

CONNECTIONS: BOOMTOWNS OF THE YANGTZE RIVER

A Traveling Investigation of the Transformation of China's River Cities

City of Chongqing



City of Wuhan



City of Shanghai



SUMMER STUDY 2009

Sponsored by the China Urban Studies Summer Program
Endowed Fund, the O'Neill Asia Cum Laude Endowment,
and the Office of International Programs

Trinity College
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CONNECTIONS: BOOMTOWNS OF THE YANGTZE RIVER

A Traveling Investigation of the Transformation of China's River Cities

For centuries, the Yangtze River was a major artery in China's internal and external pattern of trade and many of its cities derived their importance directly from their positions on its banks. Even before the initiation of the Three Gorges Project, the Yangtze was navigable during high water for some 1,500 miles from the coast to the city of Chongqing in Sichuan Province. And in the 20th century, as China began to industrialize, the great cities of the Yangtze led the way as production centers. Today Yangtze river ports continue to constitute leading economic, industrial, and cultural centers in the China that has emerged over the last 30 years as a global power.

In summer 2009, Trinity College, through the China Urban Studies Summer Program Endowed Fund, the O'Neill Asia Cum Laude Endowment, and the Office of International Programs (OIP), will launch a new study-away program that will travel to three megacities on the Yangtze River. The program will be led by Dean Xiangming Chen of the Center of Urban and Global Studies, Professor Michael Lestz of the History Department, and Professor Joan Morrison of the Environmental Science Program. It will carry two and one half credits for three courses—a social science course, a history course, and half an environmental science course—woven into an integrated interdisciplinary investigation of the dramatic historical, social, and environmental transformation of this region of China and the challenges facing three megacities (Chongqing, Wuhan, Shanghai) in their multiple symbiotic connections to the storied Yangtze River.

We will spend the first week of the program on the Trinity campus to introduce students to the connections between the Connecticut River and the city of Hartford as a preparation for the China-focused investigation.

More about the program

This program is designed as a moving inquiry, and during the course of our time in China we will travel from Chongqing in the southwest to Shanghai along the coast. The disciplinary tools employed in this investigation will include urban sociology, history, and environmental science. The courses are designed to be mutually reinforcing and enrollment in all three is obligatory.

After an intensive one-week launch at Trinity College, where we will study New England river ports and enter the literature of Chinese cities to begin our discussion of issues like sustainability and the environmental risks that derive from pell-mell growth, we will travel to China to pursue these themes. In China, our investigation will take us to Chongqing, Wuhan, and Shanghai, with a short stop in Nanjing. In addition, we are planning a Yangtze River cruise to permit a glimpse of the Three Gorges project and the enormous Sandouping Dam.

Participation in the program will be limited to 16 to 18 students. It is anticipated that the program will fill rapidly. Application forms are available in the Office of International Programs. **The application deadline is April 10.** Student interviews will take place in the following weeks and acceptance announced by mid-April. Acceptance will be based on GPA, an application essay, fit of research interests, and two letters of recommendation. A number of scholarships will be available through the China Urban Studies Summer Program Fund, endowed by an anonymous donor, and the O'Neill Asia Cum Laude Endowment. The scholarship application includes a separate essay addressing financial need.

Courses

SOCL 229: Megacities of the Yangtze: Challenges and Opportunities (1 credit), Dean Xiangming Chen

This course will provide an intensive opportunity to read a selection of the vast literature on China's cities and to carry out in-depth studies of vital topics and cases in the field. Foci of research will range from the tearing down of traditional neighborhoods to the rapid emergence of exclusive gated communities and from thriving small businesses on the streets of Chongqing or Wuhan to the grandiose mega-projects like the Three Gorges Dam or Dongtan Eco-City in Shanghai. Dean Xiangming Chen will offer both a native/personal and an intellectual/analytical perspective and insight on these topics and cases to help place the readings and field inquiries in meaningful local contexts. Interfacing with both the history and environmental science courses of the program, this course aims to engage the students in a deep probe of the most daunting social challenges facing the rapidly transforming megacities along the Yangtze River.

HIST 396: River Cities of China: The History of Urban Culture Along the Yangtze (1 credit), Professor Michael Lestz

Throughout Chinese history, the Yangtze River and the cities in its basin have played a formidable role. The river was a channel of trade and political influence: Cities that formed on its banks were marketing centers, hubs of cultural activity, and administrative centers. The importance of the Yangtze was reinforced in the 20th century, and since the reforms mounted in China from the 1980's the river and its cities have taken a place at the core of China's economic miracle. This course will examine the historical emergence of the cities we visit during the summer and their transformation from the era of the Opium War to the present.

Planned Eco-City of Dongtan



ENVS123: Environmental Challenges Posed By Urban Life Along the Yangtze (0.5 credit), Professor Joan Morrison

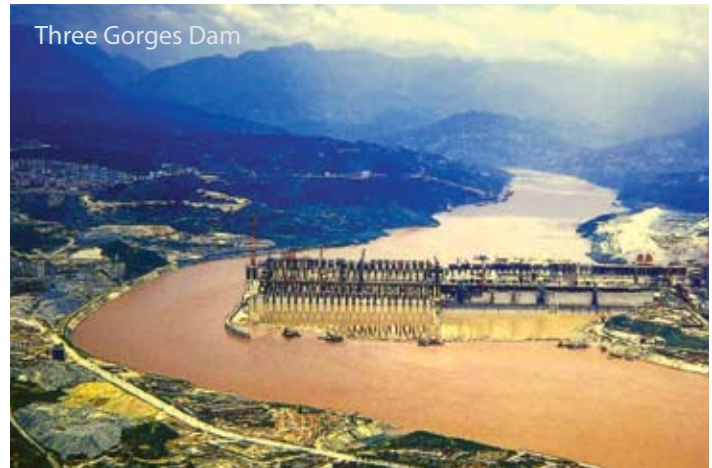
Cities have been established along rivers throughout human history because of the benefits of the water resources and the functions of rivers in removal of waste and movement of goods. Consequently, rivers have undergone periods of extreme pollution then rapid changes as society has recognized the need to clean up these valuable waterways. This course will examine the basics of the ecology and environment of rivers and the types and consequences of human interactions with rivers. Pre-trip background material will engage students in building the scientific framework necessary to understand these issues. Students will read current material that explores interrelationships between rivers and the human enterprise then, in China, our field experiences along the Yangtze River will allow examination of interactions between humans and the river in locations from the smallest rural village to the rapidly growing megacities. Dr. Morrison's extensive field research experience will facilitate the field aspects of our river studies by offering both natural- and social science-based insights into our understanding of how rapidly growing urban areas may affect the rivers and their surrounding environments. This course does not count toward the ENVS major or the natural science distribution.

Program faculty

Dean Xiangming Chen received his Ph.D. in sociology from Duke University. He conducts research on cities and regional development in China and Asia from a comparative perspective. He is the co-author of *The World of Cities: Places in Comparative and Historical Perspective* (2003) and the editor of *Shanghai Rising: State Power and Local Transformations in a Global Megacity* (summer 2009). He was appointed the inaugural dean and director of the Center for Urban and Global Studies and Paul E. Raether Distinguished Professor of Sociology and International Studies at Trinity in 2007. In this role, Dean Chen leads Trinity's strategic initiative in developing integrated urban and global programs in teaching, research, and engagement on campus, in Hartford, and globally.

Associate Professor Michael Lestz holds a Ph. D. in Chinese history from Yale University. Lestz's research is focused on Qing and 20th century China. With Jonathan Spence, he is the co-author of *The Search for Modern China: A Document Collection*. He is the author of the first Chinese to English translation of Zhou Daguan's 13th century description of a journey to Cambodia (*Zenla fengtuj*). In 2005 he was appointed director of the O'Neill Asia Cum Laude Endowment, which is designed to promote undergraduate study in Asia under the direction of Trinity faculty. In this capacity, Lestz has led credit-bearing research programs in China, Tibet, and Cambodia.

Associate Professor Joan Morrison received her Ph.D. in wildlife ecology and conservation from the University of Florida. Her research involves the study of birds, primarily birds of prey, in human-dominated landscapes. She is the leading authority on an endangered raptor in Florida, although she has also studied avian communities inhabiting urban parks in Hartford. Prior to earning her Ph.D., she obtained extensive field experience working for federal and state resource agencies in the western U.S. and Alaska. Prof. Morrison has been director of Trinity's Environmental Science program and in that role has led several field trips for Trinity students to Utah, California, Washington, and Iceland.



Calendar

- April 10** Application Deadline
- June 15-20** Program launched at Trinity. Campus housing provided
- June 20-July 15** Investigation moves to China and the cities of the Yangtze.

Application, tuition, and scholarship information

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