

HIST 240 | East Asia and Its Historic Tradition

Fall 2025

Content

Survey of the great historic traditions of China, Japan, and Korea from earliest times to approximately 1800, with special attention to state formation, society, intellectual, philosophical, and religious developments, and the visual, musical, and literary arts.

This course introduces the history of East Asia from the beginning of the civilization to around 1800. It provides an overview of foundational ideologies and institutions in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean history, and at the same time analyzes how political, economic, religious, and social changes occurred over time. Furthermore, the course examines the inter-regional exchange of goods, ideas and peoples among China, Japan, Korea, India, and regions beyond Asia. What we are looking at are dynamic, “open empires” in Asia, rather than isolated, unchanging civilizations.

Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate a basic understanding of historical contexts, major concepts, theoretical perspectives in the history of China, Japan, and Korea.
2. Compare and contrast the strengths and weaknesses of contending scholarly interpretations of the conflicts and connections in pre-modern history of East Asia.
3. Produce a focused, historical thesis using appropriate primary sources, historical reasoning, and adequate scholarly evidence.
4. Evaluate how historical knowledge informs and can shape global decisions and responsibilities in today’s world.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is one of the highest values that Purdue University holds. Individuals are encouraged to alert university officials to potential breaches of this value by either emailing integrity@purdue.edu or by calling 765-494-8778. While information may be submitted anonymously, the more information is submitted the greater the opportunity for the university to investigate the concern. More details are available on our course Brightspace under University Policies.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a special kind of academic dishonesty in which one person steals another person's ideas or words and falsely presents them as the plagiarist's own product. This is most likely to occur in the following ways: (1) using the exact language of someone else without the use of quotation marks and without giving proper credit to the author; (2) presenting the sequence of ideas or arranging the material of someone else even though such is expressed in one's own words, without giving appropriate acknowledgment; (3) submitting a document written by someone else but representing it as one's own. The university policies about plagiarism include penalties ranging from failure of an assignment

to expulsion from the university. In this class, anyone who plagiarizes fails the course. For more information, you may check [Best Practices to Avoid Plagiarism](#).

Nondiscrimination Statement

Purdue University is committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The University believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life. A hyperlink to Purdue's full Nondiscrimination Policy Statement is included in our course Brightspace under University Policies.

Mental Health/Wellness Statement

If you find yourself beginning to feel some stress, anxiety and/or feeling slightly overwhelmed, try [WellTrack](#). Sign in and find information and tools at your fingertips, available to you at any time.

If you need support and information about options and resources, please contact or see the [Office of the Dean of Students](#). Call 765-494-1747. Hours of operation are M-F, 8 am- 5 pm.

If you find yourself struggling to find a healthy balance between academics, social life, stress, etc., sign up for free one-on-one virtual or in-person sessions with a [Purdue Wellness Coach at RecWell](#). Student coaches can help you navigate through barriers and challenges toward your goals throughout the semester. Sign up is free and can be done on BoilerConnect.

If you're struggling and need mental health services: Purdue University is committed to advancing the mental health and well-being of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of mental health support, services are available. For help, such individuals should contact [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) at 765-494-6995 during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or by going to the CAPS office on the second floor of the Purdue University Student Health Center (PUSH) during business hours. The [CAPS website](#) also offers resources specific to situations such as COVID-19.

Basic Needs Security

Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. There is no appointment needed and Student Support Services is available to serve students 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Considering the significant disruptions caused by the current global crisis as it relates to COVID-19, students may submit requests for emergency assistance from the [Critical Need Fund](#).

Emergency Preparation

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances beyond the instructor's control. Relevant changes to this course will be posted onto the course website or can be obtained by contacting the instructors or TAs via email or phone. You are expected to read your @purdue.edu email on a frequent basis.

Recommended books

Ebrey, Patricia Buckley, and Anne. Walthall. 2014. *Pre-Modern East Asia, to 1800: a Cultural, Social, and Political History*. 3rd ed. Boston, MA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.

Assignments

Attendance and participation:	10%
Weekly reading quizzes:	20%
Group presentation:	5%
Short responses:	30%
Final Project:	35%

Grading Scale

A	= 93.33 – 100%
A -	= 90 – 93.32%
B+	= 86.66 – 89.99%
B	= 83.33 – 86.65 %
B -	= 80 – 83.32 %
C+	= 76.76 – 79.99 %
C	= 73.33 – 76.75 %
C -	= 70 – 73.32 %
D+	= 66.66 – 69.99 %
D	= 63.33 – 66.65 %
D -	= 60 – 63.32 %