

Contemporary Chinese Society

Sociology 225/East Asian Studies 301, Fall 2015

Time: 2:30-5:15pm, Tuesday
Location: Social Sciences 6104

Instructor: Professor Sida Liu
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a basic social science “literacy” of contemporary China, defined loosely as Chinese society since the establishment of the People’s Republic of China in 1949. It is listed in the sociology catalog, but the nature and orientation of the course are interdisciplinary, incorporating readings in history, sociology, political science, anthropology, economics, and law. The aim is to demystify China, to make it accessible to you, and to give you some perspectives to pursue further engagement with China.

The course begins with an introduction on the main institutions of traditional Chinese society and investigates how these institutions have changed in the revolutions and upheavals of the 20th century, particularly under the rule of the Chinese Communist Party. Then we focus on the post-1978 reform period and discuss the social changes in various aspects of contemporary Chinese society, including the economy, family, politics, law, the urban/rural divide, media and the Internet, and civil society.

REQUIREMENTS

The course is designed as a combination of lectures and class discussions. Careful reading before lectures and active participation in discussions are both important. Reading and class participation account for 10% of the final grade.

The exams of the course consist of two take-home mid-term exams and a take-home final exam. The first mid-term exam is scheduled in **October 13-20** (7 days) and it accounts for 30% of your final grade. The second mid-term exam is scheduled in **November 17-24** (7 days) and it accounts for 30% of your final grade. The final exam is scheduled in **December 8-17** (9 days) and it accounts for 30% of your final grade. More details about the three exams will be given in class at least one week before the exam periods begin. Out of a concern for fairness to all students, there will be no make-up exam except in the case of documented extreme illness. Please mark your calendar now with the exam times so that you can ensure your participation.

READINGS

The course readings consist of two textbooks and a number of electronic articles and book chapters. After logging in to the course website at Learn@UW, please click on the “Materials” button and then select “Content”. All the electronic readings are in PDF format under the “Readings” folder. The two textbooks are available for purchase at the University Bookstore and online booksellers. You are required to get these two books if you take this course. Both of them will be thoroughly tested in the exams.

Fei, Xiaotong. 1992. *From the Soil: The Foundations of Chinese Society*, trans. Gary G. Hamilton and Wang Zheng. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.
Chan, Anita, Richard Madsen, and Jonathan Unger. 2009. *Chen Village: Revolution to Globalization* (3rd Edition). Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

You are expected to do the readings BEFORE every class as lectures will be based on the assumption that you have completed the assigned readings. Lack of reading is likely to generate serious difficulties in understanding the lectures and cause major problems for you in the exams.

LECTURES

For your convenience in taking notes and reviewing course materials, PowerPoint will be used in the lectures. The instructor will upload each week’s PowerPoint slides to Learn@UW after the Tuesday lecture. Please note that the PowerPoint slides are only brief outlines of the lectures, so note taking is still very important for you to do well in the exams.

Attendance of lectures is crucial in the sense that exams will be based on both lectures and assigned reading materials. You are responsible for all lecture materials and for any announcements made in class, whether or not you are present. Please communicate with the instructor if you become ill or emergencies arise so that I will be aware of your circumstances. If you miss a class, you should ask a classmate to review their notes from that day. If you have to miss classes for a prolonged period due to serious illness, you should speak to the instructor as soon as possible.

Please do not arrive late to class as it is disruptive to both the instructor and your classmates. Repeated tardiness will result in a lower final grade. Meanwhile, if you must leave early in a class, please speak to the instructor before the lecture to ask for permission. Otherwise please do NOT pack your things or leave the classroom until the lecture is over. If any emergency arises during the lecture, please raise your hand and inform the instructor.

OFFICE HOURS

The instructor’s office hours are 10:00-11:30am on Tuesdays. Please feel free to come by during the office hours to discuss course materials and other academic questions. If you cannot come to

the regular office hours due to conflicts of schedule, please email to make an appointment and find a different time to meet.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with particular needs that might affect participation, coursework, or examination environment should inform the instructor about those needs within the first three weeks of the semester so that I reasonably can accommodate those needs properly. I rely on the McBurney Disability Resource Center to determine what academic accommodations a student may require. Students who request accommodations must master all requirements, skills, knowledge, and academic standards of the course. Students who request relief for religious observances also should notify the instructor within the first three weeks of the semester.

READING SCHEDULE

Week 1: Introducing China

September 8 (Tuesday)

Naughton, Barry. 2007. "The Geographical Setting" (Chapter 1), pp. 17-32 in *The Chinese Economy: Transition and Growth*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Week 2: Foundations of Chinese Society

September 15 (Tuesday)

Fei, *From the Soil*, Chapters 1-14, pp. 37-140.

Week 3: The Rise of Communism

September 22 (Tuesday)

Lieberthal, Kenneth. 2004. "The Maoist Era" (Chapter 4), pp. 84-122 in *Governing China: From Revolution through Reform* (2nd edition). New York: W.W. Norton.

Chan, Madsen, and Unger, "Chen Village and Its Leaders", "The Big Four Cleanups" and "Studying Chairman Mao" (Chapters 1-3), pp. 13-102.

Week 4: The Cultural Revolution

September 29 (Tuesday)

Chan, Madsen, and Unger, "The Cultural Revolution" and "The Cleansing of the Class Ranks" (Chapters 4-5), pp. 103-168.

Week 5: Reform and Opening Up

October 6 (Tuesday)

Chan, Madsen, and Unger, "Plunging into a New Decade", "The New Era" and "The Midas Touch" (Chapters 8, 10-11), pp. 213-235, 267-308.

Walder, Andrew G. 1989. "Factory and Manager in the Era of Reform." *China Quarterly* 118: 242-264.

Week 6: The 1989 Tiananmen Student Movement

October 13 (Tuesday)

Zhao, Dingxin. 2001. "A Brief History of the 1989 Movement", "State Legitimacy, State Behaviors, and Movement Development" and "Ecology-Based Mobilization and Movement Dynamics" (Chapters 6-8), pp. 145-266 in *The Power of Tiananmen: State-Society Relations and the 1989 Beijing Student Movement*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Week 7: Mid-Term Exam I

October 20 (Tuesday)

Mid-term exam I due – take-home exam, no reading.

Week 8: Building the Socialist Market Economy

October 27 (Tuesday)

Huang, Yasheng. 2008. "Just How Capitalist is China?" (Chapter 1), pp. 1-49 in *Capitalism with Chinese Characteristics: Entrepreneurship and the State*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Wank, David L. 1996. "The Institutional Process of Market Clientelism: Guanxi and Private Business in a South China City." *China Quarterly* 147: 820-838.

Tsai, Kellee S. 2000. "Banquet Banking: Gender and Rotating Savings and Credit Associations in South China." *China Quarterly* 161: 142-170.

Week 9: Family and Romance

November 3 (Tuesday)

Chan, Madsen, and Unger, "The Great Betrothal Dispute" (Chapter 7), pp. 186-212.

Farrer, James, and Sun Zhongxin. 2003. "Extramarital Love in Shanghai." *China Journal* 50: 1-36.

Fong, Vanessa L. 2002. "China's One-Child Policy and the Empowerment of Urban Daughters." *American Anthropologist* 104: 1098-1109.

Evans, Harriet. 2010. "The Gender of Communication: Changing Expectations of Mothers and Daughters in Urban China." *China Quarterly* 204: 980-1000.

Week 10: The Political System

November 10 (Tuesday)

Lieberthal, Kenneth. 2004. "The Organization of Political Power and Its Consequences: The View from the Outside" and "The Organization of Political Power and Its Consequences: The View from the Inside" (Chapters 6-7), pp. 171-242 in *Governing China: From Revolution through Reform* (2nd edition). New York: W.W. Norton.

Stern, Rachel E., and Kevin J. O'Brien. 2012. "Politics at the Boundary: Mixed Signals and the Chinese State." *Modern China* 38: 174-198.

Week 11: The Legal Reform

November 17 (Tuesday)

Liebman, Benjamin L. 2007. "China's Courts: Restricted Reform." *China Quarterly* 191: 620-638.

Minzner, Carl F. 2011. "China's Turn against Law." *American Journal of Comparative Law* 59: 935-984.

- Liu, Sida. 2011. "Lawyers, State Officials, and Significant Others: Symbiotic Exchange in the Chinese Legal Services Market." *China Quarterly* 206: 276-293.
- Stern, Rachel E. 2011. "From Dispute to Decision: Suing Polluters in China." *China Quarterly* 206: 294-312.

Week 12: Mid-Term Exam II

November 24 (Tuesday)

Mid-term exam II due – take-home exam, no reading. Happy Thanksgiving!

Week 13: The Urban-Rural Divide

December 1 (Tuesday)

- Chan, Madsen, and Unger, "Globalization and Transformation", "Lifestyle of a Middle Class Community" and "Outsiders" (Chapters 13-15), pp. 330-393.
- Michelson, Ethan. 2008. "Justice from Above or Below? Popular Strategies for Resolving Disputes in Rural China." *China Quarterly* 193: 43-64.
- Zhang, Li. 2001. "The Floating Population as Subjects" and "Commercial Culture, Social Networks, and Migration Passages" (Chapters 1-2), pp. 23-68 in *Strangers in the City: Reconfigurations of Space, Power, and Social Networks within China's Floating Population*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Rithmire, Meg. 2013. "Land Politics and Local State Capacities: The Political Economy of Urban Change in China." *China Quarterly* 216: 872-895.

Week 14: Media, the Internet, and Civil Society

December 8 (Tuesday)

- Shirk, Susan L. 2007. "The Echo Chamber of Nationalism: Media and the Internet" (Chapter 4), pp. 79-104 in *China: Fragile Superpower*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Yang, Guobin, and Craig Calhoun. 2007. "Media, Civil Society, and the Rise of a Green Public Sphere in China." *China Information* 21: 211-236.
- Spires, Anthony J. 2011. "Contingent Symbiosis and Civil Society in an Authoritarian State: Understanding the Survival of China's Grassroots NGOs." *American Journal of Sociology* 117: 1-45.