

**The Pacific World**  
**HIST 107-10**  
Georgetown University  
Summer 2020, First Session (June 1 to July 3)  
Car Barn 205  
Monday-Thursday, 10:45 am -12:45 pm

## **DRAFT SYLLABUS**

### **Subject to revision**

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“The past is the present. It’s the future, too.”

Eugene O’Neill, *Long Day’s Journey into Night*

“We study the past to understand the present. We understand the present to guide the future.”

William Lund

“We study history...not as a quaint exercise in antiquarianism, but to understand the present. History, properly understood, is a series of meandering roads that all converge on the modern day.”

Douglas Egerton, *The Wars of Reconstruction*

“...revision is the lifeblood of historical scholarship. History is a continuing dialogue between the present and the past. Interpretations of the past are subject to change in response to new evidence, new questions asked of the evidence, new perspectives gained by the passage of time. There is no single, eternal, and immutable ‘truth’ about past events and their meaning. The unending quest of historians for understanding the past—that is, ‘revisionism’—is what makes history vital and meaningful.”

James McPherson, president of the American Historical Association, September 2003

#### **Course Description**

The Pacific Ocean has historically been regarded as a vast and prohibitive void rather than an avenue for integration. Yet over the past five centuries motions of people, commodities, and capital have created important relationships between the diverse societies in and around the "Pacific Rim". This course examines the history of trans-Pacific interactions from 1500 to the present. It draws together the histories of peoples in eight distinct cultural zones: Island Pacific, Southeast Asia, East Asia, Siberia, Australia & New Zealand, Europe, North America, and Central/South America. It takes the ocean itself as the principal framework of analysis in order to bring into focus large-scale historical processes that served to connect, and in some cases

destroy, widely variant cultures in the region. These processes--mass migration, campaigns of imperial expansion, the destruction and reconfiguration of indigenous societies, cross-cultural trade, biological exchange, transfers of technology, cultural and religious exchange, and warfare and diplomacy--have deeply influenced both the experiences of individual societies and the world as a whole. Rather than trace these important transnational and global developments throughout all of modern world history, we will study the Pacific as a large but nonetheless delimited zone of interaction. This "oceans connect" approach to world history will bring these global processes into sharp relief while also allowing for continued attention to the extraordinary diversity and specificity of different cultures and societies located within and around the Pacific.

**Note: While covering many parts of the Pacific World over the course of the semester, the course does focus greater attention on East Asia and, eventually, the United States.**

### **Course Format**

Lecture and a weekly discussion.

### **Discussion Sessions**

The class will feature weekly discussions based on the assigned reading(s). The purpose of the discussion sessions is to provide opportunities for students to exchange opinions, interpretations, and ideas about the lectures and readings and the topics they address. A good discussion is one where the participants feel that they have learned something new, something that they would not have learned by simply reading the materials on their own. Note - the value of each discussion section ultimately rests on a willingness to come prepared to talk. Thus, all students are expected to do all of the assigned readings. Failure to do so will impair your ability to follow and benefit from the lectures, prevent you from being able to participate in discussion, and diminish the value of the session for those students who are prepared.

Each week several students will be responsible for preparing questions for the class. **Students must post one question under "Discussions" on Canvas by ??? the day prior to the discussion. Failure to submit a question for discussion will result in the student receiving a "zero" for the day's discussion grade.**

- The questions must be designed to provoke discussion on the readings (while they primarily should focus on the assigned reading, they also may consider links to previous readings as well as any broader implications of the work to global history, international relations, or other inter-societal relations).
- Do not assume additional knowledge on the part of your classmates (outside of the week's reading). If you desire to reference additional material, make it available to the rest of us.
- When including quotes or referencing specific points in the reading, please provide page numbers.
- Do not post a question that already has been asked (refrain from asking a follow up question to one that already has been posted – save that for class).

Active, informed, thoughtful and constructive class participation is a critical part of the assessment criteria for the course. Students are expected to come to class fully prepared to engage in a critical analysis of the assigned readings. Strong and effective class participation is characterized by:

- Demonstrated mastery of the assigned material;
- Critical examination of the assumptions and implications of the assigned readings;
- Ability to identify key issues, synthesize information (including making connections or exploring contrasts with previously assigned readings); and
- Respectful but probing examination of the contributions of your peers and effective facilitation in clarifying different points of view, thereby contributing to the learning of the whole group.

Critical reading, consistent attendance, and active engagement in class discussions are all vital to your learning and the success of this course. To earn an A level grade for discussion participation, you must come well-prepared for class, consistently interact with your colleagues and move the discussion forward with your own questions, interpretations, and ideas. If you attend every session and occasionally contribute to discussion, demonstrating good preparation on the whole, you will receive a B level grade for participation. If you attend but never participate, your grade will be no higher than a B-/80.

### Course Learning Goals

Engaged students who consistently come to class, participate actively in discussions, do all the reading, and complete all written assignments will improve their abilities to:

- Appreciate places, cultures, and peoples in the Pacific World, both in the past and the present, as different from themselves, and view that world from perspectives other than their own.
- Think critically about “the past,” not as a collection of facts, but rather as the interpretation, based on evidence, of human experiences, interactions, and relationships as they change over time. You will begin to understand that the practice of history is an ongoing conversation between historians, sources, and yourselves.
- Identify and analyze primary sources, and use them critically as the evidence from which historical interpretations are built; you will begin to understand how historians “know” what we know about the past.
- Access and use library resources, including data-bases, scholarly journals, books, and digital media.
- Articulate ideas verbally and defend them with evidence.
- Read critically in order to reflect thoughtfully on texts and the claims they put forward, as well as any implicit biases they might have.
- Write critically and thoughtfully. You should be better able to articulate and support a thesis-driven argument that is supported with evidence. You will understand the basic purpose and use of source documentation, and begin to gain mastery of standard citation formats.

### Course Requirements

- Two short (5-6 pages) papers **or** one long paper (10-12 pages); guidelines will be provided in a separate handout. The first short paper is due no later than the beginning of class on **June 15**; the second short paper or the long paper are due no later than the beginning of class on **June 29**. **Late papers will not be accepted** (short paper - 15% each; long paper – 30%)
- In-class mid-term examination on **June 18** (Short answer identifications and longer essay questions; 30%)
- Final exam on **July 2** (short answer identifications and comprehensive essay questions; 30%)
- Attendance is mandatory.

- Preparation & participation (10%)

**Failure to fulfill any of the course requirements may result in failure of the course.**

### **Attendance Policy**

- Attendance at all lectures and discussion groups is mandatory.
- Each unexcused absence from a discussion session will result in 5 points being deducted from the student's discussion participation grade.
- When absences are excused, students remain responsible for all assigned work, and shall be provided with the opportunity to make up, without penalty, any work that they have missed.
- ☐ Students receiving an excused absence for a discussion must submit a **1-2 page reaction paper** to the week's assigned reading. Its contents should focus on your reaction to the reading (or some portion of it), an explanation for that reaction, and, in the concluding paragraph, a sentence or two addressing the "so what?" factor—the consequences/significance of your reaction to the reading. These papers are graded on a pass/fail basis; a hardcopy must be submitted at the beginning of class the following Wednesday.

### Excused Absences:

- Absence for religious observances: Please notify me by person and email at the beginning of the semester of religious observances that conflict with classes.  
"Any student who is unable to attend classes or to participate in any examination, presentation, or assignment on a given day because of the observance of a major religious holiday or related travel shall be excused and provided with the opportunity to make up, without unreasonable burden, any work that has been missed for this reason and shall not in any other way be penalized for the absence or rescheduled work."
- Absence for athletic travel: Student-athletes must provide a travel letter at the beginning of the semester that highlights potential absences. Students who cannot be accommodated for some or all absences should discuss the matter with the relevant Academic Coordinator for Student-Athletes.
- Absence for documented illness: Students who miss multiple classes due to prolonged illness should provide documentation of such to the Dean's Office, which will communicate with the student's professors. A prolonged absence may necessitate the student's withdrawal from the course or from the University for the semester.
- At the discretion of the professor: There may be cases where an absence is undocumented but is, nevertheless, excused by the professor (e.g., absence due to a death in the family).

### **Writing Center**

Since writing is an important part of this class, you are encouraged to visit the Writing Center (217a Lauinger) and work with one of the trained tutors. While you solely are responsible for the work you submit, and the Center's tutors will not do your work for you, Writing Center tutors can talk you through any stage of your writing process, from brainstorming a thesis and organizing your thoughts to revising, editing and proofreading. To set up an appointment, visit <http://writingcenter.georgetown.edu>

### **Instructional Continuity**

Should classes be canceled, students should await case-by-case directions from the instructor.

### **Academic Integrity**

**As signatories to the Georgetown University Honor Pledge, you are required to uphold academic honesty in all aspects of the course, especially on exams and papers. The professors and teaching assistants are aware of and regularly consult all of the major Internet sources for plagiarized papers. Thus, you are hereby cautioned to follow the letter and the spirit of the Standards of Conduct outlined in the Georgetown Honor System brochure pp. 3-4, 11-13. If you have any questions about conforming to rules regarding plagiarism or about the proper format for citations, consult a professor or teaching assistant.**

**Any violations of the Honor Pledge may result in failure of the course.**

If you believe you have a disability, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center ([arc@georgetown.edu](mailto:arc@georgetown.edu)) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies. In order to arrange accommodations, the student must present his/her professor with a letter from the ARC outlining the recommended accommodations at the beginning of the semester.

Resources are available for all students when they experience life events or academic pressures that leave them feeling anxious, confused, depressed, lonely, or overwhelmed. Although such students may not be eligible for accommodations through the Academic Resource Center, they are encouraged to:

- Visit the Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS) in Darnall Hall. A free intake can be arranged by walk-in, or by calling 202-687-6985 during normal business hours (202-444-PAGE [7243] for emergencies).
- Talk to their deans, who can connect students to the appropriate resources and help them work through their academic options.
- Communicate proactively with faculty if anxiety or depression have disrupted class attendance and/or productivity.

Students who are not registered with the ARC are not entitled to accommodations (including extensions), nor are registered students who fail to follow established ARC procedures. Any student with a chronic condition which affects class performance is urged to contact the ARC to pursue whether accommodations may be appropriate for future coursework.

For more information:

<http://bulletin.georgetown.edu/regulations4.html#attendance>  
<http://guarc.georgetown.edu/>  
<http://caps.georgetown.edu/>  
<http://guarc.georgetown.edu/athlete/faqs/>

Georgetown University and its faculty are committed to supporting survivors of sexual misconduct, harassment, or assault. University policy requires faculty members to report any disclosures about sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator, whose role it is to coordinate the University's response to sexual misconduct.

### **Class Schedule**

- **The topics and readings listed in syllabus may be revised during the term**
- **Termsheets, outlines, and PowerPoint presentations for the lectures are available on Canvas under "Files."**
- **Required readings are available on Canvas under "Files."**

#### **Week 1 (Week of June 1)**

- Course Introduction/Setting the Scene
- SE Asia at the Crossroads: Early Maritime Asia
- China at the Center
- God and Gold: European/Asian Interactions

#### **Discussion:**

- Matt K. Matsuda. "Civilization without a Center" and "Trading Rings and Tidal Empires," in *Pacific Worlds: A History of Seas, Peoples, and Cultures* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

#### **Week 2 (Week of June 8)**

- Spain as a Pacific Player
- Great Power Rivalries in the North Pacific
- First Encounters in the South Pacific
- Challenge of Modernity: China

#### **Discussion:**

- TBD

#### **Week 3 (Week of June 15)**

**Monday, June 15: First written assignment due**

- Challenge of Modernity: Japan
- The "American Empire": US Expansion into the Pacific
- Commercial Activity

**MIDTERM EXAM: Thursday, June 18**

#### **Discussion:**

- TBD

#### **Week 4 (Week of June 22)**

- Trans-Pacific Migration
- "The Chinese Must Go" or "The Yellow Peril"
- Imperialism in Action
- Nationalism in Reaction

**Monday, June 29: Second written assignment/long paper due**

#### **Discussion:**

- TBD

#### **Week 5 (Week of June 29)**

- Tensions in the Pacific: The US-Japan Rivalry & Asia for the Asians?
- World War II in the Pacific
- The Cold War, Decolonization & Vietnam
- Regional Economic Growth & Integration

Discussion:

- TBD

**FINAL EXAM – Thursday, July 2**