

**UGEA 2334**

# **CHINA TODAY**

**The Chinese University of Hong Kong | Spring 2023**

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

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

Tutorial-2: TBD

Course Location: YIA 403

Faculty Instructor: ZHANG Chaoxiong

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Office Hours: TBD, and by appointment (NAH 323)

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 perspectives 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 (15%):** 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.
- **Online Response Posts (4% x 5 = 20%):** Students are expected to submit online response posts (150-250 words) in **five different weeks** of the semester. Please post the response posts in the "Discussion Board" section of the course Blackboard site **no later than 5:00pm** 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 tutorial discussion.
- **Midterm exam (30%): Mar 16 (in-class).**
- **Final (35%):** There are two possible formats:
  - (1) **Final paper:** Choose one of our (weekly) topics and write a critical essay to explain your idea. 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.
  - (2) **Group project (3 students/group):** Attend one China-related public event (lecture, screening, workshop, exhibition, etc.) in Hong Kong during this semester and then conduct an in-class presentation on **Apr 20** to share what you learn (or arranged throughout April). Please also submit your PowerPoint slides by **Apr 21**.
  - For both formats, students are required to engage what we learned in the class to develop the argument.

## 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*.
  - Optional: Cohen, Paul A. 2002. "Remembering and Forgetting National Humiliation in Twentieth-Century China." *Twentieth-Century China* 27 (2): 1–39.
- **Week 5 (Feb 9): Diversity (I): Multi-Ethnic China: Politics of Ethnic Identification**
  - Gillette, Maris. 2002. Chapter 1: "Modernization and Consumption." In *Between Mecca and Beijing: Modernization and Consumption Among Urban Chinese Muslims*. Pp. 1-21.
- **Week 6 (Feb 16): Diversity (II): Multi-Ethnic China: Ways of Being Ethnic**
  - 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.
  - Optional: 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.
  - Film: *Yuguo and His Mother* (2010). Directed by GU Tao.
- **Week 7 (Feb 23): Relatedness: 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.
  - Shi, Lihong. 2017. "Chapter 1." In *Choosing Daughters: Family Change in Rural China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. Pp. 19-45.
- **Week 8 (Mar 2) Power: Recycling Tradition and Culturing Power**
  - Siu, Helen. 2016. "Recycling Tradition: Culture, History, and Political Economy in the Chrysanthemum Festivals of South China." In *Tracing China: A Forty-Year Ethnographic Journey*, pp 137–62. Hong Kong: HKU Press.
- **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 (Guest Lecture)**
  - 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.
- **Week 12 (Mar 30): Morality and Ethics: Crisis and Politics**
  - Yan, Yunxiang. 2021. “The Politics of Moral Crisis in Contemporary China.” *The China Journal* 85 (January): 96–120.
- **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: *The Warriors in Qiugang* (2010). Directed by Ruby Yang.
- **Week 14 (Apr 13): The Epidemic: Crisis and Humanity**
  - Shao, Jing. 2013. “Ethical Shifters in the Chinese HIV/AIDS Epidemic.” In *Ordinary Ethics in China*, edited by Charles Stafford, 242–60. London: Routledge.
  - Yang, Guobin. 2022. *The Wuhan Lockdown (excerpt)*. Columbia University Press.
- **Week 15 (Apr 20): Group Project 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/academichonesty/>. 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:**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Overall course</b>
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.