Course Description

China announced its roadmap for the Belt and Road Initiative in 2013. The blueprint was to create two routes – the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road – to better connect cities in the eastern, middle and western parts of China, and link its major seaports to Asia Pacific and Eastern Europe, the two biggest growth engines in the global economy today. The plan aims to develop a new economic cooperation framework within the region by promoting increased infrastructure development and trading between the countries involved. The “Belt and Road” blueprint has raised as many questions: ranging from economic, social, cultural and resource-based as well as those related to ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ power, just to name a few.

In this course, students will examine the “Belt and Road” initiative from a variety of different perspectives including historical, cultural, and philosophical. As a case study, it will also examine a major “Belt and Road” infrastructure project as a microcosm of the wider “Belt and Road” initiative.

This course seeks to develop students’ ability to evaluate the “Belt and Road” initiative from different perspectives, taking into account militaristic, historical, developmental, social, economic and cultural factors.

Topics
1. Background to the "Belt and Road" initiative
2. Significance, purpose, theory behind the "Belt and Road" initiative
3. Geographic span of the "Belt and Road" initiative
4. Cultures and people involved in the "Belt and Road" initiative
5. Finance and Economy of the countries involved in the "Belt and Road" initiative

Grading Scheme
- Class Participation (30%)
- In-class Discussion (30%)
- Personal Response System (PRS) Exercises (15%)
- Presentation (15%)
- Written Assignment (10%)

[Topics and grading schemes are subject to change as deemed appropriate. Students will receive information and guidelines in class on how they will be assessed for the course.]
Instructor

Prof. Naubahar SHARIF

Prof. Sharif is an Associate Professor at the Division of Social Science. His research interests include the sociology of the innovation systems conceptual approach; the role of innovation/technology in Hong Kong; university-industry linkages; and economic linkages between Hong Kong and Guangdong. He completed the Executive Education program in Innovation for Economic Development at Harvard University in 2011 and has consulted for the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Commission from 2006-10. A dedicated teacher, he has been nominated for HKUST’s Michael G. Gale Medal for Distinguished Teaching, and won the School of Humanities and Social Science (SHSS) Best Teacher Award in 2009. Naubahar has been awarded both 'Public Policy Research' (PPR) and 'General Research Fund' (GRF) grants by Hong Kong’s Research Grants Council (RGC), and at HKUST from the Research Project Competition (RPC), Center for Enhanced Learning and Teaching (CELT), the Undergraduate Core Education Office (UCEO) and from School-Based Initiatives (SBI). He has published numerous articles in leading journals including Research Policy, International Journal of Technology and Management, and Science, Technology and Human Values.