**Catalog Description**

An interdisciplinary introduction to the history of the Silk Road with a focus on the cultural and material exchanges between the peoples and cultures it connected over the period 500 BCE to 1500 CE.

**Course Description:**

This course introduces the history of the Silk Road — a complex network of trade routes that connected China and Rome over land and sea — and examines the cultural and material exchanges between the peoples and cultures it connected. The course covers the period 500 BCE to 1500 CE, during which forces wielded by many peoples (e.g., Chinese, Greeks, Persians, Arabs, Turks, and Mongolians) shaped the geopolitical landscape of Asia. It explores the roles played by the Silk Road in forming and transforming the cultural, ethnic, and religious identities of these peoples and their perceptions of one another. It highlights such themes as conspicuous consumption, cultural diversity, religious pluralism, and nomadic migration, as well as the financial, judicial, religious, and social institutions that were the fruits of these extended exchanges. The course begins and ends with an analysis of conceptualizations of the “Silk Road” against the backdrop of the “Great Game” that played out in the late 19th and early 20th centuries among various colonial powers as well as its legacy to this day.

**Course Rationale**

This course takes an interdisciplinary approach to the study of different cultures and peoples who were active players in shaping the history of the Silk Road. The source materials (including archaeological finds) and topics covered in this course do not overlap with those of any existing courses offered by this or other departments and programs.

**Learning Goals**

This course satisfies the following Core Curriculum Goals:

WCr & WCd

s1. Communicate complex ideas effectively, in standard written English, to a general audience

t. Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry

u. Evaluate and critically assess sources and use the conventions of attribution and citation correctly

v. Analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights

This course satisfies the following Asian Languages and Cultures Departmental Learning Goals for East Asian majors and minors:

*Majors* will be able to demonstrate substantial knowledge of East Asian literature and culture and pursue advanced study and/or employment in a capacity requiring such cultural knowledge. *Minors* will be able to analyze and interpret texts and relate relevant issues to other areas in the humanities.

See full statement of Asian Languages and Cultures Departmental Learning Goals at:http://sas.rutgers.edu/component/docman/doc\_download/532-sas-learning-goals

**Course Requirements**

Class Participation & Presentation 30%

Map Quizzes 10%

Weekly Primary Source Analyses 20%

Paper I 20%

Paper II 20%

**Class Participation & Presentation:**

Class participation is mandatory. Any student who misses more than **FOUR** classes will automatically fail the course. Should you miss a class, please use the Absence Self-Reporting system (https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/) to indicate the date and reason for your absence.

Class participation does not mean just attendance. It encompasses 1) attendance at lectures; 2) observation of classroom decorum (no chatting, texting, eating, gaming, or surfing the internet); 3) timely completion of reading assignments; and 4) active participation in discussions. Students must bring readings assigned for that day to class.

Students are to lead the seminar discussion in turn and present the assigned materials. Each student is expected to make **TWO** presentations throughout the semester. Everyone is required to come prepared for discussion whether or not s/he is presenting.

**Map Quizzes:**

Students are expected to develop a firm knowledge of the general geography of Asia. There will be several map quizzes throughout the semester. The best way to prepare for them is to pay close attention to the maps included in assigned readings. I will also distribute a worksheet for practicing before each quiz.

All written assignments will be evaluated based on accurate factual presentation of the topic, the level of critical interpretation/reflection, and clear and logical development of the argument and thesis.

**A. WEEKLY PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSES**

The weekly analytical reflection will consist of a close reading of one of the assigned primary sources. Students must demonstrate that they have read the specific document carefully, that they are able to connect it with other assigned readings, and that they can articulate intelligently what they understand to be the key questions raised and/or addressed by it. An analytical reflection should not be a simple summary of the content. Each reflection must be between 250 and 300 words, typed, single-spaced, and include the title of the text analyzed and a word count. Each student must submit **ONE** analytical reflection per week. The ten highest grades will be used when calculating the course grade. **All weekly primary source analyses are due on Tuesday**.

**B. TERM PAPERS**

Students are expected to complete **TWO** term papers in this course. The paper will be an analytical essay centering on a question drawn from the assigned readings. The paper aims to help students become critical readers and to practice their skills as textual scholars. Students must directly engage with the sources and use them to support their arguments. Each paper will be between 1200-1500 words in length, typed, double-spaced, numbered, include a word count, and have proper attribution and citation of sources throughout.

All citations must be done according to the *Chicago Manual of Style,* for detailed information see: <http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html>.

**Please note:**

Late submission will not be accepted without prior (meaning at least 24 hours) approval. So be sure to backup all your written works for this course.

**Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity at all times. Violations include cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity.If you ever have questions about academic integrity in the course, please talk to me or send me an email immediately with your concerns.See full statement of current Academic Integrity Policy at:http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI\_Policy\_9\_01\_2011.pdf

Students with disabilities

It is the policy of Rutgers to make reasonable academic accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities. If you have a disability and wish to request accommodations to complete your course requirements, please contact the Office of Disability Services and ask to speak with a Coordinator (848-445-6800 or [dsoffice@echo.rutgers.edu](mailto:dsoffice@echo.rutgers.edu)) about accommodations.

**Course Materials Required for ALL students:**

There are two types of course materials, books to be purchased and individual articles and book chapters available for download at the course website. Students must bring a hard copy of the readings assigned for the particular class.

* + Richard C. Foltz. *Religions of the Silk Road: Premodern Patterns of Globalization*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. (Henceforth ***Religions***)
  + Valerie Hansen. *The Silk Road: A New History*. Oxford University Press, 2012. (Henceforth ***Sites***)
  + Xinru Liu. *The Silk Roads: A Brief History with Documents.* Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2012. (Henceforth ***Documents***)
  + Xinru Liu. *The Silk Road in World History*, Oxford University Press, 2010. (Henceforth **History**)
  + Susan Whitfield. *Life Along the Silk Road*. John Murry, 1999. (Henceforth ***Life***)
  + Other assigned scholarly articles, book chapters, and primary sources are available on the course website via Sakai.

**Office Hours: TBA**

**Course Schedule:**

**(Reading must be completed by the date indicated)**

\* = the item is on Sakai ***and*** required for all students

**Week 1: Introduction: The People, The Geology, and the Great Game**

*Sites,* Introduction

*Religions*, Ch. 1: The Silk Road and Its Travelers

*\*Liu, Connections Across Eurasia,* Introduction

\*Franck and Brownstone*,* Ch. 11: Cities in the Sand, pp. 263-280

*\**Boulnois, *Silk Road*, Ch. 2: The Land of Silk

**Week 2: The Emergence of the Silk Road on the Eastern End**

*Documents,* pp. 1-7; pieces #1-3 and 13

*History,* Ch. 1: China Looks West

*Sites,* Ch.1: The Kingdom of Kroraina

*\**Boulnois, *Silk Road*, Ch. 3: Adventures of a Diploma-Explorer and Ch. 4: A Kingdom of Horses

**Week 3: The Emergence of the Silk Road on the Western End**

*Documents,* pp. 7-10; pieces #4-8

*History,* Ch. 2: Rome Looks East

*Religions*, Ch. 2: Religion and Trade in Ancient Eurasia

*\**Boulnois, *Silk Road*, Ch. 6: The Geographer in Antiquity and Women’s Extravagance and Ch. 7: Dangers in the Erythraean Sea

**Week 4: Buddhism and the Silk Road**

**Map Quiz 1**

*Religions*, Ch. 3: Buddhism and the Silk Road

\**The World Religions Reader*, Document Sets: 5.1, 5.2 (pieces # 1 and 5), 5.3, 5.4

**Week 5: The Lands and Peoples In-between**

*Documents,* pp. 10-18;Pieces # 9, 12, 14

*History,* Ch. 3: The Kushan Empire and Buddhism

*Sites,* Ch.2: Kucha and the Caves of Kizil

\**Afghanistan: Hidden Treasure from the National Museum, Kabul* (Website)

**Week 6: Empire, Trade, and Religion (I): The Byzantium and Sassanid Empires**

*Documents,* pp. 19-22;Pieces #19, 20, and 21

*History,* Ch. 4: The Golden Age Emerges

**Week 7: Empire, Trade, and Religion (II): New Relationship Between Empire and Religion**

**Map Quiz 2**

*Religions*, Ch. 4: Nestorians and Manichaeans on the Silk Road

*\*Liu, Connections,* Ch. 4: Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and Buddhism

\*Anthology of World Scriptures, Ch. 9: Zoroastrianism

\* Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road, “*Hymns on Cosmogony and Eschatoloty”

**Week 8: Empire, Trade, and Religion (III): The Turks and The Sogdians**

**Paper I due on Friday @ 11:59 PM**

*Documents,* Pieces #18

*Sites,* Chs. 3: Turfan and 4: Samarkand and Sogdiana

*Life*, Introduction and the Merchant’s Tale

\*Golden, *Central Asian in World History*, Ch. 3: The Turks and Their Successors

*\**Boulnois, *Silk Road*, Ch. 12: Byzantium, Persia, the Turks and the Sogdians

**Week 9: The Great Tang Empire (I)**

*Documents,* Pieces #17, 22, 23

*Sites,* Ch. 5: Chang’an

*Life,* The Horseman’s Tale, the Princess’s Tale, and the Courtesan’s Tale

\*Sen, “The Travel Records of Chinese Pilgrims Faxian, Xuanzang, and Yijing”

\*Faxian (Fa-Hsien): A Record of the Buddhistic Kingdoms (394-414 CE)

\*Xuanzang: Record of the Western Regions

**Week 10: The Great Tang Empire (II)**

*Sites,* Ch. 6: Dunhuang Caves

*Life,* The Nun’s Tale, The Widow’s Tale, The Official’s Tale, and The Artist’s Tale

\**Dunhuang: Caves of Faith* (website)

\**The Silk Road Exhibition* (website)

**Week 11: The Arab Conquests of the Silk Road**

*Documents,* Pieces #16

*History,* Ch. 5: Transformation of the Eurasian Silk Market

*Sites,* Ch. 7: Khotan

*Life,* The Solider’s Tale and The Monk’s Tale, and the Epilogue

\*Golden, *Central Asian in World History*, Ch. 4: The Coming of Islam

\**Islamic Central Asia: Historical Sources*, Part 1.A: Central Asia and Arab Conquests

**Week 12: Islam and the Silk Road**

**Map Quiz 3**

*Documents,* Pieces #25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 and 31

*Religions*, Ch. 5: The Islamization of the Silk Road

\*Golden, *Central Asian in World History*, Ch. 5: Crescent Over Steppe

*\*Liu, Connections,* Ch. 5: Trade and Communication Under the Muslim System and Ch. 6: Oceans and Seas, 900-1300,” pp. 187-218.

**Week 13: The Mongol Conquests**

*History,* Ch. 6: The Mongols and the Twilight of the Silk Road

*Religions*, Ch. 6: Ecumenical Mischief

\**Islamic Central Asia: Historical Sources*, Part 3.A: Temujin and the Rise of Mongol Empire

**Week 14: The Mongols and the Silk Road**

*\**Boulnois, *Silk Road*, Ch. 15: Oriente Poliano

*\**Marco Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo,* in Foundations of Anthropological Theory, pp. 73-84

\*Pegolotti's *Merchant Handbook*

\**Islamic Central Asia: Historical Sources*, piece# 27

**Week 15: The Silk Road in Twilight**

**Map Quiz 4**

**Paper II due on Friday @ 11:59 PM**

*Religions*, Ch. 7: A Melting Pot No More

\*Golden, *Central Asian in World History*, Ch. 7: The Later Chinggisids

\**Islamic Central Asia: Historical Sources*, Part 4.A: Timur’s Rise and Rule

\*Rassabi, “The ‘Decline’ of the Central Asian Caravan Trade”

*\**Boulnois, *Silk Road*, Ch. 19: Explores, Archaeologists and Reporters and Ch. 20: Tourism and Pipeline

**Sample Map Quiz (24 pts total)**

Please put the number of each designated location on the map at the appropriate place. The total points available for this quiz is 24. You have 10 minutes.

1. Yellow River
2. Lake Balkas
3. Lake Baikal
4. Aral Sea
5. Oxus River
6. Caspian Sea
7. Black Sea
8. Mediterranean Sea
9. Red Sea
10. Persian Gulf
11. Indus River
12. Ganges River
13. Gobi Desert
14. Talkamakan Desert
15. Himalayas Mts.
16. Altai Mts
17. Tianshan (T’ien Shan) Mts
18. Hindu Kush
19. Iranian Plateau
20. Zagros Mts
21. Caucasus Mts
22. Dunhuang
23. Bactria (city)
24. Merv

SilkRoadQuiz.pdf

**ASSESSMENT PLAN**

**for**

**Writing & Communication Core Curriculum Learning Outcomes**

This course aims to help the students achieving the learning goals for WCr (s1) and WCd (t, u and v]. It will assess students throughout the semester based on the weekly primary source analyses and the term papers they turn in using the following rubrics.

**Grading Rubric For Weekly Primary Source Analyses**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Accurately summarize the chosen document** | | | | |
| Excellent | Good | Average | Poor | Unacceptable |
| 3 | 2 | 1.5 | 1 | 0 |
| **Identify the goal(s) of the author in composing the document** | | | | |
| Excellent | Good | Average | Poor | Unacceptable |
| 1 | 0.75 | 0.5 | 0.25 | 0 |
| **Identify and evaluate the argument and strategy the author used to achieve the goal(s)** | | | | |
| Excellent | Good | Average | Poor | Unacceptable |
| 1 | 0.75 | 0.5 | 0.25 | 0 |
| **Identify the cultural/ political biases and values (of the author and/or the potential reader)** | | | | |
| Excellent | Good | Average | Poor | Unacceptable |
| 1 | 0.75 | 0.5 | 0.25 | 0 |
| **Theorize about the society that produced it** | | | | |
| Excellent | Good | Average | Poor | Unacceptable |
| 1 | 0.75 | 0.5 | 0.25 | 0 |
| **Relate this document with the other course readings** | | | | |
| Excellent | Good | Average | Poor | Unacceptable |
| 1 | 0.75 | 0.5 | 0.25 | 0 |
| **Display correct spelling, good grammar and writing style** | | | | |
| Excellent | Good | Average | Poor | Unacceptable |
| 1 | 0.75 | 0.5 | 0.25 | 0 |
| **Display & Respect the word limit** | | | | |
| Excellent | Good | Average | Poor | Unacceptable |
| 1 | 0.75 | 0.5 | 0.25 | 0 |

**Paper Instruction & Rubrics (Sample) (SILK ROAD)**

**Weight: 20% of your course grade (200 points total)**

**Due Date: Date @ 11:59PM**

**Description**:

A primary source provides evidence for the existence of a person, event, period, idea, or practice in the past. It is usually a piece of writing or an artifact that was produced by the people who lived in the time period and at the location one wishes to study. All historians work with primary sources. Their ability to support their arguments and reconstruct the past depends on their skills in reading and analyzing primary sources. Thus, it is fair to call primary source analysis the “meat and potatoes” of history writing.

**Please re-read the assigned primary sources and address one set of the following questions:**

Set I: On Silk

What was the perceived value of silk? How and why did peoples along the Silk Road assess its value differently? What is the historical significance of these differences? Please provide concrete examples.

**or**

Set II: On Nomads

In what ways did nomads and their migrations impact trade? What do you see as the pattern(s) of interaction between nomadic and settled societies (if there is a pattern at all)? Please provide relevant case studies.

**Format:**

* Length: 1200-1500 words; please include a word count at the end of your paper.
* Fonts and spacing: 12 point, Times New Roman, and double-spaced.
* Make sure that you number each page.
* Save and upload your paper as an MS Word file (.docx or .doc) only.

**Special Remarks:**

* You must directly engage with the primary sources. Noting specific content is a good start. What is more important is to provide precise and well-chosen quotations and your interpretations of them to support your arguments.
* Assigned modern scholarship should be consulted; however, it is better to paraphrase than to quote it.
* This is *not* a research paper. Additional research, wonderful as it may be, usually distracts your attention from the primary sources. It is not very helpful and is best not attempted for this assignment.
* You must provide adequate citation when using ideas or phrases that are not your own. Failure to do so will result in a failing grade for the paper. Please consult *The* *Chicago Manual of Style* (<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html>) for the appropriate formats for citations.
* Late submission will be penalized at 50 points per day unless you have advance approval (at least 24 hours before the deadline) for an extension.
* Be sure to back up all your written work for this course. Computer- and printer-related failures are no excuse for late submission.

**Submission:**

You must submit your assignment via Sakai. Log in to the course website through the Sakai portal. Click on the folder titled “Assignments”. You will find “Paper I”. Please review the requirements for the paper and upload your paper as an attachment. If you have questions on how to submit your paper online, make sure to ask me before the due date.

**Grading Rubric For the Term Papers**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name:** | | |
| **The Use of Primary Source (45 points)** | | |
| Demonstrate that the author has read and understood the content of the documents | 15 |  |
| Use of lecture and other course materials to interpret and contextualize the documents | 15 |  |
| Address the questions and formulating arguments with appropriate use of the documents | 15 |  |
| **Critical Reading (45 points)** | | |
| Consider the purpose, the intended audience, and the inherent biases of the documents | 15 |  |
| Evaluate the usefulness of a document by assessing its strengths and limitations as a source | 15 |  |
| Demonstrate the ability to read the document beyond what is stated on the surface | 15 |  |
| **Quotation and Citation (110 points)** | | |
| Present a clear, well developed, and supported thesis | 20 |  |
| Devise an effective structure and persuasion that serve your argument | 20 |  |
| Communicate complex ideas effectively, in standard written English, to a general audience [WCr(s-1)] | 15 |  |
| Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to Chinese Studies [t] | 15 |  |
| Use the conventions of attribution and citation correctly [u] | 15 |  |
| Analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights [v] | 15 |  |
| 1200-1500 words and including a word count | 5 |  |
| Correct format (12 point, Times New Roman, double spaced, and includes the name and page number) | 5 |  |
| **TOTAL/GRADE (200 points)** | **200** |  |
| **COMMENTS** | | |