

# History 241: Modern East Asia

**Spring 2026**

**MWF | 12:30–1:20 PM**

**Location:** WTHR 160

**Credits:** 3

**Prerequisites:** None

**Honors Contract:** Contact the instructor during Week 1 if interested

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## Instructor Information

**Professor:** Dr. M. M. Tillman

**Email:** mmtillman@purdue.edu

**Office Hours:** Wednesdays after class (in-office or virtual) and by appointment

**Important:** If you are sick, do not come to class or the office.

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## Course Description

This course introduces major cultural, political, and historical developments in **China, Japan, and Korea from the eighteenth century to the present.**

Key themes include:

- Forms of **imperialism** in the 19th century
  - The rise of **modern Japan**
  - The impact of **World War II** and the **Cold War**
  - Economic growth and cultural transformations across East Asia
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## Course Goals

By the end of this course, you will:

1. Build familiarity with the politics and societies of China, Japan, and Korea.

2. Appreciate cultural differences through historical imagination.
  3. Gain introductory skills in historical methods, analysis, and criticism.
  4. Understand different processes of modernization and their long-term consequences.
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# Learning Objectives

## 1. Assess Primary Sources

- Distinguish fiction from non-fiction
- Recognize types of sources and their limits
- Understand what primary sources can reveal

## 2. Evaluate Information

- Read sources closely
- Interpret evidence through context, chronology, causality, contingency, and complexity

## 3. Write Evidence-Based Arguments

- Develop tenable, argumentative, and relevant theses
  - Use sources from class and readings
  - Relate arguments to the larger historical narrative
  - Apply reasoned logic and historical thinking skills
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# Required Readings

- **Ebrey & Walthall**, *Modern East Asia from 1600*, 3rd edition
  - **Ishikawa Tatsuzō**, *Soldiers Alive* (online via HSSE)
  - **Richard Kim**, *The Martyred* (Brightspace)
  - Additional readings provided as hyperlinks and on Brightspace
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# AI Use Policy

1. **You must remain the primary creator.**  
You may use AI for grammar or organization, but you must direct, understand, and revise the work.
  2. **You must disclose AI use clearly.**  
Include:
    - The software used
    - Exact prompts
    - What AI produced
    - How you revised or incorporated that work  
*Example provided in policy text above.*
  3. **You are responsible for accuracy.**  
Incorrect, empty, or fabricated citations = zero.
  4. **Non-disclosed AI use earns an automatic zero.**
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## If You Become Sick

- Contact the instructor.
  - Use available materials to stay on track:
    - Lecture recordings (when available)
    - PowerPoint slides (posted)
    - Textbook and readings
  - Part I of the course moves quickly—be strategic about where you focus.
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## Sustainability Option

If you want to reduce your carbon footprint:

- Use **ecosia.org** with AI features turned off
  - Attend class rather than watching recordings
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## Course Components and Grade Breakdown

Component	Weight	Purpose
Surveys	5%	P/F; support instructor understanding and student metacognition
Course Quiz	2%	Unlimited retakes; clarifies course expectations
Workshops	9%	Group skill-building activities; Zoom option available
Online Reading Quizzes	24%	Ensures completion and comprehension of readings
Online Historical Quizzes	60%	Tests factual knowledge through 2008; lecture-reinforced
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	

### Extra Credit (up to 10% total)

- **In-class writing** (pop-quiz style; attendance-based)
- **Extracurricular attendance/model citizenship** (sanctioned events only)

*Note: Extra credit cannot raise grades above 100%.*

## Course Schedule (Accessible Table)

*Readings must be completed **before class** that day.*

### Unit One: The “Confucian” Order and Western Imperialism

#### Week 1

- **Mon, Jan 12:** Course introduction
- **Wed, Jan 14:** Confucianism & the Civil Service
  - Reading: *Analects* (linked)
  - Survey 1 opens
- **Fri, Jan 16:** The Qing Dynasty
  - Reading: Qianlong Edicts
  - Course quiz opens

#### Week 2

- **Mon, Jan 19:** MLK Day — No class
- **Wed, Jan 21:** The Opium Wars
  - Reading: Ebrey Ch. 18; Lin Zexu letter
- **Fri, Jan 23:** Taiping Rebellion & Tongzhi Restoration
  - Reading: Taiping economic program

### Week 3

- **Mon, Jan 26:** Traditional Japan
- **Wed, Jan 28:** Edo Decline
  - Reading: Ebrey Ch. 19; Aizawa Shishisai
- **Fri, Jan 30:** Discussion — Japan and the U.S.
  - Reading: Perry letters; Meiji-era documents
  - **Workshop 1**

### Week 4

- **Mon, Feb 2:** Korea: Early Modern State
  - Survey 2 due
- **Wed, Feb 4:** Reform Movements in Korea
  - Tonghak Rebellion
- **Fri, Feb 6:** Optional Review
  - **Historical Quiz 1 opens**

## Unit Two: The Rise of Japan

### Week 5

- **Mon, Feb 9:** Meiji Transformation
  - Read: Charter Oath, Meiji Constitution
  - **Historical Quiz 1 closes**
- **Wed, Feb 11:** Satsuma Rebellion; Fukuzawa
- **Fri, Feb 13:** French Empire & Sino-French War

### Week 6

- **Mon, Feb 16:** Sino-Japanese War
- **Wed, Feb 18:** Boxer Rebellion
- **Fri, Feb 20:** Visualizing Imperialism
  - **Workshop 2**

## Week 7

- **Mon, Feb 23:** Russo-Japanese War
  - Survey 3 due
- **Wed, Feb 25:** 1911 Revolution
- **Fri, Feb 27:** Chinese Revolutions

## Week 8

- **Mon, Mar 2:** Taishō Japan
  - Negotiation images discussion
- **Wed, Mar 4:** Japanese Colonization of Korea
- **Fri, Mar 6:** Economic Imperialism in Korea

## Week 9

- **Mon, Mar 9:** Taiwan under Japanese Rule
    - **Reading Quiz 1 due**
  - **Wed, Mar 11:** Review (optional)
    - **Historical Quiz 2 opens**
  - **Fri, Mar 13:** No class (Instructor conference)
    - **Historical Quiz 2 closes**
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## Week 10: Spring Break (Mar 16–20)

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## Unit Three: Cold War & Economic Miracles

### Week 11

- **Mon, Mar 23:** Road to War
  - Reading Quiz 2 due
- **Wed, Mar 25:** *Soldiers Alive* excerpts; War experiences
- **Fri, Mar 27:** Japan's Defeat & Occupation

### Week 12

- **Mon, Mar 30:** China Divided

- **Wed, Apr 1:** Korea Divided
- **Fri, Apr 3:** *The Martyred*
  - **Reading Quiz 3 due**

## Week 13

- **Mon, Apr 6:** Cold War Perspectives
  - **Workshop 3**
- **Wed, Apr 8:** Vietnam War
- **Fri, Apr 10:** Maoist China

## Week 14: Economic Miracles

- **Mon, Apr 13:** Japan's Economic Growth
  - Survey 4 due
- **Wed, Apr 15:** North Korea
- **Fri, Apr 17:** South Korea

## Week 15

- **Mon, Apr 20:** Taiwan and Singapore
- **Wed, Apr 22:** China's Economic Miracle
- **Fri, Apr 24:** Regional Conflicts
  - **Historical Quiz 3 opens**

## Week 16

- **No Class (Apr 22–27)**
  - Required viewing: *So Long Asleep*
  - Survey 5 due

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# University Policies

## Accessibility

If you experience barriers, contact the instructor and the **Disability Resource Center**:  
drc@purdue.edu | 765-494-1247

## **Nondiscrimination**

Purdue is committed to inclusivity and respect for all identities.

## **Academic Integrity**

All submitted work must be your own. Plagiarism or dishonesty may result in course failure and reporting.

## **Mental Health**

Support is available:

- **CAPS:** 765-494-6995
- **WellTrack**
- **Dean of Students** (drop-in M–F, 8–5)

## **Emergency Preparedness**

In case of campus closure or disruptions, updates will be posted on **Brightspace** and emailed.

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## **Syllabus Disclaimer**

This syllabus may be updated as needed.  
Check **Brightspace daily** for announcements.