



SYLLABUS

SIENA ON THE SILK ROADS: FROM MARCO POLO TO XI JINPING

Instructor: Roxann Prazniak

Language of Instruction: English

UO Credits: 4

Contact Hours*: 40

SIENA, ITALY

COURSE DESCRIPTION

To the surprise of many, Siena has a long and colorful history along the Silk Road networks that have for centuries down to the present connected Europe and Asia. Italian food, art, and fashion all bear the marks of both European and Asian tastes. Among the first to raise awareness of the eastern lands was the Venetian Marco Polo with his fantastical and sometimes practical travel accounts that set the medieval imagination afire. Readers in Siena were some of his most enthusiastic recruits, dreaming of wealth to be gathered in the silk bazaars and adventures to be had in the camel packed oasis towns. At one point, the local Franciscan order in Siena commissioned artist Ambrogio Lorenzetti to paint a large mural of a true to life Mongol court scene with feathered hats and whispered secrets. More recently, renowned Italian author Italo Calvino, who died in Siena in 1985, penned *Invisible Cities*, an imaginative creation of extraordinary destinations along the Silk Road and a conversation between Marco Polo and Kublai Khan, ruler of the great Mongol Empire. Today the New Silk Road project of Xi Jinping, current leader of the People's Republic of China, once again finds Italy at a key position in Eurasian politics and economics. The lively university town of Bologna with its Marco Polo program for Chinese Students is one place along the New Silk Road where Siena GEO students can meet their peers, exchange experiences, and share future visions.

This course will be of interest to students in international relations, economics, political science, history, architecture, art history, literature in addition to other humanities and social science courses.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will give students on-site experience of the roles Siena and Italy have played in creating contemporary dialogue and cultural exchange with Asian societies.

Student Outcomes. Students who successfully complete this course will:

- ❖ Improve research and writing skills.
- ❖ Improve individual and group presentation skills.
- ❖ Understand contemporary geopolitics of the EU, Italy, and China
- ❖ Develop interdisciplinary thinking and problem-solving skills.
- ❖ Articulate issues related to the problems of memory, perspective, and history.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY

This course will be conducted through readings, outdoor discussions, excursions, guest speakers, mini-lectures, journaling, and creative writing. Mini lectures introduce relevant historical context. Shared journal writing allows development of individual ideas. Whenever possible we are out of the

classroom to experience our local environment and sites specific to Siena's Silk Roads history. Meeting student peers and guest speakers, we connect with individuals on current topics.

METHOD OF EVALUATION (GRADING)

Shared journal writing [weekly topics]	25%
Short quizzes for discussion of assigned readings	25%
Research Project (individual interest)	25%
Final exam	25%

COURSE OUTLINE (subject to some changes once Siena Itinerary is known)

Week 1	History and Memory Siena during the 13 th century <u>Excursion</u> to see Lorenzetti's fresco of <i>Good and Bad Government</i> [Palazzo Pubblico]
Week 2	Travelers on the Old Silk Road: A First Global Era <u>Reading</u> : Selections from the writings of Marco Polo, Ibn Battuta, and Italo Calvino
Week 3	Imagining the Silk Road: In Literature <u>Reading</u> : Selections from Calvino's <i>Invisible Cities</i> : Marco Polo and Kubilai Khan Journals due
Week 4	Imagining the Silk Road: In Art <u>Excursion</u> to San Francesco Basilica, Siena to view Lorenzetti's <i>Martyrdom of the Franciscans</i>
Week 5	<u>Excursion</u> to Venice: Architectural legacy of Italy between Europe and Asia <i>Chinoiserie</i> : Early European views of China, from Admiration and Respect to Contempt <u>Reading</u> : Selections from Matteo Ricci, an Italian mission in Beijing
Week 6	Early Chinese views of Europeans: Yuanmingyuan [Gardens of Brightness and Light] Felice Beato: Italian photographer at Yuanmingyuan in Beijing <u>Film</u> : The Destruction of Yuanmingyuan: Italian Artists at the Qing Court Marco Musillo, Giuseppe Castiglione, and Giuseppe Panzi
Week 7	A Second Global Era: An e-World of Challenges and Promise <u>Journalism</u> : Italian media coverage of the New Silk Road Initiatives Research Projects due
Week 8	Traveling Abroad Today <u>Excursion</u> to Bologna, meet with students in the Marco Polo Program
Week 9	Roundtable on Contemporary Relations between Italy and Silk Road countries <u>Guest speakers</u> from Siena and Firenze Journals due
Week 10	Final exam

COURSE READINGS

Selections from a number of sources all available on Canvas with APA citations for reference in essays and projects. We will occasionally add current newspaper and magazine articles. Course readings average 10-20 pages per week.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Academic Misconduct

The University Student Conduct Code (available at conduct.uoregon.edu) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students' obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism.

Prohibited Discrimination and Harassment Reporting

Any student who has experienced sexual assault, relationship violence, sex or gender-based bullying, stalking, and/or sexual harassment may seek resources and help at safe.uoregon.edu. To get help by phone, a student can also call either the UO's 24-hour hotline at 541-346-7244 [SAFE], or the non-confidential Title IX Coordinator at 541-346-8136. From the SAFE website, students may also connect to Callisto, a confidential, third-party reporting site that is not a part of the university.

Students experiencing any other form of prohibited discrimination or harassment can find information at respect.uoregon.edu or aaeo.uoregon.edu or contact the non-confidential AAEO office at 541-346-3123 or the Dean of Students Office at 541-346-3216 for help. As UO policy has different reporting requirements based on the nature of the reported harassment or discrimination, additional information about reporting requirements for discrimination or harassment unrelated to sexual assault, relationship violence, sex or gender based bullying, stalking, and/or sexual harassment is available at [Discrimination & Harassment](#).

The instructor of this class, as a Student Directed Employee, will direct students who disclose sexual harassment or sexual violence to resources that can help and will only report the information shared to the university administration when the student requests that the information be reported (unless someone is in imminent risk of serious harm or a minor). The instructor of this class is required to report all other forms of prohibited discrimination or harassment to the university administration.

Specific details about confidentiality of information and reporting obligations of employees can be found at titleix.uoregon.edu.

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

UO employees, including faculty, staff, and GEs, are mandatory reporters of child abuse. This statement is to advise you that your disclosure of information about child abuse to a UO employee may trigger the UO employee's duty to report that information to the designated authorities. Please refer to the following links for detailed information about mandatory reporting: [Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect](#).

Students with Disabilities

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center in 360 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoac@uoregon.edu.