GEOG 525: Asian Cities in the 21st Century
Dr. Sarah Moser
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Office: Burnside 413 | Office hours: Tuesdays 10:00-11:30 a.m. (or by appointment)

Winter 2017 meeting times: Tuesdays 2:35-5:25 p.m.
Location: Burnside Hall 429

Course Description
Asia is a rapidly urbanizing region that is home to 16 of the world’s 25 largest cities. Between 1990 and 2010, the urban population of Asia increased by over 754 million people, equal to the combined population of the United States and the European Union. Asian Cities in the 21st Century examines this vibrant region and some of the current themes relating to mass urbanization in a range of contexts and how these themes affect society and the built environment of Asian cities. The course will explore various scholarly approaches to understanding Asian cities and current theoretical debates, including those that challenge western-centric approaches to understanding urban change in the region. A variety of themes will be investigated through which students will gain familiarity with some of the major themes relating to urban change in Asia: national identity, neoliberalism, urban mobilities, social exclusions, migration, ethnicity and sustainability. The regions covered include East Asia (China, Japan, South Korea), Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Myanmar / Burma), Arab states (United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar), and South Asia (India).

Students interested in urban and cultural geography, cities, architecture, planning and contemporary urban change in Asian cultural contexts will enjoy this course.

Goals for this course
This course will:

- Encourage students to gain a deeper understanding of contemporary Asia through examining contemporary urban change
- Broaden students’ awareness of the wide variety of cities in Asia and some of the most pressing issues facing Asian cities today
- Encourage students to develop analytical and critical thinking skills and to gain familiarity with interdisciplinary urban studies methods
- Increase students’ understanding of the various scholarly approaches to understanding contemporary Asian cities and to gain familiarity with some of the major areas of enquiry relating to urban change in Asia

Assignments and evaluation
This course will be graded based on two written assignments, one presentation and participation.

10% Participation – While each class begins with a lecture, the session is dominated by class discussion guided by assigned readings and current events. Students must attend each class and will be evaluated on the quality and quantity of their comments in class. Missing a class will affect your participation mark. Half of the participation
mark comes from contributing to an online forum (https://www.facebook.com/AsianCitiesMcGill). Add an article relevant to the course material with a paragraph comment (minimum 150 words). Post a minimum of 10 articles or comments on classmates’ articles to get the full 5%. Keep a log of your comments, links to articles and the date you posted them to ensure I don’t miss any! Submit the log to me by email before the final day of classes.

20% - **Weekly critical reflection papers** – Students will write 3-page (1.5 spaced, 12 pt, Times New Roman, standard margins) critical reflections on the readings and submit them **at the start of each class**. Of the 12 classes, 10 reflection papers must be submitted. You can choose which two weeks not to submit reflection papers. They are graded out of 4 and full marks are awarded to high quality, well-written, insightful papers that engage critically with the readings and pose several discussion questions. Briefly explain the core argument each author is making, the evidence each uses to make their argument, and what the paper contributes to our understanding of contemporary Asian cities. Is their argument convincing? Why / why not? At the start of your critical reflection paper, please write 5-6 key words that summarize the themes explored in the readings.

10% **Discussion leader** – Students will each sign up for one class in which to act as discussion leader for the assigned readings (students each present two readings). In addition to the scholarly readings, students must also find several current newspaper / magazine articles about the topic of the week in order to enrich the discussion and ground the topic in contemporary events and changes in Asian cities. The newspaper articles must be submitted Friday so everyone has a chance to read them. A maximum of 2 students may sign up for one week, but it must be a week in which there are four readings. Each student will lead a 30-40 minute discussion on the themes found in the assigned reading and in the newspaper articles they find and provide a set of discussion questions for the class in order to structure the discussion. The questions can be digitally projected in the classroom or written on a white board in the classroom or copied and distributed in class. Students are encouraged to find outside visual material (e.g. marketing material, images, photos, film clips, etc) to supplement the discussion. Start with a 10 minute summary of the readings and the topic, following by a guided discussion.

20% **Book review** – In this assignment, students will review a recently published academic book relating to Asian cities. You can choose from the below list or find a suitable book on your own that relates to your thesis you own personal interests. If you choose a book not listed below, please run it by me first. The book review (1500-2000 words) should contextualize the book within the broader literature, provide a brief summary of the content, and a critical analysis of the contribution. Students are encouraged to look to published book reviews in scholarly publications for guidance. (see detailed assignment sheet) (Due Monday, Oct. 19)


10% **Paper outline, abstract and bibliography** - Students will prepare a detailed outline as well as a 150-200 word abstract and list of references for their final paper. You will be assessed on the quality of the outline, the flow and logic, clarity of argument, the relevance and thoroughness of the bibliography, and the quality of the abstract. (Due Monday, Nov. 2)

30% **Final paper** – This final research paper should be 4-5,000 words (double-spaced, 12 pt, Times New Roman, standard margins). Papers must: 1) engage with a theoretical debate that we examine in class 2) examine a theme explored in this course in depth. (see detailed assignment sheet) (Due Dec. 16 by email)

*late assignments will be penalized 10% per day. Assignments are considered late if they are not submitted at the start of class.*

*weekly critical reflection papers will only be accepted at the beginning of each class. None will be accepted by email or at the end of class or later.*

**Class schedule and readings** *readings can be downloaded from MyCourses*

| 1. Tuesday, Jan 10 | In the first class, I will introduce the Asia region and various urbanism trends. We will examine ‘Asian Cities’ as a topic of academic study as well as some of the problems with terms including the ‘global south’. Finally, we will explore several of the main theoretical approaches to understanding urban change in Asia. |
| **Introduction – Asian cities in an age of change** | **Videos + discussion** |
| | 1) Why use the term ‘urban global south’? [http://www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/dpu/dpu60/tab](http://www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/dpu/dpu60/tab) |
| | 2) What do current debates on the urban global south imply for planning? [http://www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/dpu/dpu60/tab/film-2](http://www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/dpu/dpu60/tab/film-2) |
| | 3) What kind of theory is required for the urban global south? Do we require a new urban theory or the reworking of existing conceptualizations? [http://www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/dpu/dpu60/tab/film-3](http://www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/dpu/dpu60/tab/film-3) |

| **Retheorizing cities in Asia** | Chen, Xiangming; Moser, Sarah; and Kundu, Ratoola. (2016) Intro to The Research Handbook on Asian Cities. Edward Elgar. |
### Asian Cities in the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century | Sarah Moser | Dept of Geography

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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*no class on October 12!! (Thanksgiving)*

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<tr>
<td>Culture, identity and branding</td>
<td><em><strong>Reading week Feb 27 – March 3 – no class!</strong></em></td>
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<td>Mobilities and flows</td>
<td>*** Paper outline, abstract and bibliography due at the beginning of class, Nov. 2***</td>
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<td>Accommodating the masses: Emerging housing patterns in Asian cities</td>
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12. Tues, April 4


13. Tues, April 11

Paper writing and feedback session

***Final paper due April 21 – please email it to me as a Word document before 5:00pm***

**Academic integrity**: *McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures* (see [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/) for more information). *(approved by Senate on 29 January 2003)*

*L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l’honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/)).*

**Language**: In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.” *(approved by Senate on 21 January 2009 - see also the section in this document on Assignments and evaluation.)*

*Conformément à la Charte des droits de l’étudiant de l’Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l’un des objets est la maîtrise d’une langue).*

**Other info and links:**
© Instructor generated course materials (e.g., handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions, etc.) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Note that infringements of copyright can be subject to follow up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.
"As the instructor of this course I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the Office for Students with Disabilities, 514-398-6009."

Guidelines for the use of mobile computing and communications (MC2) devices in classes at McGill have been approved by the APC. Consult the guidelines for a range of sample wording that may be used or adapted by instructors on their course outlines.

"End-of-course evaluations are one of the ways that McGill works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student’s learning experience. You will be notified by e-mail when the evaluations are available on Mercury, the online course evaluation system. Please note that a minimum number of responses must be received for results to be available to students."

"McGill has policies on sustainability, paper use and other initiatives to promote a culture of sustainability at McGill. " (See the Office of Sustainability.)

In keeping with McGill’s preparedness planning strategies with respect to potential pandemic or other concerns, the Administration suggests that all course outlines contain the statement: "In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change."

"Additional policies governing academic issues which affect students can be found in the McGill Charter of Students’ Rights" (The Handbook on Student Rights and Responsibilities is available here).