise or rewrite your work. Written assignments undergo review through Turnitin, an online system that checks for plagiarism. The important thing to note here is that citation of sources is a **good thing** and shows you've done research.
- **Reusing past work:** In general, you are prohibited in university courses from turning in work from a past class to your current class, even if you modify it. If you want to build on past research or revisit a topic you've explored in previous courses, please discuss the situation with me.
- **Falsifying research or results:** All research you will conduct in this course is intended to be a learning experience; you should never feel tempted to make your results or your library research look more successful than it was.

OHIO STATE'S ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have

read and understand the university's [*Code of Student Conduct*](#), and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the university's *Code of Student Conduct* and this syllabus may constitute "Academic Misconduct."

The Ohio State University's *Code of Student Conduct* (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: "Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the university or subvert the educational process." Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the university's *Code of Student Conduct* is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the *Code of Student Conduct* and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by university rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the university's *Code of Student Conduct* (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the university.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

Other sources of information on academic misconduct (integrity) to which you can refer include:

- The Committee on Academic Misconduct web pages ([COAM Home](#))
- *Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity* ([Ten Suggestions](#))
- *Eight Cardinal Rules of Academic Integrity* (www.northwestern.edu/uacc/8cards.htm)

Copyright disclaimer

The materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection and are only for the use of students officially enrolled in the course for the educational purposes associated with the course. Copyright law must be considered before copying, retaining, or disseminating materials outside of the course.

Statement on Title IX

All students and employees at Ohio State have the right to work and learn in an environment free from harassment and discrimination based on sex or gender, and the university can

arrange interim measures, provide support resources, and explain investigation options, including referral to confidential resources.

If you or someone you know has been harassed or discriminated against based on your sex or gender, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, or sexual exploitation, you may find information about your rights and options at titleix.osu.edu or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator at titleix@osu.edu. Title IX is part of the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) at Ohio State, which responds to all bias-motivated incidents of harassment and discrimination, such as race, religion, national origin and disability. For more information on OIE, visit equity.osu.edu or email equity@osu.edu.

Your mental health

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. If you find yourself feeling isolated, anxious or overwhelmed, please know that there are resources to help: ccs.osu.edu. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at (614) 292-5766 and 24 hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 National Prevention Hotline at 1-(800)-273-TALK or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org. The Ohio State Wellness app is also a great resource available at go.osu.edu/wellnessapp.

Support and Resources

For further detailed information and access to helpful resources related to all of the policies listed above, please visit Academic Advising (<https://advising.osu.edu/>) and the Student Services Center (<http://ssc.osu.edu>).

HOW THIS COURSE WORKS

Mode of delivery: This course is in-person.

Credit hours and work expectations: This is a **3-credit-hour course**. According to [Ohio State policy](#), students should expect around 3 hours per week of time spent on direct instruction (instructor content and Carmen activities, for example) in addition to 6 hours of homework (reading and assignment preparation, for example) to receive a grade of (C) average.

Attendance and participation requirements: Because this is an in-person course, attendance and participation are essential to success in this class. Active participation in discussions is also a crucial part of the learning process. Participation does not necessarily mean being the most vocal; participation means showing up having read the assigned text(s) and ready to learn, listening respectfully to classmates and to lectures, asking questions, engaging in constructive ways, and so on. Your participation will also include your submission on one or more weeks of discussion questions for class.

Office hours: OPTIONAL

I will hold office hours by appointment either in person or on Zoom. When contacting me to meet for office hours, please include three half-hour time windows when you are available to meet. I will respond with a time that works for both of us.

STUDENT SUPPORT FOR SUCCESSFUL LEARNING

Students are encouraged to make use of the university's support services. These can be very helpful as you navigate the significant challenges of university life in all its dimensions.

Please visit the Academic Advising website to obtain tips for success in this and other courses, information about academic affairs and regulations, and general advising about majors, minors, careers, and other aspects of academic life. Through the website you will be able to schedule appointments with advisors who can assist with specific issues. See here:

<https://advising.osu.edu/>

For guidance and access to resources in all areas of student life, please visit the Student Services Center. You can visit their website here for complete information: <http://ssc.osu.edu>

COURSE MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGIES

Textbook, articles, audio-visual materials

- This course will make use of a variety of texts and films. There are no texts to purchase for this class.
- All scholarly articles will be available either in hyperlinks or in PDF format on Carmen.
- Audio-visual material will be available through links.

ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions) that have been certified by the Office of Student Life Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office of Student Life Disability Services is located in 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue; telephone 614- 292-3307, slds@osu.edu; slds.osu.edu.

Requesting accommodations

The university strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions, please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. **SLDS contact information:** slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Accessibility of course technology

This online course requires use of Carmen (Ohio State's learning management system) and other online communication and multimedia tools. If you need additional services to use these technologies, please request accommodations with your instructor.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment*
Week 1 (Aug. 24)	The geographic setting	Ren Ch. 1	Bio (due Aug. 28)
Week 2 (Aug. 29 & 31)	Historical antecedents: origins of the modern Chinese city	Wu & Gaubatz; Chang; Steinhardt	Précis
Week 3 (Sept. 5 & 7)	LABOR DAY SEPT. 5 – NO CLASS Building Cities, Making China “Modern”	Wasserstrom; Buck; Musgrove	Précis
Week 4 (Sept. 12 & 14)	Focus on the <i>danwei</i>	Bray; “24 City”	Précis
Week 5 (Sept. 19 & 21)	Urban governance, part I: Spatial administration and urban governance	Ren Ch. 2; Lin & Ho; Cartier	Précis
Week 6 (Sept. 26 & 28)	Urban governance, part II: The entrepreneurial urban Party-state	Oi; Hsing; He & Wu; Theurillat; Woodworth	Précis
Week 7 (Oct. 3 & 5)	Urban planning and its revival	Gaubatz; Yeh & Wu; Olds	Précis; Final paper topic abstract and outline
Week 8 (Oct. 10 & 12)	In-class viewing: “The Chinese Mayor”		

Week 9 (Oct. 17 & 19)	Migration and migrants	Ren Ch. 4; Chan; Al; Crawford & Wu; Friedman; Chen; Lee; Wang, Wang, & Wu	Précis
Week 10 (Oct. 24 & 26)	Urban Inequality	Ren Ch. 5; Solinger; Tomba	Précis
Week 11 (Oct. 31 & Nov. 2)	Environment and cities	Caprotti; May	Précis
Week 12 (Nov. 7 & 9)	Spectacles, mega-events, monumentality	Debord; Shin; Ong; Woodworth	Précis
Week 13 (Nov. 14 & 16)	Other Chinas?	Chu; Allen	Précis
Week 14 (Nov. 21 & 23)	Dystopia, “Folding Beijing” NOV. 23 THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS	Hao	Précis
Week 15 (Nov, 28 & 30)	Emerging themes: what next for Chinese cities?	Wu, Zhang, & Liu	Précis
Week 16 (Dec. 5)	In-class presentations		Final Paper

Detailed Course Reading List

Week 1

The geographic setting

Ren, X. (2013). *Urban China*. Malden, MA: Polity Press. Chapter 1.

Students unfamiliar with modern Chinese history and the crucial changes since 1978 are strongly advised to watch “Becoming a Superpower,” the second episode of the BBC documentary titled *China’s Capitalist Revolution*. You can watch the film by visiting Films on Demand, which can be accessed through the university library site’s Research Database list (link is on the right side of the library’s homepage). Each episode is about 45 minutes in length.

Week 2 (No class Jan. 15)

Historical antecedents: origins of the modern Chinese city

Wu, W and P. Gaubatz (2013). *The Chinese City*. London: Routledge. Chapters 1-3.

Chang, S. (1977). The Morphology of Walled Capitals. In G. W. Skinner (Ed.), *The City in Late-Imperial China* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press): 75-100.

Steinhardt, N. (1999). *Chinese Imperial City Planning*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. Introduction.

Week 3

Building Cities, Making China “Modern”

Buck, D. (1999). Railway City and National Capital: Two Faces of the Modern in Changchun. In J. Esherick (Ed.), *Remaking the Chinese City: Modernity and National Identity, 1900-1950* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press): 65-89.

Wasserstrom, J. (1999). Locating Old Shanghai: Having Fits about Where It Fits. In J. Esherick (Ed.), *Remaking the Chinese City: Modernity and National Identity, 1900-1950* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press): 192-210.

Musgrove, C. (1999). Building a Dream: Constructing a National Capital in Nanjing, 1927-1937. In J. Esherick (Ed.), *Remaking the Chinese City: Modernity and National Identity, 1900-1950* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press): 137-157.

Week 4

Focus on the “danwei”

Bray, D. (2005). *Social Space and Governance in Urban China*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press. Chapter Six.

Week 5

Urbanization, part I: Spatial administration and urban governance

Ren, X. (2013). *Urban China*. Malden, MA: Polity Press. Chapter 2.

Lin, G. C. S. & Ho, S. P.S. (2005). The state, land system, and land development processes in contemporary China. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 95(2): 411-436.

Cartier, C. (2015). Territorial Urbanization and the Party-State in China. *Territory, Politics, Governance*. Preview.

Week 6

Urbanization, part II: The entrepreneurial urban Party-state

Hsing, Y. (2006). Land and territorial politics in urban China. *The China Quarterly* 187: 575-591.

Oi, J. (1992). Fiscal reform and the economic foundations of local state corporatism in China. *World Politics* 45(1): 99-126.

He, S. & Wu, F. (2005). China's emerging neoliberal urbanism: Perspectives from urban redevelopment. *Antipode* 41(2): 282-304.

Theurillat, T. (2017). The role of money in China's urban production: the local property industry in Qujing, a fourth-tier city. *Urban Geography* 38(6): 834-860.

Week 7**Urban planning and its revival**

Gaubatz, P. (1995). Urban transformation in post-Mao China: impacts of the reform era on China's urban form. In D. Davis, R. Kraus, B. Naughton, & E. J. Perry (Eds.), *Urban Spaces in Contemporary China: The Potential for Autonomy and Community in Post-Mao China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press): 28-60.

Wu, F. (2015) *Planning for Growth: Urban and Regional Planning in China*. London: Routledge. Chapters 2-4.

Olds, K. Globalizing Shanghai: the 'global intelligence corps' and the building of Pudong. *Cities* 14(2): 109-123.

Week 8

No reading.

Week 9**Migration and migrants**

Ren, X. (2013). *Urban China*. Malden, MA: Polity Press. Chapter 4.

Chan, K. W. (2019). China's hukou system at 60: Continuity and reform. *Handbook on Urban Development in China* (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing): 59-79.

Al, S. (2014). Introduction: Villages in the City: A Guide to China's Informal Settlements. In S. Al (Ed.), *Villages in the City: A Guide to South China's Informal Settlements* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press): 1-8.

Friedman, E. 20 Migration without integration: Workers between countryside and city. In S. Al (ed.), *Factory towns of south China: An illustrated guidebook* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press): 25-27.

Crawford, M. & Wu, J. (2014). The Beginning of the End: Planning the Destruction of Guangzhou's Urban Villages. In S. Al (Ed.), *Villages in the City: A Guide to South China's Informal Settlements* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press): 19-28.

Wang, Y., Wang, Y. & Wu, J. (2009). Urbanization and informal development in China: urban villages in Shenzhen. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 33(4): 957-973.

Week 10

Urban Inequality

Ren, X. (2013) *Urban China*. Malden, MA: Polity Press. Chapter 5 and Conclusion.

Solinger, D. 2019. Banish the Impoverished Past: The predicament of the abandoned urban poor. In D. Solinger, ed., *Polarized Cities: Portraits of Rich and Poor in Urban China* (London: Rowman & Littlefield): 59-84.

Tomba, L. (2014) *The Government Next Door: Neighborhood Politics in Urban China*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. Chapter 3.

Week 11

Environment and Cities

May, S. (2011). Ecological Urbanization: Calculating Value in the Age of Global Climate Change. In A. Roy & A. Ong (Eds.), *Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of Being Global* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell): 98-126.

Caprotti, F. (2014). Critical research on eco-cities? A walk through the Sino-Singapore Tianjin Eco-City, China. *Cities* 36: 10-17.

Week 12

Spectacles, Mega-Events, Monumentality

Ong, A. (2011). Hyperbuilding: Spectacle, Speculation, and the Hyperspace of Sovereignty. In A. Roy & A. Ong (Eds.), *Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of Being Global* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell): 98-126.

Debord, G. (2006[1967]). *The Society of the Spectacle*. London: Zone Books. Chapters 1, 2 & 7

Shin, H. (2012). Unequal cities of spectacle and mega-events in China. *City* 16(6): 728-744.

Woodworth, M. D. From the shadows of the spectacular city: Zhang Dali's Dialogue and counter-spectacle in globalizing Beijing, 1995–2005. *Geoforum* 65 (2015): 413-420.

Week 13

Other Chinas?

Chu, C. (2022). *Building Colonial Hong Kong: Speculative Development and Segregation in the City*. London: Routledge.

Allen, J. (2012). *Taipei: City of Displacements*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Week 14

Dystopia, “Folding Beijing”

Hao, J. (2017). *Folding Beijing* (<https://uncannymagazine.com/article/folding-beijing-2/>)

Week 15

Emerging themes

Wu, F., F. Zhang, and Y. Liu (2021). Beyond Growth Machine Politics: Understanding State Politics and National Political Mandates in China's Urban Redevelopment. *Antipode* 54(2): 608-628.

Week 16

In-class presentations, no readings