



Belt, Road, and Beyond

The CSIS Belt and Road Executive Course

About the Course >

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a \$1 trillion flagship foreign policy effort of Chinese leader Xi Jinping, could reshape global networks of trade, transport, and political ties within and between countries for decades to come. But since its announcement, the BRI has remained shrouded in confusion and controversy, and it now faces major challenges, including the Covid-19 pandemic. Drawing insights from leading experts and the Reconnecting Asia Project, the most extensive effort to map and analyze these developments to date, CSIS has developed a Master's-level introduction to China's BRI. This private course explains what the BRI is, what it is not, and how it is impacting commercial and strategic realities on the ground.

Apply Online

Applicants are admitted on a rolling basis.

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Sample Course Schedule >

Time ET	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3
8 AM	Welcome & Introductions	Welcome	Welcome
	Six Myths about the Belt & Road	Africa	Armchair Conversation: Next Directions
9 AM		BREAK	BREAK
	BREAK	Latin America	BRI, Energy, & the Environment
10 AM	The BRI's Domestic Drivers		
11 AM	BREAK	Southeast Asia	The Polar Silk Road
	How the Belt & Road Gained Steam		
12 PM	NETWORKING LUNCH	BREAK	The Health Silk Road (Working Lunch)
		LUNCH	
1 PM	Debt Sustainability	South Asia	The Digital Silk Road
2 PM			DISCUSSION BREAKOUT
	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
3 PM	Russia & Central Asia	The Middle East	The U.S. Toolkit
			CONCLUDING REMARKS

Seminar Descriptions >

Six Myths about the Belt and Road

Popular descriptions of the BRI abound with colorful characterizations, from a Chinese version of the Marshall Plan, to the return of the ancient Silk Road. Gain new insights to test these and other claims.

The BRI's Domestic Drivers

Learn about the domestic drivers and political dynamics inside the Chinese state, which have shaped the contours and magnitude of the BRI.

How the Belt and Road Gained Steam

The BRI is the culmination of a decades-long shift towards China and away from traditional Western development lending for infrastructure. Examine the scale of this trend and its root causes in China's domestic and international development policies.

Debt Sustainability

Many emerging markets and low-income economies have turned to foreign loans and complex agreements to finance their infrastructure investment. The resulting debts, and often opaque lending practices, have raised concerns about debt sustainability, which have been amplified by the economic pressures of Covid-19. Acquire new tools to examine the consequences for recipient countries.

Russia & Central Asia

Explore China's growing influence in Central Asia and the great power dynamics of Sino-Russian cooperation and competition.

Africa

Weigh the need to balance responses to the strategic risks of Chinese projects with local development imperatives in Africa, home to the first Chinese overseas naval base. Identify overarching regional issues as well as recent developments and trends during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Latin America

The Belt and Road was officially extended to Latin America in 2018. Delve into the significance of the region's recent incorporation in the initiative for both Latin American governments and U.S. policymakers.

South Asia

The BRI has been embraced in parts of South Asia, but its expansion has also kindled sparks over historic border conflicts and potential “debt traps.” Discuss regional reactions to the BRI and their implications.

Southeast Asia

Explore the diverse experiences of Southeast Asian nations with China and their perceptions of Beijing’s economic involvement in the region, which has prompted a blend of anticipation and unease among its smaller neighbors.

The Middle East

China’s rising energy demands have led to deepening bilateral relationships with its partners in the Middle East. Discuss the role of China’s Belt and Road Initiative in its approach to this resource-rich, yet politically-fraught region at the cross-roads of some of the world’s busiest trade routes.

BRI, Energy, and the Environment

Xi Jinping has said that the BRI must be green, sustainable, and fuel high-quality growth. Critics say Beijing is exporting old technology and locking countries into inefficient or high emissions hydrocarbon-based technologies. Hear about the BRI’s implications for global climate efforts.

The Polar Silk Road

Since the release of its first ever Arctic Policy white paper in 2018, Beijing has increased its infrastructure, digital, and scientific presence across the circumpolar Arctic. Receive insight into Beijing’s long-term strategic interests and emerging Arctic capabilities as it pursues a global diversification strategy for its future energy, mineral, protein, and shipping needs.

The Health Silk Road

The Covid-19 pandemic that originated in Wuhan has rippled throughout China’s economic and diplomatic relations with countries around the world. Examine how the pandemic has affected China’s international presence.

Expert Conversation: Next Directions

As the BRI has expanded globally, it has also evolved. Hear the view from Beijing and the next directions for BRI in the wake of Covid-19 and other developments since the initiative began directly from Chinese scholars.

The Digital Silk Road

China's Digital Silk Road is set to expand in the wake of Covid-19 due to a combination of internal and international political pressures and economic incentives. Explore these dynamics and the future of China's technology exports along the BRI.

The U.S. Toolkit

The U.S. is attempting to sharpen its toolkit for delivering projects abroad, including the U.S. Development Finance Corporation (DFC), the "Blue Dot Network," and other allied efforts. Learn about the emerging roles of these and other efforts in the U.S. development toolkit.

Apply Online

Applicants are admitted on a rolling basis. Limited space is available.

Tuition: \$3,500 per person

Location: Hybrid

Contact: For more information, please contact Barbara E. Petzen,
Director of Training Initiatives, at bpetzen@csis.org

About the Reconnecting Asia Project >

The Reconnecting Asia Project has assembled a unique and growing database of detailed information on over 14,000 infrastructure projects. Leaders in government, the private sector, and academia use these resources to shape policy, identify commercial opportunities, and conduct research. Reconnecting Asia and its scholars have been cited in *The New York Times*, *The Economist*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Financial Times*, and other leading outlets.

About CSIS >

The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) is a bipartisan, nonprofit organization headquartered in Washington, D.C. founded by David M. Abshire and Admiral Arleigh Burke in 1962. For over 50 years, CSIS has been dedicated to developing practical solutions to some of the world's greatest challenges. Voted the world's number one defense and national security think tank for the past eight years, CSIS has become one of the preeminent international policy institutions focused on defense and security, regional stability, and transnational challenges ranging from energy and climate to global development and economic integration. Tom Pritzker, executive chairman of Hyatt Hotels Corporation and chairman and CEO of the Pritzker Organization, became chairman of the CSIS Board of Trustees in November 2015. Former senator Sam Nunn (D-GA), who served as chair for 16 years, remains on the Board as chairman emeritus. John J. Hamre became the Center's president and chief executive officer in April 2000.

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