

SOC 356 Sociology of China (Chinese Society and Culture)

Spring 2018

Tuesday/Thursday, 12:00-1:15pm
Moore 203

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Office Hours: Tuesday 2-3pm or by appointment

Course Description

This course provides an overview of contemporary Chinese society since the founding of People's Republic of China in 1949. We start with the legacy of traditional Chinese social order, then we explore a variety of social issues China currently faces, including economic development, political reform, migration, sexuality, education, environment, popular culture etc. We will learn to analyze these issues primarily from sociological perspectives, but for certain topics we will also incorporate and apply insights from other disciplines such as anthropology, political science and history.

Student Learning Objectives

In this course, students will: 1) develop familiarity with and deeper interest in the social structure and culture of contemporary Chinese society, so students can further explore China-related academic works and practical opportunities in the future; 2) develop awareness of the complexity in the social issues of China and capacity to use diverse perspectives in understanding these issues; 3) build confidence and acquire tool-kits so students can challenge prevailing and stereotypical characterization about Chinese society and culture; 4) learn to appreciate and apply sociological insights in understanding social structure and processes in general and Chinese society in particular.

We will work together and employ various means to accomplish these goals. Typically, each week's class starts with rich personal stories, followed by guided discussions, lectures and readings with insightful perspectives. During a weekly group activity session, students will discuss, present and debate on important topics after reading relevant cases and/or watching documentaries.

Required Texts

Chang, Leslie. 2009. *Factory Girls: From Village to City in a Changing China*. New York: Spiegel & Grau

Hessler, Peter. 2007. *Oracle Bones: A Journey Through Time in China*. Harper Perennial

Jacka, Tamra, Andrew Kipnis and Sally Sargeson. 2013. *Contemporary China: Society and Social Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

These three books are required and can be purchased through UH Bookstore or online. All other readings will be available on Laulima. Readings with * are optional.

Course Requirements and Grading

There are three course requirements: two short essays, a final essay and class participation. Each of the two short take-home essays (2-4 double-spaced pages) will be answering questions related to a particular social issue, using multiple perspectives we learn in class. For the final essay (4-8 double-spaced pages), students have two choices: analyzing a case provided by the instructor or writing an analytical paper. If a student chooses the latter, he/she needs to discuss with the instructor about the topic and structure. Class participation is crucial to both individual and group success of the course. Regular attendance is expected.

The final grading will be determined by the two short essays (each 25%), the final essay (30%) and class participation (20%). Late papers are not accepted.

Course Schedule

Week 1

Introduction

Jan 9 Class Overview: Introduction and Syllabus

Jan 11 Introducing China

Contemporary China, "Introduction", pp. 6-14

Week 2

From Traditional to Contemporary China

Jan 16 From Traditional to Modern—From a Family's Perspective

Factory Girls, "The Stele with No Name", pp. 120-155

* Fei, Xiaotong, *From the Soil* (excerpts)

Jan 18 From Traditional to Contemporary China

Factory Girls, "The Stele with No Name", pp. 156-170

Contemporary China, "China From Late-Imperial to Post-Mao Periods", pp. 14-23

Week 3

From Village to City: Migration and Urbanization

Jan 23 Migration and Urbanization: Individuals' Perspectives

Factory Girls, "Going Out/The City", pp. 1-31

Jan 25 Migration and Urbanization: The Social Processes

Contemporary China, “Hukou” and “Migration”, pp. 66-80

Week 4

Work, Labor and Jobs

Jan 30 Working in a Factory

Factory Girls, “The Talent Market”, pp. 85-97

Feb 1 Work, Labor and Jobs in China

Contemporary China, “Work”, pp. 105-123

Week 5

Dating, Sex and Marriage

Feb 6 Speed Dating with Chinese Characteristics

Factory Girls, “Eight-Minute Date”, pp. 206-227

Feb 8 Sex and Marriage

Contemporary China, “Marriage, Intimacy and Sex”, pp. 47-61

#First Essay Question Handed Out

Week 6

Education as a Social Process

Feb 13 Learning While Doing

Factory Girls, “Square and Round”, pp. 171-194

Feb 15 Education as a Social Process

Contemporary China, “Education and the Cultivation of Citizens”, pp. 161-176

#First Essay Due

Week 7

Politics and Its Social Foundations

Feb 20 Nationalism and Social Movement

Oracle Bones, “The Middleman”, pp. 1-22

Feb 22 Top-down and Bottom-Up: Political Processes

Contemporary China, “Collective Actions”, pp. 257-270

* Yu, Hua, “Leaders”, in *China In Ten Words*, pp. 15-35

Week 8

Ethnic Relations

Feb 27 Ethnic Relations

Oracle Bones, “The Middleman”, pp. 22-30

Mar 1 Ethnic Relations Continued

Contemporary China, “Ethnicity”, pp. 145-160

Week 9

Economic Development and Inequality

Mar 6 Economic Development: Top-down and Bottom-up

Yu, Hua, "Revolutions", in *China In Ten Words*, pp. 113-140

Mar 8 Inequality and Stratification: Who are the Winners and Losers?

Contemporary China, "Social Class and Stratification", pp. 199-215

#Second Essay Question Handed Out

Week 10

Environment and Society

Mar 13 Pollution (and Sports) as Politics

Oracle Bones, "The Games", pp. 259-274

Mar 15 Environment vs. Development: A Debate

#Second Essay Due

Week 11

Religion

Mar 20 Religion and Religious Movement

Oracle Bones, "Hollywood", pp. 123-125

Contemporary China, "Religion", pp. 127-143

Mar 22 Religious Movement: Current Debates

Financial Times. 2014. "The Rise of Christianity in China."

*Sun, Yanfei. 2017. "The Rise of Protestantism in Post-Mao China: State and Religion in Historical Perspectives". *American Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 122, No. 6

Week 12

Spring Recess, No Class

Week 13

Culture and Media I

Apr 3 Media and Censorship

Oracle Bones, "Wonton Western", pp. 335-351

Apr 5 New Media and Internet

Yang, Guobin, 2013. "Contesting Food Safety in the Chinese Media: Between Hegemony and Counter-Hegemony". *The China Quarterly*. Vol. 214. pp. 337-355

Week 14

Culture and Media II

Apr 10 Youth and Culture

Contemporary China, "Modernity, Youth Identities and Popular Culture", pp. 179-198

Apr 12 Readings Meet Reality
Analyzing Two Pieces of Popular Culture

Week 15
China Goes Global

Apr 17 China's Global Impact I
Shambaugh, David. "Introduction". In *China Goes Global: The Partial Power*.
Oxford University Press. pp. 1-12

Apr 19 China's Global Impact II
Hung, Ho-fung. 2016. "Introduction." In *The China Boom*. Columbia University
Press. pp. 1-14

Week 16
Presentation and Review

Apr 24 Students' Presentation

Apr 26 Students' Presentation and Class Wrap-Up
Final Essay Question is Handed Out

May 10 Final Essay Due

Kokua Statement

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability is invited to contact me privately. I would be happy to work with you, and the KOKUA Program (Office for Students with Disabilities) to ensure reasonable accommodations in my course. KOKUA can be reached at (808) 956-7511 or (808) 956-7612 (voice/text) in room 013 of the Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services.

Plagiarism

The following definition of plagiarism comes from the UH-Manoa Student Conduct Code: *Plagiarism includes but is not limited to submitting, in fulfillment of an academic requirement, any work that has been copied in whole or in part from another individual's work without attributing that borrowed portion to the individual; neglecting to identify as a quotation another's idea and particular phrasing that was not assimilated into the student's language and style or paraphrasing a passage so that the reader is misled as to the source; submitting the same written or oral or artistic material in more than one course without obtaining authorization from the instructors involved; or "drylabbing," which includes obtaining and using experimental data and laboratory write-ups from other sections of a course or from previous terms.*

University of Hawaii at Manoa Student Conduct Code (1992), p. 6