



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
School of Continuing Studies

BLHS-403 China in Africa

Dates: August 25 to December 17, 2021

Time: Tuesdays 5:20 pm to 7:50 pm

Location: This is an online course that meets once a week via Zoom video conferences. Zoom tutorials are available at <https://uis.georgetown.edu/zoom/> Course content is organized and managed using the Canvas LMS. To learn more about Canvas, please consult the Canvas instructional videos at canvas.georgetown.edu/student-resources

Faculty: Paula S. Harrell

Contact information: psh24@georgetown.edu 301-980-7748

Virtual office hours: by appointment

Course Description

What is the potential for productive partnerships between China, a powerful country of 1.4 billion aging, increasingly affluent consumers, and the countries of Africa, an entire continent whose billion-plus population is notably young, poor and expected to double by 2050? How can we make sense of China's current record of infrastructure lending in Africa or the recent uptick in China-Africa trade or the fact that the top mobile phone seller in Africa is a Chinese company we've never heard of? To provide some answers, China in Africa (BLHS 403) will explore the on-the-ground realities of China's increasingly complex engagement with African countries in aid, trade, investment, agribusiness, and technology transfer. It will look at China's Africa policy as a work in progress, evolving over several decades as China's economic success sparked Africans' interest in China as a possible growth model and source of outside finance. It will use

country-specific case studies to illustrate the diversity of the Africa response to China: how such factors as local African governance systems, socioeconomic conditions, and negotiating skills have affected the outcomes of Chinese-financed projects. While the China-Africa story is the main event, the course will also assess competing or complementary activities of U.S., European, and Japanese investors and the work of multilateral assistance agencies. Overall, “China in Africa” aims to encourage a data-based assessment of the past and future of China-Africa partnership, a key piece in the globally-connected puzzle that represents our future.

Course Learning Objectives

The student who has mastered the content of this course will be able to

1. Explain China’s economic engagement in Africa in broad historical terms;
2. Compare China and Africa by geography, economy, demographic trends;
3. Discuss the opening phase of China’s economic takeoff and unique development experience;
4. Describe China’s Belt and Road Initiative, how its development assistance approach compares with other outside donor funding, and the response of borrowing countries in Africa;
5. Cite specific cases of China’s aid, trade, and investment in Africa, particularly in funding large infrastructure projects;
6. Gain insights into the human dimension of Chinese and Africans interacting in business and daily life;
7. Utilize the growing number of research resources/databases on BRI activities in Africa;
8. Evaluate the reliability of secondary sources reporting on China in Africa issues;
9. produce a well-written, mature research paper that presents a logical argument backed by solid evidence from reliable sources.

Assigned materials and course requirements

There is no single, required text for the course; in essence, we will be writing our own. Assigned materials, listed week by week on the Canvas site, will consist of articles/book chapters available through Lauinger e-reserves; reports/studies accessible through online links; and videos of conferences, book talks, and interviews.

You are expected to attend all online lectures. You are expected to spend approximately 9-12 hours per week before each class completing the assignments so that

you can actively contribute to in-class discussion and debate. **Be sure to check the Canvas course site each week for updated sources.** The China in Africa phenomenon is complex, fast-changing, and the subject of a recent outpouring of research and public commentary. I will make substitutions and additions to the class assignments list as necessary to reflect the latest developments and analysis.

Class assignments include four short (3-5 page) papers, one per course module, to be submitted via Google docs and discussed in class. The purpose here is to encourage you to synthesize your thinking on all of the materials presented in the module in question. These papers will be worth 25% of your final grade. One open-book exam, given at the end of the semester, is similarly intended to gauge your grasp of the material overall. This will account for 20% of your final grade. The centerpiece of the course will be a 10-12-page¹ research paper on a topic to be determined in consultation with your professor and discussed with fellow students in class. This will account for 40% of your overall course grade. Summaries of research findings, accounting for the final 15% of the grade, will be presented in the last class meeting of the semester. **Note:** the basis for grading all papers is as follows: written expression (grammar/spelling/word use)=20%; organization (clarity of thesis statement/logical construction of argument)=30%; evidence (use of solid, carefully considered data in support of main points)=30%; and creativity (original observations and broad insights derived from deep understanding of course material)=20%.

The course grading system is as follows:

93-100%=A, 90-92%=A-
87-89%=B+, 83-86%=B, 80-82%=B-
77-79%=C+, 73-76%=C, 70-72%=C-
67-69%=D+, 60-66%=D, Below 60%=F

¹8-10 pages, 12 point, Times New Roman font, double spaced with standard 1" top and bottom/1.25" left and right, using standard citation systems, e.g., Turabian's *Student's Guide to Writing* or *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

Course Schedule (Note: Check Canvas postings for assignment updates)

Module 1: The transformative potential of China-Africa engagement

Week 1. Introduction: i. reviewing course objectives and requirements, ii. defining terms in the foreign aid/development assistance lexicon, iii. explaining how China manages bilateral aid

Zainab Usman, Africa Report, Carnegie Endowment [What Do We Know About Chinese Lending in Africa?](#)

Forum on China Africa Cooperation. *The Diplomat*, 12/2020 “FOCAC Turns Twenty”<https://thediplomat.com/2020/12/focac-turns-20-deborah-brautigam-on-china-africa-relations/>

Week 2. Sizing up China and Africa today: i. country/continent comparisons (instructor in-class PPT presentation), ii. introduction to China-Africa databases/research projects (students: browse the following websites before coming to class)

China Africa Research Initiative, [China Africa Research Initiative Loans Database](#)
Boston University [GLOBAL CHINA INITIATIVE | Global Development Policy Center Africa Program | Center for Strategic and International Studies](#),
<https://www.brookings.edu/search/?s=Africa+in+Focus>
<https://uschinadialogue.georgetown.edu/search?q=China%27s+engagement+in+Africa>
https://carnegieendowment.org/search/?qry=africa+project&maxrow=10&search_op=and&search_mode=all
[China Global Investment Tracker](#)

Week 3. Sweeping views of China, Africa, and the West: i. tectonic shifts in global economic growth, ii. Africa and China under Western dominance, iii. features of China-Africa engagement

Angus Maddison, *Development Centre Studies*, [Chinese Economic Performance in the Long Run](#), Summary and Conclusions, 13-22

David H. Shinn, *China and Africa: A Century of Engagement*, Ch. I, Intro, 1-16; Ch 2, “A Historical Overview of China-Africa Relations,” 17-56

Video: [AFRICA: A Voyage of Discovery - Episode 6 - The Magnificent African Cake](#)

Alison Kaufman, “The Century of Humiliation and China’s National Narratives,”

<https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/3.10.11Kaufman.pdf>

Module 2: China's go-fast development model and its implications for Africa's developing countries

Week 4. Drivers of China's post-1979 economic growth: i. lessons from China's East Asian neighbors, ii. benefits of foreign aid, trade, investment, iii. prioritizing what works ("crossing the river by feeling the stones")

Elizabeth Economy, *By All Means Necessary*, Ch 1, 1-16, Ch 2, 17-56

Arthur Kroeber, *China's Economy: What Everyone Needs to Know* (2016) Ch 1, 2, and 3, 1-67 [2020 edition available for \$8.79 on Amazon Kindle]

Week 5. China transitions to a socialist market economy, joins the WTO, "goes global": i. resources to fuel a rising China, ii. emergence of a China-style aid model?

Brautigam, *The Dragon's Gift: The Real Story of China in Africa*, Ch 3 "Going Global," 71-103

Deborah Brautigam and Tang Xiaoyang, "African Shenzhen: China's special economic zones in Africa," *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 2011.

Kingsley Moghalu, *Emerging Frontier: How the Global Economy's Last Frontier Can Prosper and Matter*, Part I, "The New Brand Africa: An Interrogation"

Week 6. China's Belt and Road Initiative: i. the BRI's global connectivity concept, ii. country-specific applications in Africa

Jonathan Hillman, *Emperor's New Road*, Ch 1 "Project of the Century," 3-39

China's BRI: the New Geopolitics of China's Global Infrastructure Development
[China's Belt and Road: The new geopolitics of global infrastructure development](#)

David Dollar, [Seven years into China's Belt and Road](#)
[One Belt One Road Initiative: An African Perspective By Tatenda Kunaka](#) 1-21

Module 3: The BRI model of development financing: the African experience

Week 7. Chinese financing for physical infrastructure: i. rail, ports, roads, power, ii. negotiations between Chinese lenders and African borrowers

Yunnan Chen, "Railpolitik: Ethiopia's Rail Ambitions and Chinese Development Financing," 1-4 [POLICY BRIEF](#)

Yunnan Chen, "Laying the Tracks: The Political Economy of Railway Development in Ethiopia's Railway Sector and Implications for Technology Transfer," Jan 2021 [Laying the Tracks](#)

Kenya opens massive US\$1.5 billion railway project funded and built by China
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pKR1sRifMRw>

Zach Vertin, Brookings, June 2020, [Great power rivalry in the Red Sea: China's experiment in Djibouti and implications for the United States](#)

Keyi Tang/Yingjiao Shen, March, 2019, CARI [Do China-Financed Dams in Sub-Saharan Africa Improve the Region's Social Welfare? A Case Study of the Impacts of Ghana's Bui Dam](#)

“How Chinese money is changing Africa’s Tanzania bridge project”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hc5S51im21w>

Week 8. Chinese financing for ICT infrastructure: building a digital silk road in Africa: i. the digital silk road concept, ii. what the DSR means for Africa

Iginio Gagliardone, *China, Africa, and the Future of the Internet*, Ch 1, 2, 4, 1-56, 96-119

“What Happens When China Builds Your Country’s Internet?”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2tsWmJiLYo>

How Shenzhen is fueling Ethiopia’s burgeoning startup scene (Transsion-Techno) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_3z9R

Week 9. Chinese and African businesspeople: i. trends in Chinese private investments in Africa, ii. Chinese corporate financing of extractive industries/manufacturing, iii. farmer entrepreneurs

Deborah Brautigam, *Will Africa Feed China?*, Conclusion

Financial Times 3/2019 [The other side of Chinese investment in Africa](#)

The Chinese Automaker Changing the Market in Africa: BAW cars in South Africa https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_WEmuyBSLDk March 2021

South China Morning Post, “Coronavirus: How Africa’s Traders Are Making a Long-distance Partnership Work with China,” Feb 2021

Yoon Jung Park, “Can the US Compete with Chinese Firms in Africa?” 4/2021

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/04/17/chinese-investment-africa-involve-s-more-than-megaprojects-private-enterprises-also-are-making-their-mark/>

“China's opportunities and risks in Africa's giant iron ore field,” Asia Nikkei, August 2020

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Caixin/China-s-opportunities-and-risks-in-Africa-s-giant-iron-ore-field>

Week 10. Human resources development: i. Chinese workers and migrant entrepreneurs in Africa: ii. transferring skills and creating jobs for African youth; iii. Technical assistance and training for African officials

Howard French, *China’s Second Continent: How a Million Migrants Are Building*

a New Empire in Africa, Ch, “Mozambique” and Ch 4, “Liberia”

Bruegel Institute, “China's investment in Africa: What the data really says, and the implications for Europe,” July 2019

<https://www.bruegel.org/2019/07/chinas-investment-in-africa-what-the-data-really-says-and-the-implications-for-europe/>

Heidi Ostbo Haugen, “State protection of Chinese workers in Africa,”
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/imig.12845>

Module 4: China in Africa balance sheet and prospects for productive partnerships

Week 11. China’s projection of soft power in Africa: a trend?

Carnegie Institute of International Peace, Zainab Usman “Vaccine Geopolitics Could Derail Africa’s Post-Pandemic Recovery,” Feb 2021

Chinese soft power in Africa in the Covid 19 era

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BTsuJI5vgAc>

Taobao Villages in Africa

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/speech/2016/10/29/the-taobao-villages-as-an-instrument-for-poverty-reduction-and-shared-prosperity>

Maria Repnikova, U.S.-China Dialogue, Georgetown Feb 2021 [Fragmented Spectacle of Chinese Soft Power in Africa](#)

Council on Foreign Relations, “China and SinoPharm in Africa,”
<https://www.cfr.org/blog/vaccine-diplomacy-china-and-sinopharm-africa>

Week 12. Assessing prospects for productive China-Africa partnerships in the 2020s and beyond

“How should the G7 respond to China’s BRI?” [How should the G-7 respond to China's BRI? \(brookings.edu\)](#)

Paulson Institute, [China, Africa, and Beyond with Gyude Moore](#)

Yoon Jung Park, Lina Benabdallah, “What China's really up to in Africa?”-
The Washington Post, Feb 2021

“Africa Starts to Have Second Thoughts About that Chinese Money,”
[Chinese Credit Fuels Debt Crisis in Africa](#)

David Dollar interview with Landry Signe https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/DollarAndSense_Transcript_Signe_Africa%E2%80%99s-roadmap-for-long-term-economic-growth.pdf

Cullen Hendrix, PIIE, What US Strategy Gets Wrong About China in Africa, 2020 [What US strategy gets wrong about China in Africa](#)

“China in Francophone West Africa” MERICS, Tom Bayes

<https://merics.org/en/analysis/china-francophone-west-africa-challenge-paris>

Afrobarometer.org [Africans regard China's influence as significant and positive, but slipping](#)

Why African countries back China against the West on Human Rights
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-56717986>

Week 13. Exam. Opportunities and challenges in China-Africa relations

Week 14. Presentations Research papers due December 14

Course-specific and Georgetown-standard Practices

Course management

Late assignments and absences: Late assignments may be accepted on a case by case basis with evidence provided for the delay (e.g., a doctor's note). All other late submissions will be subject to point deductions.

Regarding absences: since we have only a limited number of sessions in which to cover a lot of important material, it is essential that you plan to attend each and every class. From a practical standpoint, too, since the course is built around in-class interaction (e.g., the four short papers and research project), your final grade obviously depends on your being present at every session. Work conflicts, illness, and other emergencies will be treated sympathetically, but more than three absences during the semester will have a negative impact on your final grade.

Communications: I check emails frequently. If you have a concern and send me a message, either to my Georgetown email or through Canvas, you can expect a rapid response. You may also arrange a conversation using Zoom.

Announcements will be posted on Canvas on a regular basis. Please check announcements when you log in as they will contain important information about upcoming projects and assignments.

Respect guidelines: To promote the highest standard of liberal thought, Georgetown asks each student to respect the opinions of others and respond courteously both in class and online. The topics in this course are often controversial and debate is a good thing, but the language of discourse must be uniformly respectful. For a full discussion of SCS student conduct expectations please review the policy found in the [Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies Undergraduate Bulletin](#). For questions about the

Code of Student Conduct, please review the information provided by the **Office of Student Conduct**.

School closings: During inclement weather or another emergency on a day when we are scheduled to meet, check the university's website or call 202-687-7669 for information on whether the university is open. If it is, the class will meet. If the university is closed, the class will meet via Zoom conferencing. Check your email for a message from me on details. Due dates for written assignments submitted through Canvas will not be changed due to campus closings.

Disabilities: If you are a student with a documented disability who requires accommodations or if you think you may have a disability and want to inquire about accommodations, please contact the Academic Resource Center at 202-687-8354 or arc@georgetown.edu. This must be done before the start of classes to give the Center time to review documentation.

Technical requirements: Be sure to consult the Canvas instructional videos at canvas.georgetown.edu/student-resources before the start of class so you are fully up to speed on how to navigate the website. For 24-hour Canvas support by phone, call the Canvas Support Hotline at 855-338-2770.

Georgetown ethical/legal guidelines and support services

Academic integrity: All students are expected to follow Georgetown's honor code unconditionally. We assume you have read the following documents available at <http://scs.georgetown.edu/academic-affairs/honor-code> : Honor Council Pamphlet, What is Plagiarism, Sanctioning Guidelines, and Expedited Sanctioning Process. Papers in this course may be submitted to turnitin.com for checking.

Submitting material in fulfillment of the requirements of this course means that you have abided by the Georgetown honor pledge as follows: *In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown Honor System: to be honest in any academic endeavor, and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.*

Copyright: The materials used in Georgetown University courses ("Course Materials") generally represent the intellectual property of course instructors which may

not be disseminated or reproduced in any form for public distribution (e.g., sale, exchange, etc.) without the written permission of the course instructor. Course Materials include all written or electronic documents and materials, including syllabi, current and past examination questions/answers, and presentations such as lectures, videos, PowerPoints, etc., provided by a course instructor. Course Materials may only be used by students enrolled in the course for academic (course-related) purposes. More information about intellectual property and copyright can be found here:

<https://www.library.georgetown.edu/copyright> More information about computer acceptable use policy and intellectual property can be found here:

<https://security.georgetown.edu/it-policies-procedures/computer-systems-aup>

Religious observances: Georgetown University promotes respect for all religions. 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 will be excused and provided with the opportunity to make up, without unreasonable burden, any work that has been missed for this reason and will not in any other way be penalized for the absence or rescheduled work. Students will remain responsible for all assigned work. Students should notify professors in writing at the beginning of the semester of religious observances that conflict with their classes.

Title IX at Georgetown: For a full discussion of Title IX, see <https://titleix.georgetown.edu/> As part of the Title IX provisions, Georgetown University is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive environment for pregnant and parenting students. Students seeking a pregnancy adjustment or accommodation should follow the process laid out at: <https://titleix.georgetown.edu/student-pregnancy>.

More broadly, Title IX prohibits discrimination based on sex in any educational programs, which includes sexual harassment or any acts of sexual misconduct. Title IX requires the University, upon becoming aware of any incident of sexual harassment and misconduct to respond appropriately to protect and maintain the safety of the University community, including students, faculty, and staff. Georgetown has a number of fully confidential professional resources who can provide support and assistance to survivors of sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct. Information about campus resources can be found at <https://sexualassault.georgetown.edu/get-help> and importantly include Jen Schweer, MA, LPC at (202) 687-0323 and Erica Shirley, Trauma Specialist at (202) 687-6985. For general counseling services see [Counseling and Psychiatric Services](#) 202-687-6985.

Academic/library support services: SCS offers a variety of support systems for

students that can be accessed online, at the School of Continuing Studies downtown location, and on the main Georgetown campus:

Academic Resource Center 202-687-8354 | arc@georgetown.edu

Of special importance to BLHV-01 is Georgetown's Writing Center

<https://writingcenter.georgetown.edu/>

Students enrolled in online School of Continuing Studies SCS coursework have access to the University Library System's eResources, including 500+ research databases, 1.5+ million ebooks, and thousands of periodicals and other multimedia files (films, webinars, music, and images). Students can access these resources through the **Library's Homepage** by using their University username (NetID) and password (this is the same login information used to access email, Canvas, etc.). This service is available to currently enrolled students who need assistance with Georgetown-assigned projects and papers. Please review the **Services & Resources Guide for Online Students** for additional information.

