

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

Department: Fudan International Summer Session 2025

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| <b>Course Code</b>           | SOCI170008   |  |  |  |  |                                  |  |
| <b>Course Title</b>          | China's Belt and Road and Its Impact in the Developing World   |  |  |  |  |                                  |  |
| <b>Credit</b>                | 2  | Experiment<br>(including<br>Computer) Credit |  | Practice Credit  |  | Aesthetic<br>Education<br>Credit |  |
| <b>Credit Hours Per Week</b> | 36+3 tutorial hours (one credit hour is 45 minutes)  | Education on The Hard-Working Spirit Hours   |  | <b>Language of Instruction</b>   |  | Honors Course                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| <b>Course Type</b>           | <input type="checkbox"/> Core General Education Course <input type="checkbox"/> Specific General Education Course <input type="checkbox"/> Basic Course in General Discipline<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Others  |  |  | 2+X Major :<br><input type="checkbox"/> Professional Core Course<br><input type="checkbox"/> Professional Advanced Course<br>Non 2+X Major :<br><input type="checkbox"/> Professional Compulsory Course<br><input type="checkbox"/> Professional Elective Course |  |                                  |  |
| <b>Course Objectives</b>     | <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> |  |  |  |  |                                  |  |

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| <b>Course Description</b>   | <p>To provide rich background knowledge, the course would start by unpacking China’s global engagement and introducing basic approaches to understanding the basic dynamics. 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 readings, lectures, 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.</p> |                           |                   |                       |
| <p><b>Course Requirements:</b></p> <p>Students are required to do the readings and actively engage in class discussions in an informed manner. Attendance and completion of assignments are mandatory. Performance will be evaluated based on attendance, informed participation, presentation, and a final open-book examination.</p>  |  |                           |                   |                       |
| <p><b>Teaching Methods:</b></p> <p>The course is lecture-based, while students interact with the instructor in an informed manner. The course would also include in-class discussions, debates and/or simulations.</p>  |  |                           |                   |                       |
| <p><b>Course Director's Academic Background:</b></p> <p>Yao Wen is Associate Professor in the Institute of International Studies at Fudan University. He serves as Deputy Director of Fudan’s Center for China’s Relations with Neighboring Countries, and coordinates the Network of ASEAN-China Academic Institutes (NACAI). He holds a PhD in Political Science from the University of Toronto. Dr. Wen’s research interests include international relations theory, great power politics, and Chinese foreign policy. His has published over a dozen articles in peer-reviewed journals in English and Chinese such as The China Review, Asian Perspective, and World Economics and Politics.</p> |  |                           |                   |                       |
| <p>Instructor's Academic Background:</p> <p>See above</p>   |  |                           |                   |                       |
| <p>Members of Teaching Team</p>   |  |                           |                   |                       |
| <p>Name</p>   | <p>Gender</p>  | <p>Professional Title</p> | <p>Department</p> | <p>Responsibility</p> |
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**Course Schedule:**

This is a four-week summer course. Classes meet three 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**

- "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.
- 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.

**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.
- Andrew Scobel, et al, *At the Dawn of the Belt and Road: China in the Developing World*, Rand Corporation, 2018, Chapter 2.
- 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**

- Meia Nouwens, *China's BRI A Decade on*. Asia-Pacific Regional Security Assessment, 2023. Available at: <https://www.iiss.org/en/publications/strategic-dossiers/asia-pacific-regional-security-assessment-2023/aprsa-chapter-4/>.
- 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.
- Deborah Brautigam, "A critical look at Chinese 'debt-trap diplomacy': The rise of a meme." *Area Development and Policy* 5, no. 1, 2020.
- 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:

See above and below.

If you need a TA, please indicate the assignment of assistant: Sun Zhiqiang, PhD candidate in international politics

**Grading & Evaluation:**

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

|                                       |     |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Attendance and informed participation | 15% |
|---------------------------------------|-----|

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| Presentation                | 25% |
| Discussant role             | 5%  |
| 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  |
|-------|--------|------|-----------------|-----------|--|--|
|       |        |      |                 |           | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-compiled Textbook (Published)<br><input type="checkbox"/> Non-mainland Textbook<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other Textbook (Published) | <input type="checkbox"/> National Planning Textbook<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provincial and Ministerial Planning Textbook<br><input type="checkbox"/> School Level Planning Textbook<br><input type="checkbox"/> Others |
|       |        |      |                 |           | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-compiled Textbook (Published)<br><input type="checkbox"/> Non-mainland Textbook<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other Textbook (Published) | <input type="checkbox"/> National Planning Textbook<br><input type="checkbox"/> Provincial and Ministerial Planning Textbook<br><input type="checkbox"/> School Level Planning Textbook<br><input type="checkbox"/> Others |

**Teaching Materials & 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.