

HISTORY 379

The Corporation in the History of East Asia, 1700–2003

Purdue University — Department of History
Spring 2026

Course Information

Meeting Times: Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays

Dates: January 12 – May 8, 2026

Location: WALC 217

Instructor Office Hours: Online, by request

Zoom Room: <https://purdue-edu.zoom.us/j/6898881530>

Instructor Email: swijeyer@purdue.edu

Response Note:

Emails sent after 6:00 PM may be answered after 9:00 AM the following day.

Course Description

This course examines the rise and development of major corporations in **East Asia**—including **China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam**—from the 17th through the 20th centuries.

Students will learn how corporations:

- Emerged in early modern East Asia
- Influenced and were shaped by colonial powers
- Interacted with shifting political regimes
- Helped create modern economic structures
- Connected East Asia to global capitalism

Examples range from the **East India Company** to **Toyota, Samsung**, and other influential corporations.

Students will gain skills in:

- Primary source contextualization
- Analytical writing
- Comparative historical interpretation
- Understanding economic and political systems in East Asia

No prior study of East Asian history, culture, or languages is required.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Examine case studies of major East Asian corporations and explain their roles in shaping economies and markets.
 2. Analyze the long-term evolution of corporations and their socio-political impacts from 1700–2003.
 3. Critically evaluate interactions between corporations, society, and the state in East Asia, particularly in contexts of colonialism, industrialization, and globalization.
 4. Apply advanced source evaluation and analytical writing skills using appropriate primary and secondary sources.
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Accessibility and Accommodations

If you have a documented learning disability or a physical barrier affecting your coursework, please notify the instructor as early as possible. Accommodations will be arranged to fit your needs.

Required Texts

Patricia Buckley Ebrey & Anne Walthall,

Modern East Asia from 1600: A Cultural, Social, and Political History (3rd ed., 2014).

All other readings will be provided as accessible PDFs or links.

Contact and Communication Expectations

- Email the instructor using professional language (include a greeting and use the instructor's title and surname).
- Important concerns should be discussed in person during office hours or via scheduled meetings.
- Notify the instructor of absences or extension requests **as early as possible**.

Coursework Overview

1. Textbook Readings

Purpose:

- Provide broad historical context
- Introduce major concepts, changes, and regional developments

You should understand:

- Major transformations in each historical period
- Definitions of foundational concepts
- How these changes unfolded and why they mattered

Weekly guiding questions will help you identify key themes.

2. In-Class Readings and Discussions

These deepen understanding of a specific regional issue within the broader textbook themes.

Focus on:

- How large-scale trends appear at the regional level

- Scholarly debates related to each era or corporate case study
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3. Sectional Videos (3 videos × 20% each)

For each of the course's three sections:

- Submit a **3–4 minute video** answering **one** of the posted "Video Questions."
- Use required readings and primary sources from that section.
- File name format: **SURNAME, FIRST NAME, Section X**

Penalties:

- ±5% for every full minute above/below the 3–4 minute range.
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4. Final Essay (2 × 20%)

The final essay consists of:

1. **A detailed plan and thesis** (worth 20%)
2. **The full essay** (worth 20%)

Requirements:

- Length: **1350–1650 words**
 - ±5% penalty per 100 words over/under
 - At least **four primary sources** from any section
 - Proper formatting, footnotes, grammar, and citation required
 - Topic must be approved by the instructor
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Extensions and Late Work

- Request extensions **as soon as possible**.
- Extensions are normally granted only for illness or family emergencies.
- Maximum extension length: **one week**.
- Late work without an approved extension: **one full grade deduction per day**.

Participation and In-Class Expectations

Your participation grade reflects:

- Attention during lectures
- Engagement in discussions
- Completion of readings
- Professional behavior

The following will negatively affect your grade:

- Sleeping in class
- Chronic tardiness
- Not reading assigned materials
- Using phones or laptops for unrelated activity
- Distracting behavior

Additional notes:

- Attendance is required.
- One excused absence allowed with prior notice.
- More than **3 unexcused absences** = **-5%** penalty.
- Only handwritten or typed notes permitted—**no recordings allowed**.

University Policy Links

Students must review Purdue policies on:

- Academic honesty
(<https://www.purdue.edu/odos/osrr/academic-integrity/index.html>)
- Copyright
(<https://www.purdue.edu/policies/academic-research-affairs/ia3.html>)
- Attendance and conduct
(https://www.purdue.edu/studentregulations/regulations_procedures/classes.html)