Urbanizing China

Fall 2020 ARCH UN3502 Barnard and Columbia Colleges Architecture Department
Meetings MTWR 1:10-2:25 / ONLINE ONLY
Instructor Nick R. Smith, nrsmith@barnard.edu
Office Hrs TBA (sign-ups at urbanismith.com/teaching)
TAs TBA

Course Description:
This course investigates the dramatic urban transformation that has taken place in mainland China over the last four decades. The speed and scale of this transformation have produced emergent new lifeways, settlement patterns, and land uses that increasingly blur the distinction between urban and rural areas. At the same time, Chinese society is still characterized by rigid, administrative divisions between the nation's urban and rural sectors, with profound consequences for people’s lives and livelihoods. The course therefore examines the intersection between the rapid transformation of China’s built environment and the glacial transformation of its administrative categories. We will take an interdisciplinary approach to this investigation, using perspectives from architecture, history, geography, political science, anthropology, urban planning, and cultural studies, among other disciplines.

This year, the course is being offered in an immersive, online format with an introduction and five thematic modules, each of which focuses on a particular dimension of urban-rural relations in
contemporary China: land and planning, housing and demolition, citizenship and personhood, agriculture and food, and nationality and identity.

Prerequisites:
This class is open to students at all levels. There are no prerequisites for the class, though some rudimentary knowledge of Chinese history and society is assumed. For those students without background knowledge about China, short supplementary readings drawn from Columbia’s Asia for Educators initiative (afe.easia.columbia.edu) and the New York Times China Rises Companion (www.nytimes.com/ref/college/coll-chinarises.html) are assigned during the first week. Students are responsible for having a firm grasp of this background material.

Student Learning Objectives:
Through full participation in this course, students will acquire a deeper understanding of the following subject areas:

• The definitive role played by the one-party state in producing urbanization, as well as the limitations of the state’s ability to control processes of urban transformation
• The social experience of instability, precarity, and inequality as a result of rapid urbanization
• The dialectical relationship between urban and rural development and the importance of the urban-rural binary in shaping Chinese society
• The challenge of conceptualizing rapid socio-spatial transformation and the resulting inadequacy of China’s urban and rural categories
• The unique role played by China in the study of urbanization more generally

Upon successful completion of this course, students will also be able to:

• Synthesize evidence and arguments from a diversity of disciplines and sources in order to articulate one’s own perspective on the material in the form of a weekly forum post
• Participate actively in online discussions in order to collaboratively develop a common understanding of the material, including building on, challenging, and refining each other’s ideas and insights, as well as questioning one’s own assumptions
• Develop and articulate original arguments that use secondary sources to critically compare and contrast primary evidence

Readings
Each week includes 50-100 pages of required reading, which will be provided electronically via Canvas. You are encouraged to read the texts in the order listed in the syllabus. Each text should be read strategically, focusing on the author’s main argument and key evidence, as well as the text’s significance in relation to the other readings and its relevance to the themes of the course. Reading should not take more than 4-5 hours per week. Readings should be completed prior to the corresponding lecture.

Forum Posts
After completing the readings for the week, students should post a short (100-200 words) commentary to the online forum. The forum post can draw on the week’s materials, materials from past weeks, and your own experience and reading outside of class (you should always include two sources from the current week, and you must clearly cite the sources you are using). In the forum post, you should articulate a preliminary perspective on the week’s materials and themes—this perspective should be clearly and concisely stated in the first paragraph of your post. Your post should conclude with a question or provocation to be raised during discussion section (this should be a question of interpretation, not of fact).

Students are responsible for reading the other forum posts in their section and being prepared to engage critically with their classmates’ ideas during discussion section.

Forum posts will be graded on the following scale (the two lowest grades may be dropped):
Post is well-written and makes an original and compelling contribution to discussion

Post is clear and demonstrates thoughtful engagement with the week’s readings

Post is submitted on time and meets the stated criteria but requires improvement

Post is not submitted on time and/or does not meet the stated criteria

Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning Options

This course is offered online only with both synchronous and asynchronous learning options. All students are expected to join synchronously if they are able to do so. The asynchronous option is open to any student who would have difficulty joining synchronously, whether due to time difference, unreliable internet, learning accommodation, or other hardship. The asynchronous option is available only with the permission of the instructor (petitions will be processed as part of sectioning in Week 1). Students may only switch between synchronous and asynchronous options in exceptional circumstances and with the permission of the instructor.

Asynchronous online forums and discussion boards will be student moderated spaces. Moderator duties will rotate among students and will be an important component of the participation grade. The instructor and TAs will participate in these spaces on a regular basis but will not always be available for immediate responses. Students enrolled in the synchronous learning option will also have access to class-wide discussion boards.

Active and consistent participation in relevant sections, breakouts, forums, and discussion boards is expected of all students, regardless of learning mode.

All students, regardless of learning mode, are invited to attend weekly office hours offered by the instructor and the TAs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synchronous</th>
<th>Asynchronous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mon</strong> Lecture: Lectures will be delivered via Zoom during normally scheduled class time. These sessions will include short breakouts for discussion, clarification, and generation of questions for the instructor.</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tue</strong> Workshop: During normally scheduled class time on Tuesdays, students will convene in small groups via Zoom to workshop the week’s assignment, which must be submitted online before class. These sessions will also include section-wide discussions of common problems and briefings on the next assignment.</td>
<td>Lecture: Lectures will be recorded and available online on Monday afternoon. Students are responsible for viewing the lectures by 3 PM EST on Tuesday. Students should use the lecture discussion board to pose questions of clarification. A short quiz must be completed after each lecture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wed</strong> Lecture: Lectures will be delivered via Zoom during normally scheduled class time. These sessions will include short breakouts for discussion, clarification, and generation of questions for the instructor. Forum Posts: Due online by 11 PM EST Wednesday.</td>
<td>Workshop: Students must submit the week’s assignment by 3 PM on Wednesday. By 3 PM on Thursday, students are responsible for reading and providing comments on the assignments of two assigned peers. Students should also use the assignment discussion board to discuss common problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thu</strong> Discussion: During normally scheduled class time on Thursdays, students will convene in sections via Zoom to discuss the week’s material (including readings and lectures). Prior to class, students must read the other forum posts in their section. The agenda will be based on the questions posed in the forum posts and in</td>
<td>Lecture: Lectures will be recorded and available online on Wednesday afternoon. Students are responsible for viewing the lectures by 3 PM EST on Thursday. Students should use the lecture discussion board to pose questions of clarification. A short quiz must be completed after each lecture.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the lecture exit tickets. Discussions will include small breakouts to address specific questions.  

**Forum Posts:** Due online by 11 PM EST Thursday.

| Fri | Discussion: Students are responsible for actively participating in their section’s forum between 11 PM EST on Thursday and 11 PM EST on Friday. This includes *at least* the following: (1) substantively commenting on three other forum posts; (2) briefly responding to all comments on their own forum post. |

---

**Assignments**

There are two term papers due over the course of the semester. Each paper asks you to make an original argument that compares and contrasts two pieces of primary evidence, which will be provided to you. The introduction of the paper should clearly articulate a problem, a question arising from that problem, and a proposed response to that question (i.e. your thesis). The body of the paper should substantiate your thesis through a critical analysis of the primary evidence backed up with material from the class readings and lectures. Your writing should be clear and error-free. Detailed paper prompts will be distributed in advance of each assignment.

Each paper has multiple intermediate assignments, each of which is designed to help you prepare for a successful final submission. Paper 1 includes an in-class exercise, a preliminary draft, and a final submission. Paper 2 includes a proposal, two drafts, and a final submission. The intermediate assignments are due online prior to the beginning of Tuesday class, which is devoted to workshopping these assignments. Final paper submissions are due by 10 PM on the due date:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LENGTH</th>
<th>DUE DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper 1</td>
<td>750 wds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 2</td>
<td>1500 wds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final paper should be submitted online in PDF format. It should include a title and page numbers, and your name should NOT appear anywhere in the file. It should be double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font. Sources should be cited in-text, using the (Author Date: Page) format. References should be listed alphabetically at the end of the paper using the Chicago (Author-Date) citation style (references are not included in the word count).

Final papers will be graded based on the following five-part rubric: clarity of structure, strength of analysis, appropriateness of evidence, consistency of style, and quality of revision. Further information regarding the grading rubric will be distributed in class. Grades for each paper will be assigned in both numerical and letter-grade format. Final grades for the class will be calculated using the numerical grade for each paper.

All students, regardless of background or experience, are encouraged to set up an appointment with the Barnard Writing Center before handing in assignments. http://writing.barnard.edu

**Grading**

**CONTINUING ASSESSMENT**

| Participation: | 10% |
| Forum Posts:   | 20% |
| **Continuing Assessment TOTAL:** | **30%** |

**PAPER 1**

| Paper 1 Exercise: | 5% |
Attendance Policy
For synchronous learning, attendance is mandatory at all class meetings. Any student arriving more than twenty minutes after the beginning of class will be marked absent.

For asynchronous learning, students must complete designated learning tasks on the assigned schedule. Any day with an incomplete task will be considered an absence.

Absences due to acute illness, a personal crisis (e.g. a death in the family), religious observance, or for other reasons of comparable gravity may be excused at the discretion of the instructor. In all such cases, students must promptly email their TA to communicate the reason for their absence and to arrange an opportunity to review any important information they may have missed. Students who know they will miss one or more scheduled classes due to a religious holiday should meet with their TA during the first week of class to discuss anticipated absences. Unexcused absences, late arrivals, or early departures from class will be deducted from your Participation grade. Three non-consecutive absences will result in a further grade reduction of one-third (1/3) of one letter grade (e.g., A- to B+).

Late Submission Policy
Students are expected to plan and manage their workloads and to ensure they do not lose work through IT malfunction. Students are expected to submit work on or before the deadlines specified in the syllabus or otherwise announced in class.

Because of the time-sensitive nature of the Forum Posts, late submissions will receive a 0. Students will be allowed to drop the two lowest Forum Post grades. For all other graded assignments, 5% of the assignment’s total possible points will be deducted for each day (24-hour period, or part thereof) the assignment is late. If you believe you are going to have a problem submitting an assignment on time, please inform your TA as far in advance as possible.

Non-Discriminatory Language and Conduct
This course encourages non-discriminatory language and conduct. Students should not use racist, sexist or other discriminatory language in class discussions or written work.

Honor Code
The Barnard Honor Code applies to all students in this class regardless of academic affiliation. Approved by the student body in 1912 and updated in 2016, the Code states:

We, the students of Barnard College, resolve to uphold the honor of the College by engaging with integrity in all of our academic pursuits. We affirm that academic integrity is the honorable creation and presentation of our own work. We acknowledge that it is our responsibility to seek clarification of proper forms of collaboration and use of academic resources in all assignments or exams. We consider academic integrity to include the proper use and care for all print, electronic, or other academic resources. We will respect the rights of others to engage in pursuit of learning in order to uphold our commitment to honor. We pledge to do all that is in our power to create a spirit of honesty and honor for its own sake.
The Barnard Honor Code includes relevant language for the proper use of electronic class material:

*We consider academic integrity to include the proper use and care for all print, electronic, or other academic resources.*

To be clear, this means that any recorded class content — from lectures, labs, seminars, office hours, and discussion groups — is the intellectual property of your professor and your fellow students, and should not be distributed or shared outside of class.

The Columbia College Honor Code and the Columbia College Faculty Statement on Academic Integrity can be viewed here:

https://www.college.columbia.edu/honorcode
https://www.college.columbia.edu/faculty/resourcesforinstructors/academicintegrity/statement

**Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services (CARDS) Statement**

If you believe you may encounter barriers to the academic environment due to a documented disability or emerging health challenges, please feel free to contact the instructor and/or the Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services (CARDS). Any student with approved academic accommodations is encouraged to contact the instructor during office hours or via email. If you have questions regarding registering a disability or receiving accommodations for the semester, please contact CARDS at (212) 854-4634, cards@barnard.edu, or learn more at barnard.edu/disabilityservices. CARDS is located in 101 Altschul Hall.

**Affordable Access to Course Texts Statement**

All students deserve to be able to study and make use of course texts and materials regardless of cost. Barnard librarians have partnered with students, faculty, and staff to find ways to increase student access to textbooks. By the first day of advance registration for each term, faculty will have provided information about required texts for each course on CourseWorks (including ISBN or author, title, publisher, copyright date, and price), which can be viewed by students. A number of cost-free or low-cost methods for accessing some types of courses texts are detailed on the Barnard Library Textbook Affordability guide (library.barnard.edu/textbook-affordability). Undergraduate students who identify as first-generation and/or low-income students may check out items from the FLIP lending libraries in the Barnard Library (library.barnard.edu/flip) and in Butler Library for an entire semester. Students may also consult with their professors, the Dean of Studies, and the Financial Aid Office about additional affordable alternatives for having access to course texts. Visit the guide and talk to your professors and your librarian for more details.

**Wellness Statement**

It is important for undergraduates to recognize and identify the different pressures, burdens, and stressors you may be facing, whether personal, emotional, physical, financial, mental, or academic. We as a community urge you to make yourself—your own health, sanity, and wellness—your priority throughout this term and your career here. Sleep, exercise, and eating well can all be a part of a healthy regimen to cope with stress. Resources exist to support you in several sectors of your life, and we encourage you to make use of them. Should you have any questions about navigating these resources, please visit these sites:

- **Barnard Students:** https://barnard.edu/wellwoman/about  
  http://barnard.edu/primarycare  
  https://barnard.edu/about-counseling
- **Columbia Students:** http://www.college.columbia.edu/resources
- **GS Students:** https://gs.columbia.edu/health-and-wellness
- **SEAS Students:** http://gradengineering.columbia.edu/campus-resources
CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1. Introduction

Mon (Oct 26)  Lecture: Chinese Urbanization as a Paradigm

Required Reading:

Recommended Reading:

Tue (Oct 27)  Discussion: Course Overview and Logistics

Wed (Oct 28)  Lecture: The Historical Arc of Chinese Urbanization

Required Reading:

Recommended Reading (supplementary background on Chinese history):
http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/main_pop/kpct/ct_china.htm (historical overview)
http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/timelines/china_timeline.htm (imperial)
http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/timelines/china_modern_timeline.htm (colonial/republican)
http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/special/china_1950_prc_timeline.htm (socialist)

Thur (Oct 29)  Discussion

Week 2. Urban-Rural Relations

Mon (Nov 2)  NO CLASS (Academic Holiday)
Tue (Nov 3)  NO CLASS (Election Day)
Wed (Nov 4)  Lecture: Spatial Unevenness in the Reform Era

Required Reading:


Recommended Reading:


Thur (Nov 5) Discussion

Week 3.  Land and Planning

Mon (Nov 9) Lecture: The Political Economy of Land Use

Required Reading:


Recommended Reading:


Tue (Nov 10) Workshop: Paper 1 Exercise

Wed (Nov 11) Lecture: Planning and the Rationalization of Urbanization

Required Reading:


Recommended Reading:


Thu (Nov 12) Discussion

**Week 4.  ** Housing and Demolition

Mon (Nov 16)  Lecture: Housing as Commodity and Social Good

Required Reading:

Recommended Reading:

Tue (Nov 17)  Workshop: Paper 1 Drafts

Wed (Nov 18)  Lecture: The Political Economy of Urban Redevelopment

Required Reading:

Recommended Reading:

Thu (Nov 19)  Discussion

**Week 5.  ** Agriculture and Food Systems

Mon (Nov 23)  Lecture: The Industrialization of Chinese Agriculture

Required Reading:

Recommended Reading:

Tue (Nov 24)  Discussion  
Paper 1 Due

Wed (Nov 25)  NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)

Thu (Nov 26)  NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)

**Week 6.  Citizenship and Personhood**

Mon (Nov 30)  Lecture: Household Registration and Its Reform

Required Reading:

Recommended Reading:

Tue (Dec 1)  Workshop: Paper 2 Proposals

Wed (Dec 3)  Lecture: Migration and Personal Quality

Required Reading:

Recommended Reading:

Thu (Dec 4)  Discussion

**Week 7.  (Trans-)Nationality and Identity**

Mon (Dec 7)  Lecture: Urbanizing Western China
Required Reading:

Recommended Reading:

Tue (Dec 8)  Workshop: Paper 2 Drafts
Wed (Dec 9)  Lecture: Exporting Chinese Urbanization through the Belt and Road Initiative

Required Reading:

Recommended Reading:

Thu (Dec 10)  Discussion

Week 8.  Reading Week

Mon (Dec 14)  Workshop: Paper 2 Drafts
Thu (Dec 17)  Paper 2 Due