

History 2618F
China in the World

Fall 2025

Instructor: James Flath

Office Hours: TBA
Department of History, Office: Lawson Hall 2234
Email: jflath@uwo.ca

Course Description:

Explores the interaction between China and the rest of the world from the Mongol conquest of the 13th century to the Republic of China in the mid-20th century, to understand how China has been globally integrated through conquest, the exchange of goods and ideas, and the migration of peoples.

Prerequisites: none

Course Syllabus:

China in the World explores the history of interaction between China and the rest of the world. The course begins with the Mongol empire in the 13th century, global trade and exploration during the Ming dynasty, Manchu conquests during 16th century, and Western imperialism and colonialism during the 19th and early 20th century. The objectives of the course are to examine how China has been globally integrated with the rest of the world over the course of many centuries, to develop critical thinking skills, and to use history to understand how China and the West might have constructive dialogue in the present.

The course emphasizes communication in the historical sense, as well as in the present, and in the classroom. To promote discussion students will be assigned to small groups (four to six per group) for weekly group-based instructional activities. In addition, there will be two group-based assignments. The course also emphasizes knowledge

This is a draft outline. Please see course website on OWL Brightspace for final version.

production, examining how knowledge about China and the World was produced in the past, as well as in the present, and in the classroom. Due to the nature of the course, it is essential that students make every effort to attend every class.

Course Materials:

Timothy Brook, *Great State: China and the World*, Harper Collins, 2020. (For purchase, \$29.94).

Supplementary materials online or on OWL Brightspace.

Methods of Evaluation:

- 1) Weekly Quizzes: 25%. A short quiz at the beginning of each class (excluding first and last week) to test the student's comprehension of weekly readings. **There are no make-up quizzes**, however, the lowest two weekly scores will be dropped from the final calculation.
- 2) Essay Critique: 15%. Each group will receive a pre-written essay relating to one of the course topics. The group will examine the essay in detail, identifying its weaknesses as well as strengths. Students will be graded on their individual contribution to the critique. **Due Date: October 9.**
- 3) Media Assignment (group project): 15%. Each group will produce a five-minute video focusing on one of the weekly topics. All students in the group will receive the same grade. **Due Date: November 20.**
- 4) Essay Assignment: 20%. Each student will write an essay (2000 words) on an approved topic. **Due Date: November 27.**
- 5) Final Exam: 25%. **During Final Exam Period.** Students must earn at least 50% on the exam in order to pass the course.

Notifications:

***Late assignments will not be accepted, except on the advice of Academic Advising.**

***Make-up tests, midterms, and exams can only be approved by Academic Advising. Please see https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html for department procedures and requirements involving make-up tests and exams.**

This is a draft outline. Please see course website on OWL Brightspace for final version.

***Artificial Intelligence is a useful research tool, but it cannot produce arguments and is prone to generating false statements. Students will be held responsible for all errors, biases, falsifications, and plagiarism committed by the AI.**

***Students will be asked to use personal response systems ('clickers'). University guidelines on the use of clickers is available here: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/courseoutlines.pdf#page=5**

Course Schedule and Readings:

Week 1: Introduction

Brook, Introduction

Week 2: The Great Khan

Brook, Chapter 1

Marco Polo (on OWL – chapter TBA)

Week 3: The Great Plague

Brook, Chapter 3

Monica Green, "On Learning How to Teach the Black Death" (on OWL)

Week 4: Distant Lands

Brook, Chapter 4

Findlay "How Not to (Re)Write World History: Gavin Menzies and the Chinese Discovery of America". [History Cooperative \(Online\)](#)

Week 5: Close Neighbors

Brook, Chapter 5

Week 6: The China Trade

Brook, Chapter 6

This is a draft outline. Please see course website on OWL Brightspace for final version.

Antony, *Golden Age of Piracy in China* – (On Owl)

Week 7: Missions and Missionaries

Brook, Chapter 8

“Maps of the World” (on OWL)

Week 8: Manchu Conquest

Brook, Chapter 9, 10

Week 9: Imperialism

Brook, Chapter 11

“Two Edicts from the Qianlong Emperor” (excerpt, on OWL)

Week 10: Treaty Ports

Brook, Chapter 12

Week 11: China at War

Brook, Chapter 13

Week 12: The Chinese Century?

Brook, Chapter 14

Franceschini, *Global China as Method* ([Online](#) – chapter TBA)

Week 13

Film Festival

Additional Statements:

Please review the Department of History’s shared policies and statements for all undergraduate courses at:

https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html for important information regarding accessibility options, make-up exams, medical accommodations, health and wellness, academic integrity, plagiarism, and more.

This is a draft outline. Please see course website on OWL Brightspace for final version.

This is a draft outline. Please see course website on OWL Brightspace for final version.