

Contemporary Chinese Society

Season, Year

Day, Time

Classroom

Dr. Lefeng Lin

Email

Office:

Office hours: Day Time, or by appointment

Overview

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. 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 political, economic, and social changes in various aspects of contemporary Chinese society, including the economy, law, politics, family, civil society, environment, and social struggles.

Learning Objectives:

- (1) Students will have a broad knowledge of contemporary Chinese Society.
- (2) Students will understand the processes of social and economic development, the forces that make this happen, and the problems facing Chinese society.
- (3) Students will apply the knowledge to explain and analyze social and economic issues.

Required Readings

There is no textbook for this course. The assigned readings will be posted on (Canvas). Hard copies of the articles in the reader will be available on reserve in the (Library). I expect you to bring the assigned readings with you to lecture (or discussion section) in order to facilitate discussion.

Course Requirements:

Attendance and Participation (10%)

Three Exams (90%)

The exams of the course consist of an in-class mid-term exam, a take-home mid-term exam, and a take-home final exam. Out of a concern for fairness to all students, there will be no makeup exam except in the cases of extreme illness, family emergency, and arranged special accommodation. Please mark your calendar with the exam times so that you can ensure your participation.

- The in-class mid-term exam is scheduled on the week 4 (30%).
- The take-home mid-term exam is scheduled in the week 9 (30%).
- The take-home final exam is scheduled in the week 14 (30%).
- All take-home exams are submitted via (Canvas and Turnitin)

Honors Credit:

If you are eligible to receive honors credit for (class number), it is your responsibility to make the appropriate course registration and to contact Professor Lin. In order to receive honors credit, you must write an analytical article on a chose topic, following the guidelines for (university specific or instructor-made). For grading purposes, your grade on the proposal will be averaged with that of your group projects.

Accommodations: Please send the instructor an email by the end of the second week of the course if you are eligible for special arrangements or accommodations for testing, assignments, or other aspects of the course. This may be the case if English is your second language, you have a travel schedule from student athletics, or you experience a physical or psychological condition that makes it difficult for you to complete assignments without some modification of those tasks. Accommodations are provided for students who qualify for disability services through the (a university institution). Their website has detailed instructions about how to qualify: <http://www/> Provide a copy of your accommodations request to the instructor.

If you wish to request a scheduling accommodation for religious observances, send an email by the end of the second week of the course stating the specific date(s) for which you request accommodation; campus policy requires that religious observances be accommodated if you make a timely request early in the term. See the university's web page for details: <http://www/>

Academic Integrity: As with all courses at the (university), you are expected to follow the University's rules and regulations pertaining to academic honesty and integrity. The standards are outlined by (Office of) at (Website). According to (rule number), academic misconduct is defined as:

For a complete description of behaviors that violate the University's standards as well as the disciplinary penalties and procedures, please see (website). If you have questions about the rules for any of the assignments, please ask the instructor.

Notice of grievance and appeal rights (if there is one)

Schedule of Classes (Two lectures for each week)

Week 1: Foundation of Chinese Society

- Lecture 1: Traditional Social Fabric
Fie Xiaotong. 1992. *From the Soil*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Lecture 2: Traditional Institutions
Qu Tongzu. 1961. *Law and Society in Traditional China*. Paris: Mouron. (Chapter TBA)

Week 2: Rise of Communism

- Lecture 1: Manage Society and Workplace
Cheng Tiejun and Mar Selden. 1994. "The Origins and Social Consequences of China's Hukou System." *China Quarterly* 139: 644-68.
Walder, Andrew. 1983. "Organized Dependency and Culture of Authority in Chinese Industry." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 43:51-76.
- Lecture 2: "Class Struggle" and Political Mobilization
Gao Hua. 2018. *How the Red Sun Rose: The Origin and Development of the Yan'an Rectification Movement 1935-1945*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press. (Chapter TBA).
Anita Chan, Richard Madsen, and Jonathan Unger. 2009. *Chen Village: Revolution to Globalization (Second Edition)*. Berkeley: University of California Press. (Chapter TBA)

Week 3: Communist Society in Transition

- Lecture 1: Market Transition
Justin Yifu Lin. 1992. "Rural Reforms and Agricultural Growth in China." *American Economic Review* 82(1): 34-51
Andrew Walder. 1989. "Factory and Managers in the Era of Reform." *China Quarterly* 118: 242-64.

- Lecture 2: Social Upheaval
Dingxin Zhao. 2001. *The Power of Tiananmen: State-Society Relations and the 1989 Beijing Student Movement*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 6.

Week 4: Movie Screening and Exam 1

- Lecture 1: Movie Screening
Watch *Chung Kuo, Cina* (original title). 1972. Michelangelo Antonioni's documentary on the lives of working-class Chinese people.
- Lecture 2: Exam 1
In-class exam

Week 5: Economic Restructuring

- Lecture 1: Fiscal Reform and Restructuring State-Owned Enterprises
Jae Ho Chung. 1994. "Beijing Confronting the Provinces: the 1994 Tax-Sharing Reform and its Implications for Central-Provincial Relations in China." *China Information* 9(2-3): 1-23.
Edward Steinfeld. 1998. *Forging Reform in China: The Fate of State-Owned Industry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Chapter TBA)
- Lecture 2: Foreign Investment and Private Business
Yasheng Huang. 2003. *Selling China: Foreign Direct Investment During the Reform Era*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Chapter TBA)
Yasheng Huang. 2008. *Capitalism with Chinese Characteristics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Chapter 2)

Week 6: The Rise of Economic Power

- Lecture 1: Domestic Economy
Xiaoshuo Hou. 2014. *Community Capitalism in China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Chapter TBA)
An article from *The Economist* China's [China's Tech Trailblazers](#)
New York Time Video [How China is Changing Your Internet](#)
- Lecture 2: Global Economic Power
Ching Kwan Lee. 2018. *The Specter of Global China: Politics, Labor, and Foreign Investment in Africa*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Chapter TBA)
[One Belt One Road - Visualizing China's Most Ambitious Megaproject](#)

Week 7: Legal Reform and Practice of Law

- Lecture 1: Legal Reform
Benjamin Liebman. 2007. "China's Courts: Restricted Reform." *China Quarterly* 191: 620-38.
Sida Liu. 2011. "Lawyers, State Officials, and Significant Others: Symbiotic Exchange in the Chinese Legal Services Market." *China Quarterly* 206: 276-293.
- Lecture 2: Practice of Law
Carl Minzner. 2011. "China's Turn against Law." *American Journal of Comparative Law* 59: 935-84.
Rachel Stern 2011. "From Dispute to Decision: Suing Polluters in China." *China Quarterly* 206: 294-312.
Sida Liu and Terence Halliday. 2018. "The Ecology of Activism: Spatial Dynamics of Lawyer Mobilization in an Authoritarian Regime." (Forthcoming)

Week 8: Reconfiguring Bureaucracy and Governance

- Reconfiguring Bureaucracy
Lieberthal, Kenneth. 2004. *Governing China: From Revolution through Reform* (2nd edition). New York: W.W. Norton. (Chapter 6 and 7)
- Lecture 2: Reconfiguring Governance
Elizabeth Perry and Sebastian Heilmann. 2011. "Embracing Uncertainty: Guerrilla Policy Style and Adaptive Governance in China." In *Mao's Invisible Hand: The Political Foundations of Adaptive Governance in China* (Perry and Heilmann, eds). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
Ching Kwan Lee. 2013. "The Power of Instability: Unraveling the Microfoundation of Bargained Authoritarianism." *American Journal of Sociology* 118(6): 1475-1508.

Week 9: Movie Screening and Exam 2

- Lecture 1: Movie Screening
Watch *Plastic China*. 2016. Wang Jiuliang's documentary on global trade of plastic waste, environment, rural economy
- Lecture 2: Exam 2
Take-home exam

Week 10: Migration and Urbanization

- Lecture 1: Migration

Zhang, Li. 2001. *Strangers in the City: Reconfigurations of Space, Power, and Social Networks within China's Floating Population*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. (Chapters 1 and 2)

Recommend *Last Train Home*. 2010. Fan Lixin's Documentary on Rural-urban migration, labor, left-behind children

- Lecture 2: Urbanization

George Lin and Fangxin Yi. 2011. "Urbanization of Capital or Capitalization on Urban Land? Land Development and Local Public Finance in Urbanizing China." *Urban Geography* 32(1): 50-79.

Rithmire, Meg. 2013. "Land Politics and Local State Capacities: The Political Economy of Urban Change in China." *China Quarterly* 216: 872-895

An Article from *The Guardian* [Hundreds of Thousands Displaced as Shenzhen "Upgrades" its Urban Villages](#)

Week 11: Private Sphere

- Lecture 1: Family and Romance

Yunxiang Yan. 2003. *Private Life under Socialism: Love, Intimacy, and Family Change in a Chinese Village, 1949-1999*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. (Chapter TBA)

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

- Lecture 2: One-Child Policy

Vanessa Fong. 2004. *Only Hope: Coming of Age under China's One-Child Policy*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. (Chapter TBA)

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

Chris Buckley. 2015. "China Ends One-Child Policy, Allowing Families Two Children." *New York Times* (October 29).

Week 12: Civil Society

- Lecture 1: Social Organizations

Timothy Hildebrandt. 2013. *Social Organizations and the Authoritarian State in China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Introduction.

Anthony Spires. 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.

- Lecture 2: Movie Screening

Watch *Petition*. 2009. Liang Zhao's Documentary on govt's systemic oppression and persecution towards ordinary folk who petition the government.

Week 13: Popular Contention

- Lecture 1: Peasant and Worker
Kevin O'Brien and Li Lianjiang. 2006. *Rightful Resistance in Rural China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Chapter TBA)
Ching Kwan Lee. 2007. *Against the Law: Labor Protests in China's Rustbelt and Sunbelt*. Berkeley: University of California Press: 69-121. (Chapter 5)
- Lecture 2: Netizen, Environmentalist, and Feminist
Guobin Yang. 2009. *The Power of the Internet in China: Citizen Activism Online*. New York: Columbia University Press. (Chapter TBA)
Jinyun Dai and Anthony Spires. 2018. "Advocacy in an Authoritarian State: How Grassroots Environmental NGOs Influence Local Governments in China." *The China Journal* 79(1): 62-83
Diana Fu. 2017. "[Why is Beijing afraid of Chinese feminists?](#)" *The Washington Post*.

Week 14: Movie Screening and Exam 3

- Lecture 1: Movie Screening
Watch *The Chinese Mayor*. 2014. Zhou Hao's Documentary on the urban development and Displacement – no reading
- Lecture 2: Exam 3
Take-home exam