

China's Belt and Road and Its Impact in the Developing World

Department: Fudan International Winter Session 2025

Course Code	GEIS10030						
Course Title	China's Belt and Road and Its Impact in the Developing World						
Credit	2	Experiment (including Computer) Credit		Practice Credit		Aesthetic Education Credit	
Credit Hours Per Week	12 credit hours per week, 36+3 tutorial hours in total (one credit hour is 45 minutes)	Education on The Hard- Working Spirit Credit Hours		Language of Instruction		Honors Course	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Course Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Core General Education Course <input type="checkbox"/> Specific General Education Course <input type="checkbox"/> Basic Course in General Discipline <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Others			2+X Major : <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Core Course <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Advanced Course Non 2+X Major : <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Compulsory Course <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Elective Course			
Course Objectives	<p>The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) proposed by the Chinese government in 2013 has become an important pillar of China's domestic development strategy and its foreign policy. Through the BRI, China is reshaping its relationships throughout Asia and beyond as it engages politically, economically, diplomatically, and culturally with other developing countries and sub-regions. The BRI and its multi-faceted implications have invoked heated discussions, politicized debates and conflicted interpretations of China's motives and impacts. The primary goal of this course is to provide a comprehensive and balanced picture of the BRI and China's growing influence in the developing world. It aims to facilitate students' understanding of the background, policy objectives, and implementation of the BRI. Throughout the course, students will engage with ongoing discussions about China's rise and its international engagement in the developing world and beyond.</p>						

Course Description	To provide rich background knowledge, the course would start by unpacking China’s global engagement and introducing basic approaches to understanding the dynamics behind China’s international relations. The course then introduces major drivers of the BRI and its key components, and identify distinctive features regarding China’s economic, political, and cultural engagement in various parts of the developing world as well as on a global scale. In addition, students will be asked to make their own inquiries into examples and cases of China’s enlarging footprints in developing countries. Through the combination of lectures, presentations, and discussions, the course is expected to assist students to obtain a more informed and balanced understanding of China’s changing role on the world stage and its significant impact on other countries. More importantly, the course would encourage students to critically think about the different narratives about an ascending China.			
Course Requirements: Performance will be evaluated based on attendance, participation informed by course materials, thematic presentation, and a final open-book examination.				
Teaching Methods: The course is lecture-based, while students interact with the instructor in an informed manner.				
Course Director's Academic Background: Yao Wen is Associate Professor in the Institute of International Studies/Center for American Studies at Fudan University. He holds a PhD in Political Science from the University of Toronto. Prof. Wen’s research interests include international relations theory, great power politics, and Chinese foreign policy.				
Instructor's Academic Background: See above.				
Members of Teaching Team				
Name	Gender	Professional Title	Department	Responsibility
Course Schedule: This is a three-week intensive course. Classes meet four times a week for three credit hours each.				
The Belt and Road Portal - BRI Official Website. Available at https://eng.yidaiyilu.gov.cn/				
Part 1 Unpacking China’s global engagement				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● "The Belt and Road Initiative: A Key Pillar of the Global Community of Shared Future," The State Council Information Office of the People’s Republic of China, October 2023.● “Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road,” National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of				

Commerce of the People's Republic of China with State Council authorization, March 2015.

- Stephen, Matthew D., "China's New Multilateral Institutions: A Framework and Research Agenda." *International Studies Review*, vol. 23, 2021, pp. 807–834.
- Johnston, Alastair Iain. "China in a World of Orders: Rethinking Compliance and Challenge in Beijing's International Relations." *International Security*, 44, no. 2 (2019): 9–60.

Part 2 The BRI and China's economic statecraft

- Joint Communiques of the Leaders Roundtable of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, May 2017, April 2019, July 2023.
- Jones, Lee, and Jinghan Zeng, "Understanding China's 'Belt and Road Initiative': beyond 'grand strategy' to a state transformation analysis," *Third World Quarterly*, 40:8, 2019.
- Selina Ho. "Infrastructure and Chinese power." *International Affairs* 96, no. 6, 2020.
- Zhang Xiaotong and James Keith, "From Wealth to Power: China's New Economic Statecraft," *The Washington Quarterly*, 40:1, 2017, pp. 185–203.
- Fung, Courtney J., Enze Han, Kai Quek, and Austin Strange. "Conditioning China's influence: Intentionality, intermediaries, and institutions." *Journal of Contemporary China* 32, no. 139 (2023): 1–16.

Part 3 The BRI in China's neighborhood

- Deborah Brautigam, "A critical look at Chinese 'debt-trap diplomacy': The rise of a meme." *Area Development and Policy* 5, no. 1, 2020.
- Kaczmarek, Marcin, "Two Ways of Influence-building: The Eurasian Economic Union and the One Belt, One Road Initiative," *Europe-Asia Studies*, 69:7, 1027-1046, 2017.
- Kuik, Cheng-Chwee, "Asymmetry and Authority: Theorizing Southeast Asian Responses to China's Belt and Road Initiative," *Asian Perspective*, 45 (2021), 255–276.
- Zhao, Minghao, "The Belt & Road Initiative and U.S.-China Competition over the Global South." *China Economic Journal* 17 (2): 166–81, 2024.

Part 4 The BRI and the Global South

- Ikenberry, G. John. "Three Worlds: the West, East and South and the competition to shape global order." *International Affairs* 100, no. 1 (2024): 121-138.
- Tang Xiaoyang, "Co-evolutionary Pragmatism: Re-examine 'China Model' and Its Impact on Developing Countries." *Journal of Contemporary China* 29, no. 126, 2020.

- Komakech, Robert Agwot, and Thomas Ogoro Ombati, "Belt and Road Initiative in Developing Countries: Lessons from Five Selected Countries in Africa" *Sustainability* 15, no. 16: 12334, 2023.
- Matt Ferchen, "The BRI in Latin America: New Wine in Old Bottle?" in Florian Schneider ed., *Global Perspectives on China's Belt and Road Initiative: Asserting Agency through Regional Connectivity*, Amsterdam University Press, 2021.

Open-book examination is in the last class.

The design of class discussion or exercise, practice, experience and so on:

While this course will be lecture-intensive, presentation sessions will provide valuable opportunities for students to critically analyze aspects of the BRI and engage in discussions with the class.

If you need a TA, please indicate the assignment of assistant:

Grading & Evaluation:

Students' performance and final grade for the course will be evaluated as follows:

Attendance and informed participation	15%
Presentation	30%
Final open-book examination	55%

Usage of Textbook: ☐ Yes (complete textbook information form below) ☒ No

Textbook Information (No more than two textbooks) :

Title	Author	ISBN	Publishing Time	Publisher	Type I	Type II

Teaching References:

- "The Belt and Road Initiative: A Key Pillar of the Global Community of Shared Future," The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, October 2023.
- "Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road," National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of

Commerce of the People's Republic of China with State Council authorization, March 2015.

- Rafiq Dossani, Jennifer Bouey, Keren Zhu, *Demystifying the Belt and Road Initiative: A Clarification of Its Key Features, Objectives and Impacts*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, 2020.
- Florian Schneider ed., *Global Perspectives on China's Belt and Road Initiative: Asserting Agency through Regional Connectivity*, Amsterdam University Press, 2021.