

UGEA 2334

CHINA TODAY

The Chinese University of Hong Kong | Spring 2023

Lecture Time: Thursdays 2:30pm-4:15pm

Tutorial-1: Thursdays 4:30pm-5:15pm

Tutorial-2: TBD

Course Location: YIA 403

Course website: TBD

Faculty Instructor: ZHANG Chaoxiong, Ph.D.

Email: zhang.chaoxiong@outlook.com

Office Hours: TBD, and by appointment (NAH 408)

Teaching Assistants: TBD

Course Description:

China is looming large on the global scene and in our everyday life. The course provides an introduction to emerging trends in Chinese culture and society. We will explore processes of change and continuity in China, examining the complexity of social issues and the dynamics of cultural unity and diversity. While we will focus on the post-reform and opening-up era, we will consider how contemporary developments draw upon the legacies of the Maoist revolutions as well as the pre-socialist past. This course addresses a host of issues that are salient in understanding China and its position in the contemporary world. It is primarily informed by an anthropological perspective that is particularly good at making sense of macro-level issues through studying day-to-day details and processes in a small locale. The course also draws from disciplines other than anthropology, for example, history, political sciences, and economics. The overall intention is to provide a well-rounded and nuanced understanding of China today.

Language of instruction: English

Learning Outcomes: Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

- acquire a good understanding of contemporary China;
- be acquainted with anthropological holistic and comparative perspective and traditional anthropological topics;
- develop a good understanding of how scholars of various backgrounds analyze contemporary China;

- reflect on both how global processes interact with China's recent transformation and how China is shaping the world;
- reflect upon the challenges regarding inequality, marginality, sustainability, and inclusiveness based on the analysis of China;
- establish students' own critical perspectives of China today.

Reading materials:

All readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Course Requirements:

- **Tutorial Attendance and Participation (20%):** Attendance (12%): Come to class on time and having completed the readings. Attendance will be taken for the tutorials. You are allowed **one** unexcused absence (excused absence requires a written documentation). For each unexcused absence thereafter, two points will be deducted from the final grade. Participation (8%): You should contribute to class discussion at least **once** during each tutorial session (no less than eight sessions). You will receive **1 point** for your participation in class discussion.
- **Online Response Posts (5% x 4 = 20%):** Students are expected to submit online response posts (150-250 words) in **four different weeks** of the semester. Please post the response posts in the "Discussion Board" section of the course Blackboard site **no later than 2:30pm** on the day **before class** to receive credit. You can either summarize the major arguments of the readings or identify a passage from one of the readings that excites or puzzles you and write your comments. You could also write the post in bullet points format. In your post, you are also required to raise one question for class discussion.
- **Midterm exam (30%): Mar 16 (in-class).**
- **Final paper & presentation (25%+5%):** Choose one of our (weekly) topics and write a critical reflection and explain your ideas. Students are required to present their topics and preliminary ideas in class on **Apr 20 (3-minute PowerPoint or Keynote presentation)**. The final paper should be **1500-2000 words in English** or **3000-4000 words in Chinese**. Format: double-spaced, Times New Roman, font size 12, and standard margins. Due by **May 4**. Please upload it to VeriGuide, and then upload your paper and VeriGuide Certificate to Blackboard.

Course Schedule

(Subject to modification)

- **Week 1 (Jan 12): Course Introduction**
 - No readings
- **Week 2 (Jan 19): Historical Background: Pre-reform & Reform era**
 - Jacka, Tamara, Andrew B. Kipnis and Sally Sargasso. 2013. "Introduction (excerpt)." In *Contemporary China: Society and Social Change*. Pp. 6-23. Cambridge University Press.
 - Cheek, Timothy. 2006. "Making Sense: What Is 'China'?" Chapter 1 in *Living with Reform: China Since 1989*. Sed Books. Pp. 13-31.
 - Optional: Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom. 2013. From Mao to Now. In *China in the 21st Century: What Everyone Needs to Know*. 2nd. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press. P. 75-104.
- **Week 3 (Jan 26): No Class**
 - ~Happy New Year~
- **Week 4 (Feb 2): Modernization: A One Hundred Year Quest**
 - Karl, Rebecca. 2018. "Rules for Destroying Countries: China and the Colonial World in the Early 20th Century." *Viewpoint Magazine*.
- **Week 5 (Feb 9): Diversity (I): Multi-Ethnic China: Politics of Ethnic Identification**
 - Harrell, Stevan. 1995. "Civilizing projects and the reaction to them." In *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers*, edited by Stevan Harrell, 3-36. University of Washington Press. Pp.33-53.
 - Optional: Gillette, Maris. 2002. Chapter 1: "Modernization and Consumption." Between Mecca and Beijing. Pp. 1-21.
- **Week 6 (Feb 16): Diversity (II): Multi-Ethnic China: Ways of Being Ethnic**
 - Siobhán M. Mattison. 2010. Economic Impacts of Tourism and Erosion of the Visiting System among the Mosuo of Lugu Lake. *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology* 11(2): 159-176.
 - Optional: Shao-hua Liu. 2011. The Meandering Road to Modernity. In *Passage to Manhood: Youth Migration, Heroin, and AIDS in Southwest China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. P. 27-50.
 - Film: *Yuguo and His Mother* 雨果的夏天 (2010). Directed by GU Tao.
- **Week 7 (Feb 23): Relatedness (I): Kinship, Family, and Marriage**
 - Jacka, Tamara, Andrew B. Kipnis and Sally Sargasso. 2013. "Chapter 1. Families, Kinship and Relatedness." In *Contemporary China: Society and Social Change*. Pp. 6-23. Cambridge University Press.
 - Yan, Yunxiang. 1997. "The Triumph of Conjuality: Structural Transformation of Family Relations in a Chinese Village." *Ethnology* 36(3):191-212.
 - Kinship and Social Organization Tutorial
- **Week 8 (Mar 2) Relatedness (II): Birth Control and Changing Gender Dynamics**
 - Greenhalgh, Susan. 1994. "Controlling Births and Bodies in Village China." *American Ethnologist* 21(1):3-30.
 - Shi, Lihong. 2017. Chapter 1. In *Choosing Daughters: Family Change in Rural China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. Pp. 19-45.
- **Week 9 (Mar 9): No Class**

- Reading Week
- **Week 10 (Mar 16): Midterm Exam (in-class)**
 - No readings
- **Week 11 (Mar 23): Divide: Rural-Urban Division**
 - Whyte, Martin. 2010. “The Paradoxes of Rural-Urban Inequality in Contemporary China.” In *One Country, Two Societies: Rural-Urban Inequality in Contemporary China*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Pp. 1-25.
 - Optional: Tamara Jacka, Andrew B. Kipnis, and Sally Sargeson. 2013. “Citizenship, Household Registration and Migration.” In *Contemporary China: Society and Social Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P. 65-81.
 - Optional: Tamara Jacka, Andrew B. Kipnis, and Sally Sargeson. 2013. “Regional, Rural-Urban and Within-community Inequalities.” In *Contemporary China: Society and Social Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P. 217-36.
 - Film: *The Last Train Home* 歸途列車 (2009). Directed by FAN Lixin
- **Week 12 (Mar 30): Hierarchy: Class and Inequality**
 - Tamara Jacka, Andrew B. Kipnis, and Sally Sargeson. 2013. “Social Class and Stratification.” In *Contemporary China: Society and Social Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P. 199-216.
- **Week 13 (Apr 6): Environment: Development and Sustainability**
 - Tilt, Bryan. 2009. “Pollution, Perceptions and Environmental Values,” in *The Struggle for Sustainability in Rural China: Environmental Values and Civil Society*, pp. 83-107. Columbia University Press.
 - Film: *Plastic China* 塑料王國 (2017). Directed by WANG Jiuliang.
- **Week 14 (Apr 13): The Epidemic: Crisis and Humanity**
 - Yang, Guobin. 2022. *The Wuhan Lockdown (excerpt)*. Columbia University Press.
 - Film: *76 Days* (2020). Directed by WU Hao, CHEN Weixi, and Anonymous.
- **Week 15 (Apr 20): Final Paper Topic Presentation**
 - No readings

Course Policies:

- **Penalties for late work:** All assignments are due on the scheduled day and time. No extensions will be given except under extraordinary circumstances. One-third of a letter grade will be deducted for each day an assignment is submitted late.
- **Class Culture:** Classes are a safe atmosphere where ideas can be discussed and different opinions respected.
- **Academic Honesty:** The Chinese University of Hong Kong places very high importance on academic honesty, and adopts a policy of *zero tolerance* on academic dishonesty. Any such offence will lead to disciplinary action including possibly termination of studies at the University. Students should know how to properly use source material and how to avoid plagiarism. Detailed guidelines and examples for the acknowledgement of sources can be found on the University’s website at http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academic_honesty/. All papers must be submitted through VeriGuide.

- **Writing Assistance:** For additional help on your writing, consult the expert staff of the **English Language Teaching Unit (ELT)**. ELT's Peer Tutoring Scheme offers informal opportunities for CUHK undergraduates and postgraduates to consult trained Peer Tutors on English speaking and writing (<https://eltu.cuhk.edu.hk/pts/>).

Grade descriptors are as follows for the assessment of this course:

Grade	Overall course
A	Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.
A-	Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.
B	Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.
C	Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.
D	Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes.
F	Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.