



Graduate Course Syllabus

HIS 640: Chinese Imperialism

Center: Online

Course Prerequisites

HIS 501 and HIS 502

Course Description

This course provides an overview of major military campaigns, strategies, and tactics in Chinese history. Students will explore the cultural aspects of military campaigns and warfare in China and be introduced to the latest scholarship on the topics explored. Students will also engage with the historiography of a topic of interest and define their own interpretations based on scholarly research.

Course Outcomes

- Analyze the relationship between theory and practice in Chinese warfare for its effects on the political, cultural, and economic facets of Chinese society
- Critique the existing body of scholarship for its strengths and shortcomings relative to historical interpretations of Chinese imperial expansion and military action
- Evaluate the impact of ruling governments' use of pacifist Confucian-derived rhetoric to project the image of an idealized defensive state
- Compare and contrast regional perceptions of Chinese imperialism throughout history in order to challenge dominant narratives
- Compare and contrast different models of Chinese strategic culture as they pertain to the pursuit of political and military goals for informing future strategic behavior
- Analyze Chinese Imperialist actions for their historical role in creating and expanding Chinese states

Required Materials

Using your learning resources is critical to your success in this course. Please purchase directly through the [SNHU Online Bookstore](#) rather than any other vendor. Purchasing directly from the bookstore ensures that you will obtain the correct materials and that the IT Service Desk, your advisor, and the instructor can provide you with support if you have problems.

Dragon's Head & a Serpent's Tail: Ming China & the First Great East Asian War, 1592–1598

Kenneth M. Swope

University of Oklahoma Press

2009

ISBN: 978-0-8061-5581-4

Forgotten Ally: China's World War II, 1937–1945

Rana Mitter

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

First Edition

2013

ISBN: 978-0-544-33450-2

Mao's China and the Cold War

Chen Jian

The University of North Carolina Press

2001

ISBN: 978-0-8078-9890-1

Military Culture in Imperial China

Nicola Di Cosmo, ed.

Harvard University Press

2011

ISBN: 978-0-674-06072-2

The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China

Ralph D. Sawyer

Basic Books, Inc.

1993, 2007

ISBN: 978-0-465-00304-4

The Culture of War in China: Empire & the Military Under the Qing Dynasty

Joanna Waley-Cohen

I.B. Tauris

2006

ISBN: 978-1-7807-6668-3

This resource can be accessed for free as an eBook through the Shapiro Library. Click [here](#) to access the resource.

The Dao of the Military: Liu An's Art of War

Andrew Seth Meyer

Columbia University Press

2012

ISBN: 978-0-2311-5333-1

This resource can be accessed for free as an eBook through the Shapiro Library. Click [here](#) to access the resource.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

As indicated in our core values, SNHU is committed to “embrace diversity where we encourage and respect diverse identities, ideas, and perspectives by honoring difference, amplifying belonging, engaging civilly, and breaking down barriers to bring our mission to life.”

This may or will be reflected in SNHU's curriculum as we embrace and practice diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) to provide the most transformative experience for our students, faculty, and staff. Because topics pertaining to DEI can be sensitive, please remember that embodying and practicing diversity, equity, and inclusion is one of our core values that you will encounter throughout the academic experience. In higher education, we are expected to think and engage critically. Use a growth mindset to embrace the diverse readings, course assignments, and experiences of your peers and faculty.

For more information about DEI at SNHU, please visit our website at the [Office of Diversity and Inclusion](#).

Instructor Availability and Response Time

Your class interaction with the instructor and your classmates will take place on a regular, ongoing basis. Your instructor will be actively engaged within the course throughout the week. You will normally communicate with your instructor in the weekly discussions or the General Questions discussion topic so that your questions and the instructor's answers benefit the entire class. You should feel free, however, to communicate with your instructor via SNHU email at any time, particularly when you want to discuss something of a personal or sensitive nature. Your instructor will generally provide a response within 24 hours. Instructors will post grades and feedback (as applicable) within seven days of an assignment's due date, or within seven days of a late submission.

Grade Distribution

Assignment Category	Number of Graded Items	Point Value per Item	Total Points
Discussions	10	18	180
Group Discussions	2	30	60
Short Papers	3	25	75
Group Activity: Peer Review	1	50	50
Final Project			
Milestone One	1	20	20
Milestone Two	1	30	30
Milestone Three	1	100	100
Milestone Four	1	135	135
Final Submission	1	350	350
			Total Course Points: 1,000

This course may also contain practice activities. The purpose of these non-graded activities is to assist you in mastering the learning outcomes in the graded activity items listed above.

University Grading System: Graduate

Grade	Numerical Equivalent	Points
A	93–100	4.00
A-	90–92	3.67
B+	87–89	3.33
B	83–86	3.00

Grade	Numerical Equivalent	Points
B-	80–82	2.67
C+	77–79	2.33
C	73–76	2.00
F	0–72	0.00
I	Incomplete	
IF	Incomplete/Failure *	
W	Withdrawn	

* Please refer to the [policy page](#) for information on the incomplete grade process.

Grading Guides

Specific activity directions, grading guides, posting requirements, and additional deadlines can be found in the Assignment Guidelines and Rubrics section of the course.

Weekly Assignment Schedule

All reading and assignment information can be found within each module of the course. Assignments and discussion posts during the first week of each term are due by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Assignments and discussion posts for the remainder of the term are due by 11:59 p.m. of the student's local time zone.

In addition to the textbook readings that are listed, there may be additional required resources within each module.

Module	Topics and Assignments
1	<p>Is There a Chinese Art of War?</p> <p><i>The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China</i>, Chapters 1–5</p> <p><i>Military Culture in Imperial China</i>, Introduction (pp. 1–22)</p> <p>1-1 Discussion: What is the Chinese Art of War?</p> <p>1-2 Final Project Milestone One: Working Paper Topic</p>
2	<p>The Philosophy of War in Early China</p> <p><i>The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China</i>, Chapters 6–7</p> <p><i>The Dao of the Military: Liu An's Art of War</i>, Entire book</p> <p>2-1 Discussion: China's "Strategic Culture"</p> <p>2-2 Short Paper: Key Tenets of the Ancient Military Classics</p>
3	<p>Fashioning an Empire</p> <p><i>Military Culture in Imperial China</i>, Chapters 1–5</p> <p>3-1 Discussion: Organization and Motivation of Armies</p> <p>3-2 Group Discussion: How Did Early Empires View Themselves?</p> <p>3-3 Final Project Milestone Two: Topic Submission</p>
4	<p>Preserving and Extending Military Traditions</p> <p><i>Military Culture in Imperial China</i>, Chapters 6–8</p> <p>4-1 Discussion: Balance of Power</p> <p>4-2 Short Paper: Steppe Culture Absorption</p> <p>4-3 Group Activity: Mongol Dynasty in Chinese History</p>

Module	Topics and Assignments
5	<p>The Tributary System and Regional Conflicts</p> <p><i>Dragon's Head & a Serpent's Tail: Ming China & the First Great East Asian War</i>, Entire book</p> <p><i>Military Culture in Imperial China</i>, Chapter 9</p> <p>5-1 Discussion: Implications of Memories</p> <p>5-2 Final Project Milestone Three: Annotated Bibliography</p>
6	<p>A New Culture of War?</p> <p><i>Culture of War in China</i>, Entire book</p> <p><i>Military Culture in Imperial China</i>, Chapters 10-13</p> <p>6-1 Discussion: New Dimensions to Chinese Warfare</p> <p>6-2 Short Paper: Assess the Larger Significance of Qing Conquests</p> <p>6-3 Group Discussion: Share your Research (non-graded)</p>
7	<p>The Closing of the Steppe & Imperialism</p> <p><i>Military Culture in Imperial China</i>, Chapter 14</p> <p>7-1 Discussion: Closing of the Steppe</p> <p>7-2 Final Project Milestone Four: Rough Draft</p>
8	<p>Into the Twentieth Century</p> <p><i>Forgotten Ally: China's World War II, 1937–1945</i>, Entire book</p> <p>8-1 Discussion: War and the Rise of the Communist Party</p> <p>8-2 Group Activity: Peer Review</p>
9	<p>New Imperialism or Maintaining Traditions?</p> <p><i>Mao's China and the Cold War</i>, Entire book</p> <p>9-1 Discussion: To Present Day</p> <p>9-2 Submission: Historiographical Final Paper</p>
10	<p>Reflecting on the Historian's Journey</p> <p>10-1 Discussion: Evolution of the Professional Historian</p>

Attendance Policy

Online students are required to submit a graded assignment/discussion during the first week of class. If a student does not submit a graded assignment/discussion during the first week of class, the student is automatically dropped from the course for non-participation. Review the [full attendance policy](#).

Late Assignments Policy

Meeting assigned due dates is critical for demonstrating progress and ensuring appropriate time for instructor feedback on assignments. Students are expected to submit their assignments on or before the due date. Review the [full late assignment policy](#).

SNHU Student Handbook

Review the [student handbook](#).

ADA/504 Compliance Statement

Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) is dedicated to providing equal access to individuals with disabilities in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as amended by the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008.

SNHU prohibits unlawful discrimination on the basis of disability and takes action to prevent such discrimination by providing reasonable accommodations to eligible individuals with disabilities. The university has adopted this policy to provide for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints regarding any action prohibited by Section 504, the ADA, or the ADAAA.

For questions about **support services, documentation guidelines, general disability issues, or pregnancy accommodations**, please visit the [Online Accessibility Center](#) (OAC).

As a student, you must complete an interactive intake process, with supporting documentation, in order to be granted accommodations. Once reasonable accommodations are approved by the OAC, you will receive an accommodations letter. You are then responsible for sharing the letter with your instructor. Accommodations are not retroactive.

If you feel you've been subject to discrimination on the basis of disability, by any party, you may file a complaint or grievance. For more information on the ADA/504 Grievance Policy, go to the [Disability and Accessibility Services](#) website.

Academic Honesty Policy

Southern New Hampshire University requires all students to adhere to high standards of integrity in their academic work. Activities such as plagiarism and cheating are not condoned by the university. Review the [full academic honesty policy](#).

Copyright Policy

Southern New Hampshire University abides by the provisions of United States Copyright Act (Title 17 of the United States Code). Any person who infringes the copyright law is liable. Review the [full copyright policy](#).

SNHU Withdrawal Policy

Review the [full withdrawal policy](#).

Southern New Hampshire University Policies

More information about SNHU policies can be found on the [policy page](#).