



# Independent Study | in Idaho

**HIST 180**  
**Introduction to**  
**East Asian History**

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Boise State University — Idaho State University — Lewis-Clark State College

# Course Guide

Independent  
Study | in Idaho

*Self-paced study. Anytime. Anywhere!*

## **History 180 Introduction to East Asian History**

University of Idaho  
3 Semester-Hour Credits

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## Hist 180: Introduction to East Asian History

3 Semester-Hour Credits: UI

### Welcome!

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Whether you are a new or returning student, welcome to the Independent Study in Idaho (ISI) program. Below, you will find information pertinent to your course including the course description, course materials, course objectives, as well as information about written assignments, exams, and grading.

### Policies and Procedures

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Refer to the ISI website at [www.uidaho.edu/isi](http://www.uidaho.edu/isi) and select *Students* for the most current policies and procedures, including information on setting up accounts, student confidentiality, exams, proctors, transcripts, course exchanges, refunds, academic integrity, library resources, and disability support and other services.

### Course Description

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Survey of traditional and modern Chinese, Japanese, and Korean history. General education credit, international.

*12 graded assignments, 3 exams*

Students may submit up to 2 assignments per week. Before taking exams, students MUST wait for grades and feedback on assignments, which may take up to two weeks after date of receipt by the instructor.

ALL assignments and exams must be submitted to receive a final grade for the course.

### Course Materials

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#### Required Course Materials

- Charles Holcombe, *A History of East Asia: From the Origins of Civilization to the Twenty-First Century*, Cambridge University Press, 2011. ISBN: 9780521731645
- Pang-Mei Natasha Chang, *Bound Feet & Western Dress: A Memoir*, New York: Anchor Books, 1996. ISBN: 9780385479646
- John Hersey, *Hiroshima*. New York: Vintage Books, 1985. ISBN: 0679721037.

### Course Supplemental Materials

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#### 1. *The Pacific Century, Documentary series*

*The Pacific Century*, produced by the Pacific Basin Institute and Annenberg/CPB (The Annenberg Foundation and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting), is a set of ten instructional videos on the political, cultural, and economic development of major East Asian countries, including China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Vietnam during the past 150 years. The video series, produced in 1992, discusses interesting issues involved in these East Asian countries on their path toward industrialization, their struggle for democracy, and the frustration between tradition and modernization. The visual information in the series is the most helpful material to students in this course. The Media Center of Washington State University/University of Idaho now has this series in possession. Students need to obtain an authorization from the instructor in order to check the tapes out.

The ten episodes, each tape about 57 minutes long, are as follows:

1. The Two Coasts of China: Asia and the Challenge of the West
2. The Meiji Revolution
3. From the Barrel of a Gun
4. Writers and Revolutionaries
5. Reinventing Japan
6. Inside Japan, Inc.
7. Big Business and the Ghost of Confucius

8. The Fight for Democracy
9. Sentimental Imperialists: America in Asia
10. The Pacific Century: The Future of the Pacific Basin

For more information, check CPB's website at <http://www.learner.org>.

## 2. Videos

The following films and documentaries are suggested as references to help students better understand some issues in this course.

### China

#### 1) In English

55 Days in Peking  
The Good Earth  
The Last Emperor  
Red Corner  
Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon  
The First Emperor of China (documentary)  
Forbidden City: The Great Within (documentary)  
China in Revolution, 1911-49 (documentary)  
Mao Years, 1949-76 (documentary)  
Gate of Heavenly Peace (documentary)  
A World at War, China in WWII (documentary)

#### Japan

Black Rain (English subtitles)  
Gung Ho  
Shall We Dance (English subtitles)  
Mishima: A Life in Four Chapters  
Hiroshima  
A World at War, Japan in WWII (documentary)  
Colonel Comes to Japan (documentary)

#### Taiwan

Eat Drink Man Woman  
The Wedding Banquet

#### 2) In Chinese with English Subtitles

Raise the Red Lanterns  
Farewell My Concubine  
Jiu Dou  
To Live  
Blue Kite  
Not One Less  
Breaking the Silence  
The Road Home

#### Vietnam

Three Seasons (English subtitles)  
Scent of the Green Papaya (English subtitles)  
Regret to Inform (documentary)  
Vietnam at Crossroads (documentary)

## Course Delivery

This course is available online. An electronic course guide is accessible through Canvas at no additional cost. Refer to your *Registration Confirmation Email* for instructions on how to access Canvas.

## Course Introduction

This course is a general survey of both traditional and modern history on major countries in East Asia, including China, Japan, Korea, and on regions such as Hong Kong and Taiwan. The course examines major events and developments in traditions, culture, philosophical thoughts, political organizations, social structures, economic institutions, religious practices, western impact, as well as foreign relations of these nations. Through examination of East Asian traditions and ideologies, we not only see how the East viewed the West but also vice versa. The focus will be placed on how East Asian states underwent transformation throughout history and took the challenge to become industrialized over time. The course will explore patterns of political and economic reforms in East Asia. The study of East Asian history tends to provide students with necessary information to understand, with a global perspective, interaction and interrelations of the greater region known as the Pacific Rim, which began to play a more and more important role in international politics as well as globalization since the 1980s.

## **Course Objectives**

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The primary objective of this course is to introduce general understanding of East Asia. Students are expected to achieve the following by the end of the course:

- To learn major Asian traditions and cultures both in theory and in practice;
- To understand general characteristics of East Asian political and economic structures and philosophical traditions;
- To interpret interaction between the East and the West in historical perspective;
- To explain western impact on, and responses from, East Asian countries;
- To identify major problems in the region, then and now;
- To appreciate cultural diversity; and
- To familiarize with some literature and scholarship on East Asia.

Students are encouraged to apply a comparative approach in both readings and writings.

## **Lessons**

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There are *twelve* written assignments in this course, two of which are book reviews. Each lesson includes the following components:

- Lesson objectives
- An introductory lecture
- A reading assignment
- A written assignment usually includes identification of several important terms or events, commentary on an article excerpt, and a few short answers or short essays (in some cases, essays) discussing historical significance of the major developments covered in the lessons.

### **Study Hints:**

- Keep a copy of every written assignment submitted.
- Complete all assigned readings.
- Set a schedule allowing for completion of the course one month prior to your desired deadline. An *Assignment Submission Log* is provided for this purpose.
- Take notes while reading and write down points you do not understand. If necessary, you may contact the course instructor for explanation through e-mail.

For each lesson students are required to submit a written assignment, which will be based on the reading and questions raised in the course guide. Each written assignment must be typed. There is no specific requirement for the length of the work but either too short or too long will not give extra strength to the writing.

## **Book Reviews**

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The *two* book reviews are based on the two books assigned for this course. All book reviews must be typed, double spaced in 12 point font, and between 6 to 8 pages in length. The two book reviews are assigned as written assignment 5 and written assignment 11 and should be submitted in order. See the respective written assignment for detailed requirements and instructions for each review.

## **Examinations**

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- You must wait for grades and comments on written assignments prior to taking each subsequent examination.

Examinations include identifications and essay questions, and are not cumulative. Examination questions come mainly from the written assignments in lessons and lectures. To prepare for each examination, students should stay with the course guide closely, read each chapter thoroughly, and finish written assignments carefully. Submit all written assignments preceding each exam prior to requesting it.

## **Grading**

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The final course grade is issued after **all** written assignments and examinations have been graded. Final course grade will be based upon the following considerations:

### **Point Distribution:**

Ten written assignments	25 maximum points each = 250
Two book reviews	35 maximum points each = 70
<u>Three examinations</u>	<u>60 maximum points each = 180</u>

**Total Points: 500**

### **Grade Breakdown:**

A = 500-450
B = 449-400
C = 399-350
D = 349-300
F = 299 and below

Acts of academic dishonesty, including cheating or plagiarism are considered a very serious transgression and may result in a grade of F for the course.

## **Spelling System**

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The main textbook, *A History of East Asia: From the Origins of Civilization to the Twenty-First Century* by Charles Holcombe is using pinyin system (the Chinese spelling system), instead of Wade-Giles system (the western spelling system), in spelling out Chinese names and places. Since most of the English scholarship on China has begun adopting pinyin system, students in this course are expected to apply pinyin system to their written assignments and examinations.

## **About the Course Developer**

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This course was developed by Dr. Pingchao Zhu, an associate professor in the History Department at University of Idaho. She is specialized in East Asian history and Sino-U.S. relations. Courses she has taught include Survey of East Asian History, Modern China, Modern Japan, The Pacific Rim, World History, The Korean War, History of the Cold War, U.S. and the Vietnam War, and U.S. Diplomatic History. To learn more about her teaching and research interests, please check her website at <http://www.uidaho.edu/~pzhu>.

## **Contacting Your Instructor**

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Instructor contact information is posted in the *Course Rules* document on your Canvas site

## Assignment Submission Log

Lesson	Chapters	Written Assignments	Date Submitted
1	1	IDs, Short Answers, & Reading Questions	_____
2	2	IDs, Short Essays, & Reading Questions	_____
3	3-4	IDs, Short Essays	_____
4	5-6	IDs & Essays	_____
<b>It is time to take Examination 1.</b>			
5	<i>Bound Feet &amp; Western Dress</i>	A Book Review	_____
6	5-6	IDs & Essays	_____
7	7	IDs & Essays	_____
8	8	IDs & Essays	_____
<b>It is time to take Examination 2.</b>			
9	9	IDs & Essays	_____
10	10	IDs & Essays	_____
11	<i>Hiroshima</i>	A Book Review	_____
12	11-12	IDs & Essays	_____
<b>It is time to take the Final Examination.</b>			



## Lesson 1

### *Early East Asia*

#### **Lesson Objectives**

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The first lesson deals with the early history of East Asia in general. Students should be able to grasp the following:

1. Major geographical differences of East Asia from other regions in the world
2. Basic social and cultural framework of the region
3. Economic patterns of the region
4. Early Chinese dynasties that laid the foundation for Chinese civilization

#### **Reading Assignments**

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Holcombe, Introduction & Chapter 1

#### **Important Terms**

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Meaning of Japan	Meaning of <i>Zhongguo</i>	Oracle bones
Middle Kingdom mentality	The Bronze Age	The Yellow River valley
“The Tale of Genji”	The Shang Dynasty	

#### **Lecture**

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##### **1. Geography**

Unlike many other early civilizations, East Asian civilization developed in relative isolation. Geographically, the region is surrounded by the Pacific Ocean in the east, the Himalayas and Tibetan plateau in the west, an expanse of deserts and mountain ranges to the north, and jungles and mountains to the south. The wet climate in the region determines its agricultural pattern, mostly rice growing.

##### **2. The People**

The major race in East Asia is known as Mongoloids, especially in China, Japan, and Korea. The very origins of the race of the Mongoloids, however, still remain unclear. One trace is the *Peking Man*, which dates back to about 400,000 B.C., discovered in a cave near China’s Beijing in 1927.

Later, archaeological discoveries in Lantian near Xian in northwestern China pointed to a much earlier date, about 600,000 B.C. More recently, excavation in the southwestern Yunnan area indicated an even earlier time period to be about 2.8 million years ago. China once claimed to be the place for the origin of human beings, but it has been proven to be Africa. Residents in Asia, especially in East Asia (China, Japan, and the Korean Peninsula), have light to dark brown or yellow skin, straight black hair, a relatively flat face, and dark eyes.

##### **3. The Languages**

Almost anywhere in the world, major languages have gradually transformed from their original forms to syllabic and alphabetic forms. Only the Chinese language retains its very ancient pictographic flavor. The largest linguistic division in East Asia is the Sinitic family of language. It is what we know today as the Chinese characters.

Written language in Japan appears to be more complicated. It includes the original Japanese symbols, known as Hiragana, Chinese characters, and Katakana (for borrowed foreign words only but with a very similar pronunciation). The Japanese language has also, over time, evolved to become adaptable to European language by using the Romanized system to pronounce Japanese symbols and Chinese characters. The Korean written language had long been following the Chinese pattern by adopting the Chinese characters. In 1446 a group of Korean scholars, under the guidance of the Korean King Sejong, developed a writing system known as *han’gul*, meaning the “Korean letters.” Gradually and especially in modern time, Chinese characters are being eliminated from the Korean written language.

##### **4. Early East Asian States**

Early East Asian states remained isolated from each other by keeping their separate identities. Archaeological

evidence locates prehistoric China along the Yellow River valley, with the discoveries in Yangshao and Banpo sites as the most prominent. While the origins of both Japan and Korea are often related to Chinese mythologies, the Chinese influence on these two Sinitic states is unavoidably obvious.

When China's Shang and Zhou dynasties (1600-476 B.C.) evolved with certain significant political and social developments, Japan, Korea, and other Southeast Asian areas were still experiencing the life of hunting and gathering. That would give China a great advantage of extending cultural and political influence beyond its frontier. Please keep this in mind as you are reading through more chapters to find out when Japan, Korea, and Vietnam began to take separate ways to form their own cultural identities and political characters.

## 5. Chinese Dynastic Cycles

Although major Chinese political system prior to 1911 was based on the emperorship, it was quite different from that in Japan. Before the Zhou Dynasty, all rulers took the title of king. But Qin Shi Huangdi, the first ruler of the Qin Dynasty (221-207 B.C.), decided to adopt the title of the emperor; therefore, he was best known as the First Emperor. Imperial succession was carried out only within each dynasty. The fall of one dynasty and the rise of another usually occurred as a result of revolt and uprising. New rulers of the new dynasty had no connection with the imperial family of the previous dynasty. Some of the Chinese dynasties were named after the ruling family, such as Zhou and Qin. Other rulers carefully selected certain Chinese characters for their specific meanings as the names of the dynasties. Yuan, for example, was chosen by the Mongol ruler to refer to the "origins" or the "beginning" of the Mongol Dynasty in China. Ming, meaning "radiance/brilliance" and "light," was used to offset the Mongol's rule. When the Manchus (who were considered barbarian foreigners by the Chinese) overran the Ming Dynasty in 1644, they chose the Chinese character "Qing," meaning "putting out the light/fire (of the Ming Dynasty) with water."

In summary, the features of Chinese dynastic cycles are distinct from that of the Japanese imperial line. The Japanese imperial system has remained unbroken in succession since the legendary date of 660 B.C., when the Sun Goddess sent her great grandson to establish the first Japanese state on the Yamato plain.

## Written Assignments

There will be identifications, short answers, and a list of questions raised by students throughout the reading assignment. Please write down each item before answering it. Without complying with this rule, the written assignment will be returned to the student for revision.

### 1. Identifications

When answering the IDs, make sure to include what, where, when, who, how, wherever applicable, and most importantly, the *historical significance*, of each item. *A sample identification answer is provided on page 48.*

Meaning of *Zhongguo*  
The Bronze Age

Oracle bones  
"The Tale of Genji"

Middle Kingdom mentality  
The Yellow River valley

### 2. Short Answer Questions

Short answer requires only a couple of paragraphs.

- 1) What are the major geographical features of East Asia? How does geography determine the early developments in government and economy in the region?
- 2) Identify the two major river systems in China and their locations. Based on your reading, what role did the river systems play in the early development of Chinese civilization?
- 3) Identify major similarities and differences of the three written languages in East Asia (the Chinese, the Japanese, and the Korean).
- 4) Summarize the major characteristics of China's Shang Dynasty.

**3. Reading Questions**

Make a list of questions generated from your reading of the textbook and lecture notes. These questions are not for the instructor to answer, but for the instructor to understand how and in what way students are thinking while reading or writing. The list should contain about 3 questions. *A sample Reading Question is provided on page 48.*