SUMMARY
The "Going East" course features four modules: the Middle East, India, China and Japan. Each specific region or country is approached from theoretical and empirical perspectives to introduce and better understand local realities.

CONTENT
From the East to the Far East
"Going East" features four modules that each focus on a specific region or country: the Middle East, India, China and Japan. Each module will be introduced by a historical and geopolitical overview to initiate and better understand local realities. It will be followed by a lecture on specific cultural or artistic expressions of the region or country. Relevant and attractive, these cases studies (architecture, literature, music, movies, social networks, manga) will deepen a particular cultural focus, which in turn will inform understanding of the society as a whole. Finally, a personality from the field (head of a Swiss company, diplomat or scientist with extensive international cooperation) will close this module by sharing their expertise and experience on what it means to live and work abroad and give a practical perspective on other cultures.

Week 1: General introduction to Going East (fall and spring semesters); Presentation of the Minor in Area and Cultural Studies with specialization in East Asia, South Asia and the Middle East.
Weeks 2-3: Module on the Middle East // Historical and geopolitical overview; Culture: Dynamics of Conflict and Transition in the Post-Arab Spring.
Weeks 4-6: Module on India // Historical and geopolitical overview; Culture: Bollywood and Popular Culture; Personality from the field: Academic collaboration.
Weeks 7-9: Module on China // Historical and geopolitical overview; Culture: Social Networks; Personality from the field: Professional career.
Weeks 10-12: Module on Japan // Historical and geopolitical overview; Culture: living together in the digital era; Personality from the field: Culture and Diplomacy.
Week 13: Final list of research projects; wrap-up; course evaluation.
Week 14: Written exam.

Keywords
Middle East, India, China, Japan, alterity (otherness), culture, stereotypes, comparison, local realities

LEARNING PREQUISITES
Recommended courses
History of contemporary Asia - Contemporary Japan - Contemporary India - Competing with China - Contemporary Middle East - East Asia: the case of China - East Asia: the case of South-East Asia

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the course, the student must be able to:
Expound and contextualise the issues of the Middle East and Asia (historic crossroads of culture, language and religion) and their importance as key centres of global exchange - goods, services, people - but also crucially of ideas and technical innovation.
Contrast technical skills to a pluricultural professional and academic situation.
Assess / Evaluate and analyse aspects of of the culture, the economy or the political system of these regions.
Integrate reflexive and constructivist perspectives that reveal the dangers of a non-critical look at non-Western societies.
Distinguish the trap of clichés and stereotypes when trying to understand other societies, cultures and subcultures.

Transversal skills
Use a work methodology appropriate to the task.
Communicate effectively, being understood, including across different languages and cultures.
Take feedback (critique) and respond in an appropriate manner.
Access and evaluate appropriate sources of information.
Write a literature review which assesses the state of the art.

TEACHING METHODS
Fall semester: seminars by module composed of ex-cathedra lectures with active student participation.
**EXPECTED STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

Student should **participate actively** in class during the fall semester (questions, comments, criticism etc. to initiate discussions) to help them to **write a collective research paper** (groups of 2-3 students) on a topic mutually agreed with the teachers. Students will be expected to

- Read the mandatory references for the four modules of the fall semester.
- Participate actively in the ex-cathedra sessions of the four modules by asking questions and making comments.
- Establish research groups during the fall semester and define a topic for the spring semester project in agreement with the teachers.
- Become a "reporter" group for another project (to be arranged in class, see last point).
- Progress the research project during the fall semester with teacher input during personalized meetings with students (mid-term workshops).
- Write the research project paper (20 pages) following teachers recommendations regarding form and content.
- Present the project orally to the class at the end of the year (final workshops) and be able to answer questions from teachers and students.
- Read the final paper of another group and be able to ask questions, formulate comments and initiate reflection by actively participating in the debate during the oral presentations (final workshops).

**ASSESSMENT METHODS**

In the **fall semester** the **written exam** is composed of three general questions of which students answer two questions without the help of their documentation notes. It takes place during the last class (week 14).  

In the **spring semester** groups of students **write a collective research paper**. Oral and written presentations of the detailed plan take place during the mid-term workshop and the final oral presentation is held during the final workshop at the end of the semester and is based on the final paper research sent beforehand electronically to teachers.

**Weighting of the assessments**: 50% fall semester (written exam 40%; participation 10%); 50% spring semester (final paper 30%; oral presentation 10% and participation 10%).

**SUPERVISION**

Office hours: Yes
Assistants: No
Forum: No
Others: Tuesday 10-12h

**RESOURCES**

**Bibliography**


**Moodle Link**

http://moodle.epfl.ch/course/view.php?id=9041

**PREREQUISITE FOR CREDITS AND WORKLOAD**

| Credits | 3 |
| Total workload | 90h |
| Exam session | Winter |
| Type of assessment | During the semester |