

# PA 5880 Planning for China's Urban Billion (3 credits)

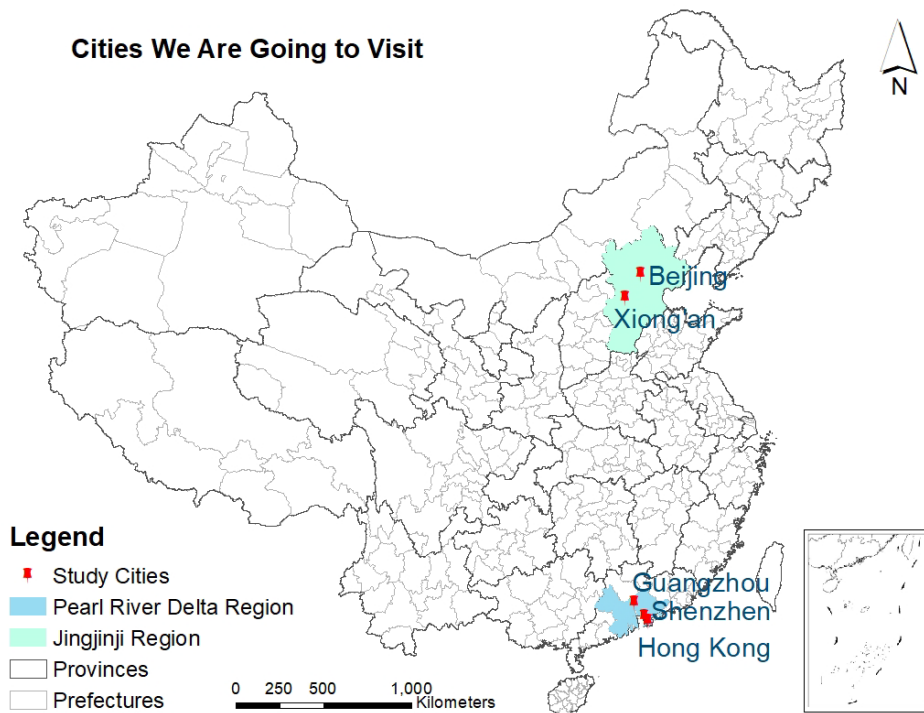
May 20, 2024 - June 3, 2024

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## Course Description

China is home to the world's largest urban population. If current urbanization trends continue, China will have one billion urban population by 2030. How Chinese cities can minimize the pressures and maximize the opportunities of urban expansion is a critical question that affects every aspect of urban planning, ranging from affordable housing provision to historic preservation to rural development to transportation demand management.

This intensive 2-week study abroad course between May 20 and June 3, 2024 will introduce students to urban planning practices and emerging development issues in five unique Chinese cities: [Beijing](#), [Xiong'an](#), [Shenzhen](#), [Guangzhou](#), and [Hong Kong](#). By integrating guest lectures, site visits, and cross-cultural classroom activities, the course will create immersive learning experiences that directly connect students to foreign cultures, alternative ways of life, and exciting urban landscapes.

## Overview of Class Schedule and Activities

<i>City</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Day</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Hotel</i>
<b>Beijing</b>	20-May	Mon	PM	Students arrive and meet instructors in Beijing	7 nights in Beijing
	21-May	Tue	AM	Lectures at Peking University & Campus Tours	
			PM	Summer Palace	
	22-May	Wed	AM	Tiananmen Square, Forbidden City	
			PM	Jingshan Park, South Luogu Alley	
	23-May	Thu	AM	Mutianyu Great Wall	
			PM	Huanghuacheng Lakeside Great Wall	
	24-May	Fri	AM	Photovoice field work in Beijing's oldest city districts	
PM			Photovoice student presentations		
<b>Xiong'an</b>	25-May	Sat	AM	Xiong'An New Area	
			PM	Xiong'An New Area	
<b>Beijing</b>	26-May	Sun	AM	Temple of Heaven	
			PM	Free Time	
<b>Shenzhen</b>	27-May	Mon	AM	Train to Shenzhen	7 nights in Shenzhen
			PM	OCT-LOFT Creative Culture Park	
	28-May	Tue	AM	Lectures at Shenzhen Urban Transportation Planning Center (SUTPC)	
			PM	Futian CBD, urban villages, Nanshan Science and Technology Park	
	29-May	Wed	AM	Gankeng Ancient Town	
			PM	Guanlan Printmaking Village	
<b>Guangzhou</b>	30-May	Thu	AM	HSR to Guangzhou, Shamian Island, Liwan District	
			PM	Flower City Square	
<b>Hong Kong</b>	31-May	Fri	AM	HSR to Hong Kong, Lectures at University of Hong Kong	
			PM	Victoria Peak Tram, Central Escalator, Star Ferry	
<b>Shenzhen</b>	1-June	Sat	AM	Free time & group work session	
			PM	Student group presentations	
	2-June	Sun	AM	Course evaluation & optional day trip	
			PM	optional day trip, hotel check out on Monday, June 3	

## The Jingjinji Region: Beijing & Xiong'an (May 20-26)



Collaborating with the School of Government at **Peking University**, we will examine [Beijing](#) through the lens of its oldest neighborhoods that have faced destruction as the city and China relentlessly modernizes. We will focus on [Dashilar](#), a traditional 'hutong' neighborhood at the very heart of Beijing. The neighborhood was known as the birthplace of the Beijing Opera and the first Chinese stock market. We will learn about the Dashilar Project launched in 2011 that aimed to revitalize and preserve the neighborhood simultaneously. We will learn about the application of advanced urban sensing technologies in the Dashilar Project to collect data on urban processes and transform how communities engage with neighborhood planning and development.



did, both of which are now major global financial and business centers.

We will make a one-day visit to [Xiong'an](#), a state-level new area located about 100 km southwest of Beijing. Newly established in April 2017, Xiong'an was hand-picked by Chinese president Xi Jinping as the dream city for his "thousand-year" plan to transform the area into a high-technology hub of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei ([Jingjinji](#)) economic region. Xiong'an is expected to rapidly grow into prominent new cities just like how Shenzhen and Pudong Shanghai

Additional site visits include:

- [Mutianyu Great Wall](#): one of the best-preserved sections of the Great Wall of China.
- [Huanghuacheng Great Wall](#): submerged parts of the Great Wall under the lake water.
- [Tiananmen Square](#): city square of culture significance and formality in the center of Beijing.
- [Forbidden City](#): the former Chinese imperial palace from the Ming dynasty to the end of the Qing dynasty (the years 1420 to 1912).
- [South Luogu Alley](#): an 800-meter long North-South alleyway with cafes, bars, and shops all designed in classical Chinese 'hutong' style.

## The Pearl River Delta Region: Shenzhen, Guangzhou & Hong Kong (May 27-June 3)



Over the past four decades, [Shenzhen](#) has grown from a fishing town of 30,000 into the fourth largest city in China with a population of 17.6 million in 2020. Collaborating with the **Shenzhen Urban Transportation Planning Center**, we will examine the rise of major economic centers in Shenzhen, including the Futian CBD Area and the Nanshan Science and Technology Park. We will visit the Futian station—the largest underground station in Asia that serves both metro trains and the high-speed intercity trains. We will learn about the streetscape renovation projects in Futian and Nanshan Districts that encourage people to spend more time outdoors and promote community involvement.



We will take a day trip to [Guangzhou](#), 30 minutes from Shenzhen via high-speed rail. As China's third-largest city, Guangzhou shares the Pearl River Delta Region with Shenzhen, creating the world's most

expansive continuous urban area. Guangzhou has a rich and culturally significant history as a major terminus of the maritime Silk Road. The city has been a springboard for trading, cultural exchanges, and revolutions and reforms. The city offers a mix of new and old. We will tour the well-preserved colonial villas and church on the [Shamian Island](#), the futuristic architectures in the [Zhujiang New Town](#), and the serene pedestrian zones surrounded by parks and ponds at the [Huacheng Square](#).

We will make a one-day visit to [Hong Kong](#), which is about 15 minutes away from Shenzhen via high-speed rail. As a special Administrative Region of China, Hong Kong enjoys a high degree of autonomy. It has its own currency and maintains the common law system which is different from the civil law system in Mainland China. The urban area of Hong Kong has the highest population density in the world. Over 90% of the Hong Kong population uses public transportation, the highest rate in the world. In this fascinating city, we will learn about the city's planning projects at the [City Gallery](#), and tour its sophisticated multimodal transportation network, including [Star Ferry](#), [Central Escalator](#), and [Tramways](#).



## Course Readings

There is no required textbook for this course. All required readings will be provided and prepared by the instructor. The readings will be downloadable from the Canvas course website (available on April 15).

Recommended book readings prior to the trip:

- Meyer, M. (2010). *The last days of old Beijing: Life in the vanishing backstreets of a city transformed*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA.
- O'Donnell, M. A., Wong, W., & Bach, J. (Eds.). (2017). *Learning from Shenzhen: China's post-Mao experiment from special zone to model city*. University of Chicago Press.
- Karakiewicz, J., Shelton, B., & Kvan, T. (2013). *The making of Hong Kong: from vertical to volumetric*. Routledge.

## Course Evaluation

Course evaluation is comprised of three components: class participation, photovoice assignments, and the final journal assignment.

### 1. Class participation (20%)

Students are required to follow the group schedule closely. In addition, plan on spending about five minutes per day recording anything related to a cultural difference. Photos may also be helpful. It could be something that you heard from a speaker, something that you observed, a particular conversation, a story from an event you participated in, an emotional feeling that you had, etc. Use the Describe, Interpret, and Reflect model to share your interpretation and reflections with classmates during daily check-in meetings at breakfast time.

### 2. Photovoice assignment and group presentations (30%)

In the photovoice assignment, students are required to use cameras to record and reflect on diverse aspects of urban life in the study city. Detailed instructions will be provided during the trip. The objectives of the photovoice assignments are:

- To recognize and honor the value of subjective experience;
- To reveal physical conditions and social realities of urban living in China; and
- To facilitate critical and analytical discussion on strengths and concerns of Chinese cities

Students will be paired into groups to complete the photovoice assignments and make group presentations. Detailed instructions will be provided during the trip. Both the instructors and volunteers from the partnering organization will provide feedback on student presentations.

### 3. Graphic reflective journal assignment (2 entries; 25% each)

The main assignment of this course is to develop a journal to record your site observations and reflections based on research, readings, field work, and lectures. You will develop an entry for each study region and are required to submit a total of two journal entries (one on Beijing & Xiong'an and another on Shenzhen, Guangzhou, and Hong Kong) in one PDF file to [yingling@umn.edu](mailto:yingling@umn.edu) by the midnight of Monday, June 17, 2024. Each entry should be at least 1,000 words plus at least 10 visuals (e.g., photos, maps, figures, charts).