Contemporary Chinese Society  
SOC 4439/6439  
Fall Semester, 2010  
(6:00-8:45 Mondays; BEH S 102)

Instructor:

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Office Hours:

11:00-12:00 Monday or by appointment  
428 BEH S

I am available for consultation during office hours or by appointment, or via email. E-mail will be responded within 48 hours. Please use Blackboard/Vista Mail to communicate with me via email. I will check Vista Mail often.

Course Description

This course reviews a succinct outline of the Chinese past and surveys the post-1978 Chinese society, focusing on social issues under the market reform and conditions of increasingly globalized economy. China’s transition to a market-oriented society has effected fundamental changes in the lives of its citizens. We will discuss a range of topics related to the contemporary Chinese society including but not limited to regional economic disparities, education and employment, gender inequality, internal migration, social justice, and human right issues.

The class is organized around assigned readings, films, lectures, and class discussion. Readings for the class are mostly from two books, supplemented with other scholarly works. Students are expected to have completed all required readings when they come to the lecture, and to participate actively in class discussions. We will also watch two sets of documentary videos. Evaluation will be based upon class participation, two exams, a research paper, and a research presentation.

The course does not assume any background in China studies.
**Course Objective**

The main purposes of this course are 1) to offer exposure to a broad overview of social issues in contemporary China, and 2) to familiarize students with available resources for learning about Chinese society.

**Blackboard/Vista**

Course syllabus is available on Blackboard/Vista. Additional course materials will be posted there.

**Required Readings**

*China, Adapting the Past, Confronting the Future* edited by Thomas Buoye, Kirk Denton, Bruce Dickson, Barry Naughton, and Martin Whyte, published by Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan 2002. (Referred as TB)

*Creating Wealth and Poverty in Postsocialist China* edited by Deborah Davis and Wang Feng, published by Stanford University Press 2009. (Referred as DW)

Copies of required journal article readings are posted on Blackboard/Vista.

**Exams**

There are two exams closely corresponding to the readings and films. The first exam is scheduled on **October 18 (Monday)**. The second exam is scheduled on **December 6 (Monday)**. Exam schedules are shown again in the course schedule below. Please make arrangements now to avoid schedule conflicts with exam time.

No make-up exams will be given except for emergency situations where written request with proof is required. Make-up exams will include tough essay questions. They are made to neutralize any advantage a student gains from extra study time. All make up exams are given at the testing center toward the end of the semester.

**Research Paper and Presentation**

You are also required to work on a research paper. As an undergraduate student, you can work alone or in a group of no more than four students for the paper. Working in a group would help you to get team work experience but it is your choice whether to join a group to work on this research paper. As a graduate student, you will need to work alone
on this paper. Topics of the research project should be related to contemporary Chinese society. It is recommended that you select a topic covered in this class but you can choose an alternative topic not covered in the readings, films or our discussions. You are welcome to talk with me regarding your research topic. The end product of the project is a research paper and a presentation. External research is necessary for the project. The research paper should be no more than eight pages (can be shorter) and will be due on December 13 (Monday). The research presentations will be scheduled on November 29 (Monday). Please submit a hard copy of your research paper to the sociology department office (BEH S 301) by 5pm on December 13 (Monday).

**Class Participation**

This class meets on every Monday except on holidays or during the fall break. Class participation is strongly encouraged. Attendance roll will be taken randomly throughout the semester. Questions and comments are always welcomed during lectures. Other in-class activities include in-class discussion, short in-class papers and quizzes.

Undesirable in-class behaviors such as chatting and reading newspapers will negatively affect your class participation mark. Routinely being tardy or leaving early without pre-approved reasons will also negatively affect the participation mark. Cell phones should be turn off in class.

Class participation is assessed according to your attendance and in-class behavior (20%), your contribution to in-class discussion (50%), and your performance on pop quizzes and other in-class activities (30%).

**Grading**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation:</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 1:</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 2:</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research paper:</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom presentation:</td>
<td>5%</td>
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Final letter grades will be guided by the following scale:

- A (93-100%)
- A- (90-92%)
- B+ (87-89%)
- B (83-86%)
- B- (80-82%)
- C+ (77-80%)
- C (73-77%)
- C- (70-73%)
- D+ (67-69%)
- D (63-66%)
- D- (60-62%)
- E (<60%)
Course Schedule

Week 1 (8/23). Class Introduction

Week 2 (8/30). Brief introduction of pre-1949 Chinese history (I)
Readings:
   2. TB: “The Uniting of China,” by Dru Gladney

Video Documentary: China: A Century of Revolution, Part I

Week 3 (9/6). Labor Day Holiday

Week 4 (9/13). Brief introduction of pre-1949 Chinese history (II)
Reading:
   1. TB: “History and China’s Revolution,” by John King Fairbank

Video Documentary: China: A Century of Revolution, Part 2

Week 5 (9/20). The Mao Era
Readings:

Video Documentary: The Mao Years, Part I

Week 6 (9/27). Tha Mao Era and the Reforms
Readings:

Video Documentary: The Mao Years, Part II

Week 7 (10/4). Exam 1

Week 8 (10/11). Fall Break
Week 9 (10/18). Politics and Social Control
Readings:
2. TB: “Human Rights in China,” by Andrew Nathan

Video documentary: *Born Under the Red Flag*, Part I

Week 10 (10/25). Politics and Social Control
Readings:
2. TB: “China since Tiananmen Square,” by Stanley Rosen

Video documentary: *Born Under the Red Flag*, Part II

Week 11 (11/1). Education and Employment (February 22, 24, 26)
Readings:
1. DW Chapters 11-12

Week 12 (11/8). Social Costs of the Reforms
Readings:
1. TB: “How Come You Aren’t Divorced Yet?” by Zhang Xinxin
3. TB: “Hey Coolie! – Local Migrant Labor,” by Daniel Wright

Week 13 (11/15). Creating Wealth and Poverty (March 1, 3, 5)
Readings:
1. DW: Chapters 6-9

Video documentary: *China From Inside*, Power and the People
Week 14 (11/22). Social Justice (March 29, 31)
Readings:
   1. DW: Chapters 10-14

Video documentary: *China From Inside*, Freedom and Justice

Week 15 (11/29). Course Wrap-up and Research Presentations

Week 16 (12/6). Exam 2

* Reading/Lecture schedule is subject to change

**AMERICAN WITH DISABILITY ACT (ADA)**

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.

All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

**ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

It is assumed that all work submitted for evaluation will be your own work. Plagiarism, cheating, misrepresenting one’s work, and falsification of information are serious offenses that warrant severe sanctions. Students should be familiar with the formal definitions of academic misconduct, as outlined in the University of Utah Student Code at [http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-10.html](http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-10.html).
Contemporary Chinese Society Research Paper

I. Topics

Your topic should be related to contemporary Chinese society. Possible topics are:

Rural-to-urban migration
Rural-urban inequalities
Gender inequalities in employment opportunities
The rising trends in family dissolution
Education and employment
Formal and informal social control

Additional material on the selected topics can be found in online databases such as Sociological Abstracts. Go to www.lib.utah.edu and find Sociological Abstracts under ‘Article Databases’ then search for published articles on the related topics. Prominent journals focused on include Journal of Asian Studies, China Quarterly, China Journal, or Modern China. Prominent sociological journals such as American Journal of Sociology, American Sociological Review, Social Forces, and International Migration Review also publish academic articles addressing social issues in China.

II. The Paper

A. The paper should be no more than eight pages in length (typed, double spaced, one side of the page).

B. It will have a minimum of ten references (no more than three of the required ten can be non-academic internet references).


D. Do not plagiarize

1. Any material where an author's words are used verbatim should be enclosed in quotation marks and the appropriate reference cited.

2. Any ideas that are taken from the works of others (books, periodicals, etc.) should be cited by using appropriate references.
III. You will need to work in a group of no more than four persons. The smallest group can be two persons.

IV. Research papers are due by 5pm on December 13 (Monday). Please submit your paper to the Sociology department office located at BEH S 301. Late papers are not accepted.

V. Presentations

Powerpoint presentations are required. Do not read your paper to the class. They are your classmates, be prepared to talk to them and tell them about the exciting things you have discovered from your research. Expect questions from the class. Group presentations will be graded based on both the instructor’s evaluation (60%) and peers’ evaluation (40%). The content (substantive and layout), organization, and rhetoric of presentation will all be considered when it is being evaluated.
Criteria for Grading the Research Paper

Research papers will be strictly graded based on the following criteria.

**Organization and Coherence (30%)**: Your research question should be clearly introduced in the very beginning. Discussions on why the question is important and worthy of research should follow the introduction of the problem. Next, you need to explain the research method you will use to do research on the problem. Then in the result section, you should present the evidence you find with regard to the research problem. The last section of the paper should consist of conclusions drawn from your own research. Overall, the paper should be coherently organized to present evidence and argument with regard to your research question.

**Literature review (20%)**: Literature review is essential to find previously existing evidence supportive of or against your hypotheses. You ought to have a critical review of the relevant literature. Discuss what they have said, what they have left unanswered, and what should be further explored in the future.

**Your personal opinions (20%)**: A good paper not only presents a good summary of the literature but also provides clearly argued views the authors hold with regard to the topic being researched. I will look for your own words discussing the problem and evaluating the evidence you are presenting. It would be a plus if you discuss policy implications of the research findings you presented.

**Writing (20%)**: Clear and coherent writing is essential for a good paper. Grammar, spelling, and rhetoric will all be considered.

**Format (10%)**: Formatting citations and bibliography consistently is important. All borrowed words should be cited and references should be listed alphabetically in the bibliography separately put in the end of the paper. No reference that is not cited in the text should appear in the bibliography and vice versa. At least ten references with no more than three online non-academic references are required for the paper. The text should be twelve points, double-spaced, and single-sided. The paper should be no more than eight pages. Page numbers should be inserted.