

Prof. Luo
Mears Cottage 312
Office Hours T/TH 10-11:50 am

HIS 295-04 **Kungfu Panda:** **Chinese Environmental History**



Pandas might not be able to fight back with martial arts (Kungfu), but humans, with sustained effort (Kungfu), might just be able to save them all. The human toll, political challenges, and global impacts created by environmental degradation in contemporary China have attracted widespread attention. But because most discussions of China's environmental problems attribute them to the country's post-1979 economic growth, they tend to overlook processes with deep roots in China's past. To gain a fuller understanding of China's environmental dilemmas, this class investigates key topics in contemporary as well as pre-modern Chinese environmental history.

Required Books:

Jonathan Watts, *When a Billion Chinese Jump: How China Will Save Mankind—or Destroy It* (2010)

Ed Grumbine, *Where the Dragon Meets the Angry River: Nature and Power in the People's Republic of China* (2011)

Other readings will be posted on P-Web as PDF files.

Class Policies

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Academic honesty:

In all assignments written for this course, you must abide by the College's rules on plagiarism. (http://catalog.grinnell.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=2537#Honesty_in_Academic_Work) Do not submit someone else's work as your own, quote from a source without citing it, or provide inappropriate help to a classmate on exams and assignments. If you paraphrase or quote any text from another you must indicate where the text comes from. Failure to comply with the requirement of academic honesty may result in receiving no credit for the assignment in question or even failing the course in cases of serious academic dishonesty. If you are in doubt about any of the rules, please consult with me, or the professionals in the Writing Lab, *before* submitting your class materials and assignments.

Religious holidays:

Grinnell College offers alternative options to complete academic work for students who observe holy days. Please contact me within the first 2 weeks of the semester if you would like to discuss a specific instance that applies to you.

Inclusive classroom and student accessibility services:

I strive to create a fully inclusive classroom. Thus I welcome individual students to approach me about distinctive learning needs. In particular, I encourage students with disabilities, including invisible or non-apparent disabilities such as chronic illness, learning disabilities, and psychiatric disabilities, to discuss reasonable accommodations with me, and to have a conversation about how our classroom or course activities could impact the disability and what accommodations would be essential to you.

You will also need to have a conversation about and provide documentation of your disability to the Coordinator for Student Disability Resources, John Hirschman, located on the 3rd floor of Goodnow Hall (x3089). Students should then notify me within the first few days of classes so that we can discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course and coordinate your accommodations.

Attendance and extension policies:

If you have legitimate reasons to miss class or turn in an assignment late, please let me know in advance and supply relevant documentation. Everyone is allowed 2 absences without penalty during the semester. If you have 3 or more absences (regardless of reasons,) you will incur deduction of attendance grade. You are encouraged to come to talk to me about ways to make up for absences if you have legitimate reasons to miss more than 2 classes. Everyone is allowed 1 extensions of 24 hours on 1 writing assignments without penalty. If you have 2 or more late submissions (regardless of reasons) you will incur grade deduction on the assignment depending on the amount of time lapsed. You are encouraged to come to talk to me about ways to make up for the grade.

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Laptop and tablet use:

I believe that great discussions are facilitated by everyone's full attention including eye contact. For this reason, laptops and other electronic devices are discouraged. However, there are many good reasons to use laptops to facilitate learning. If you intend to use a laptop regularly or occasionally, please be mindful of the potential disruptive effect. If I find that you are using your device in ways that are distracting for you or the class I may ask you to put it away.

Class Requirements:

It is expected that students will attend all classes, carefully read all assigned material before class, actively participate in class discussions, and complete all written and presentation assignments in a timely manner.

Attendance and Participation (25%): You are expected to attend class and participate actively throughout the semester. Lectures and discussions are essential to learning in this class. All readings are to be completed prior to the class period for which they have been assigned. You should come to class prepared to discuss them in detail, with questions and points for discussion prepared. Attendance (10%) will be taken at every meeting (after drop/add period). Participation (15%) includes taking part in discussions, completing assignments, and other learning activities associated with the class.

Reflection Papers (20%) There will be two reflection papers (10% each) of 2-3 pages (double-spaced) at different points of the semester for you to review and process what you have learned up to that point. *For more information, see Assignment Sheet* (will be posted under Assignment on PWeb).

Midterm Research Proposal (15%): This is a 3-4 page (double-spaced) statement that delineates what you plan to work on for your final research portfolio. A revised and expanded version of this proposal may be included as part of your final project (see below). A detailed prompt will be given on how to complete this proposal. *For more information, see Assignment Sheet* (will be posted under Assignment on PWeb).

Final Project: Research Portfolio and Group Presentations (30%+10%=40%). Plan for a compelling research project without writing the actual paper. This portfolio includes 4 parts: a research question, a proposal, a literature review, and an annotated bibliography. You will also work with a few other students on a group presentation project that draws upon your own project and incorporates your collaborative research. *For more information, see respective Assignment Sheets* (will be posted under Assignment on PWeb).

Grading Scale:

93-100% A

83-86% B

70-76%

C

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90-92% A-	80-82% B-	60-69% D
87-89% B+	77-79% C+	below 60% F

Course Schedule

Readings and due dates are subject to change

Date	Topic	Assignments
8/30 F	Introduction	Syllabus
9/2 M	China's Environmental Challenges	Shapiro, "Introduction: The Big Picture"
9/4 W	The Long View	Elvin, "'Humans vs. Elephants': The Three Thousand Years War"
9/6 F	Chinese Perception of Nature	Elvin, "Nature as Revelation"
9/9 M	Dragons	Brook, "Dragon Spotting"
9/11 W	Chinese Colonialism I	Liu, "Han Migration and the Settlement of Taiwan: The Onset of Environmental Change."
9/13 F	Chinese Colonialism II	Elvin, "Guizhou and the Miao"
9/16 M	The Peril of Pearl	Schlesinger, "Pearl Thieves and Perfect Order"
9/18 W	A Mushroom's Perspective	Schlesinger, "The Mushroom Crisis"
9/20 F	Climate Change and the Little Ice Age	Marks, "It Never Used to Snow"

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9/23 M	Population and land-reclamation	Marks, "Land Clearance in the Eighteenth Century"
9/25 W	Drought Demon	Ter Haar, "Wicked Women and Evil Emperors" * Reflection paper 1
9/27 F	Feeding the People	Will and Wong, "The State Civilian Granary System"
9/30 M	Famine I	Sen, <i>Poverty and Famine</i> (excerpt)
10/2 W	Famine II	Edgerton-Tarpley, "Tears from Iron" *Read about North China Famine here: http://www.disasterhistory.org/north-china-famine-1876-79
10/4 F	The Chin I	<i>Recipe Research Assignment</i>
10/7 M	Chinese Food, Cooking, and the Environment II	Meeting in the Kitchen! Or, you may submit a blog post style essay instead
10/9 W	The Chinese Pharmacy	Bian and Ellis (excerpts)

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10/11 F	Ecology and Economy	Xue, "Treasure Nightsoil as if it were Gold"
10/14 M	War and Ecology	Rogaski, "Nature, Annihilation, and Modernity: China's Korean War Germ Warfare Experience Revisited"
10/16 W	War and Disease	McPherson, "Cholera in China, 1820-1930: An Aspect of the Internationalization of Infectious Disease"
10/18 F	<i>Mao's Great Famine (2012)</i>	Shapiro, <i>Mao's War Against Nature</i> (excerpt)
	10/21-25 Fall Break	
10/28 M	Subduing Nature	Chen, <i>Search for Modern China</i> (selection primary sources) *Midterm research proposal
10/30 W	Water and Hydraulic Power	Van Slyke, "Yangtze: Nature, History, and the River" (excerpt)
11/1 F	Dams be Damned?	Chen, <i>Search for Modern China</i> (selection primary sources) "China's Dam Boom"
11/4 M	The Angry River I	<i>Where the Dragon Meets the Angry River</i>

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11/6 W	The Angry River II	<i>Where the Dragon Meets the Angry River</i>
11/8 F	Research method training at the Library Computer Lab	TBA
11/11 M	Clean Energy	Smil, <i>China's Past, China's Future</i> (excerpt) Downs, "China's Energy Rise" (excerpt)
11/13 W	Politics and the Environment	Economy, "Environmental Governance" Shapiro, "The View from Above" (excerpt)
11/15 F	Environmental Justice	Shapiro, "Environmental Justice and the Displacement of Environmental Harm" * Reflection paper 2
11/18 M	Nationalism and Environmentalism	Schell, "Humiliation and the Olympics"
11/20 W	Rural Sustainability	Tilt, <i>The Struggle for Sustainability in Rural China</i> (Chapter 1)
11/22 F	Urban Environment	Sheppard, "Ghost Cities"
11/27 M	The Story of Coal	Freese, "Coal" (excerpt) Marks, "China" (excerpt)
11/27 W	"Under the Dome"	
	11/29 Thanksgiving	

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12/2 M	Green Public Sphere	Yang and Calhoun, "Media, Civil Society, and the Rise of a Green Public Sphere in China" * DRAFT literature reviews and annotated bibliography due
12/4 W	Population, Infrastructure, Pollution	Spence, <i>The Search for Modern China</i> (selections)
12/6 F	Group Presentations	
12/9 M	Group Presentations	
12/11 W	Group Presentations	
12/13 F	Conclusion and evaluations	McNeill, "China's Environmental History in World Perspective."
	Exam week	Final research portfolio due