Chinese Society in Transition: Up Close and Personal

This course examines how China’s post-1979 transition toward a market economy affects people’s everyday lives. We will explore some of the most pressing issues Chinese citizens face today. How did Chinese hospitals evolve into dangerous grounds where patients violently attack their doctors? Why do Chinese women feel “left-over” despite China’s 34 million male-female gender imbalance? Why do we witness increasing public dissent and protest in China today despite the dramatic improvements in standard of living throughout the past 30 years? This course will explore some of the deeply rooted causes behind social phenomenon that may appear inexplicable to onlookers, and examine the causes and consequences of social inequality, social conflict, and social change in contemporary China. In particular, we will examine how rising forces of globalization, consumerism, and individualism in the post-socialist era shaped China’s sexual revolution, changing family structure, increasing rural-urban migration, education and healthcare reform, emerging civil society, growing internet culture and new media, booming entertainment industry, revival of religion, as well as people’s well-being/happiness. Moreover, we will look at China as not only a location where globalization takes effect, but also a site where new cultures, visions, and practices are being produced and making a significant impact on the rest of the world.

Student Learning Outcomes:

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology has specified six student learning outcomes (SLOs) that we want students to acquire before graduating. In this course, we focus on the following three:

- Articulate the complexity of contemporary socio-cultural phenomenon in their many dimensions (e.g. temporal, structural, spatial, and symbolic).

- Applying sociological theory to analyze socio-cultural phenomena.

- Engage the world by drawing upon your understanding of historical and contemporary socio-cultural phenomena.
Required Course Material

Five books are required for this course:

- Song, Geng and Derek Hird. 2014. *Men and Masculinities in Contemporary China.*

Additional reading is available electronically via the course Moodle. Always complete the assigned readings before class. Read the material closely, take effective notes, determine what is clear to you and what needs further clarification, and also consider how core ideas can be connected to other readings.

Course Requirements

Critical Reading Response

You will be responsible for posting a critical reading response and question to our discussion board on Moodle before each class. This requirement is designed to help you practice focusing and articulating your engagement with the text, as well as to develop critical questioning skills.

China in the News

This assignment asks you to conduct some research on a current event of your choice concerning contemporary Chinese society. Students are to form small groups and report their findings to the class through an interactive presentation. In addition, you should analyze how this issue has been shaped and affected by China's socio-economic transition. At the end of the presentation, you are to lead a brief discussion with the class and pose at least one interesting discussion question.

Final Paper

In the final paper, you will explore a topic of your choice, which you will develop in consultation with me. The paper will develop in stages.

Note: More details about each of these assignments will be provided in class.

Participation

To receive full credit for participation, please complete the assigned readings in a timely manner, contribute to in-class discussions by raising questions and comments, and listen carefully to others as they speak. The “default” participation grade is 5/15, so students who actively and productively contribute to the class will substantially increase their grades.
### Table 1: Summary of Course Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Requirement</th>
<th>Points Awarded</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Reading Response (Moodle)</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>China in the News (group assignment)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper (to be submitted in stages)</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>15</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Please note: No extensions will be provided unless written proof of illness or emergency is provided. Late critical response submissions are not accepted, while late paper/assignment submissions will incur a 3% deduction for each day late.

**The following grading scale will be used for the course:**

- A   94-100%
- A-  90-93%
- B+  87-89%
- B   84-86%
- B-  80-83%
- C+  77-79%
- C   74-76%
- C-  70-73%
- D+  67-69%
- D   60-66%
- F   below 60%

**Course website**

[https://moodle.carleton.edu/](https://moodle.carleton.edu/)

To log in: Use your Carleton username and password.

**Resources for Students**

**Writing Center**

Don’t forget to take advantage of the Writing Center! Located in 4th Libe, the Writing Center has peer writing consultants who can work with you during any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to final proofreading! [http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/asc/writingcenter/](http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/asc/writingcenter/)

If you are a second language writer and believe you might benefit from working individually with a writing consultant, email Renata Fitzpatrick, the Multilingual Writing Coordinator, call her at x5998, or stop by her office in 420D 4th Libe.

**Speakeasy for your Presentation**

To hone your presentation skills, make an appointment with the coaches from the Speakeasy to help you with your presentation planning and delivery! [http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/asc/speakeasy/](http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/asc/speakeasy/)
Accommodations for students with disabilities
Carleton College is committed to providing accommodations to students with disabilities. Please contact the Coordinator of Disability Services, Andy Christensen, at 222-4464 or anchrist@carleton.edu.

The Assistive Technology program brings together academic and technological resources to complement student classroom and computing needs, particularly in support of students with physical or learning disabilities. Accessibility features include text-to-speech (Kurzweil) software, speech-to-text (Dragon) software, and audio recording Smartpens. For more information, contact aztechs@carleton.edu or visit go.carleton.edu/aztech.

Academic Integrity
Please familiarize yourself with Carleton’s academic integrity policy: http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/doc/integrity

- Cheating (e.g. copying during an exam; using unauthorized aids; altering a graded exam and submitting it for a re-grade) will not be tolerated!
- You are welcome to collaborate while studying, but please complete all written assignments by yourself (group projects are the exception)!
- When writing, avoid plagiarism by properly citing any external source material used for your words, ideas, or concepts!

Course Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Chinese society: historical overview</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/28</td>
<td>Welcome and Introductions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/30</td>
<td>Readings Due:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/1</td>
<td>In Class: Watch To Live [Professor out of town]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>Persons</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>In Class: Watch To Live</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/6</td>
<td>Readings Due:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yang, Martin. A Chinese Village: Taitou, Shantung Province. (Moodle, p.157-172)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blum, Susan. Lies that Bind. (Moodle, p.25-60)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4/8 
Readings Due:
- Sheridan, Mary. *The Emulation of Heroes*. (Moodle, p.47-72)
- Fong, Vanessa. *Only Hope*. (Moodle, p.31-68)

**Week 3**  
**Gender & Family**

4/11 
Readings Due:

4/13 
Readings Due:

4/15 
Readings Due:

➢ Paper topic due (submit in class)

**Week 4**  
**Gender & Family (continued)**

4/18 
Readings Due:

4/20 
Readings Due:

4/22 
Readings Due:

**Week 5**  
**Gender & Family (continued)**

4/25 
Readings Due:
- Song and Hird. *Men and Masculinities*. p.55-78

4/27 
Readings Due:
- Song and Hird. *Men and Masculinities*. p.79-119

4/29 
Readings Due:
Week 6  Gender & Family (continued); Rural to Urban Migration

5/2  Mid-term break

5/4  Readings Due:
    Song and Hird. *Men and Masculinities*. p.211-253

5/6  Readings Due:
    Chang, Leslie. *Factory Girls*. p.3-43

Week 7  Rural to Urban Migration

5/9  Readings Due:

5/11  Readings Due:

5/13  Readings Due:

➢ Paper Draft 1 due (4 pgs + outline; submit in class)

Week 8  Rural to Urban Migration (continued); Restless China

5/16  Readings Due:

5/18  Readings Due:
    Zhan, Mei. "Human oriented? Angels and monsters in China's health care reform" (Moodle)

5/20  Readings Due:
    Osnos, Evan. *Age of Ambition*. p.50-75

Week 9  Restless China

5/23  Readings Due:
    Osnos, Evan. *Age of Ambition*. p.76-113

5/25  Readings Due:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 5/27 | Readings Due:  
Osnos, Evan. *Age of Ambition*. p.277-318 |
| **Week 10** | **Restless China (continued)** |
| 6/1  | Paper Presentations |
| 6/3  | Lessons Learned about Chinese Society |