

SOC 389 - 001 Spec. Tops in Sociology
Contemporary Chinese Society and Culture
Fall 2018

Bin Xu

Assistant Professor

Department of Sociology

Email: bin.xu@emory.edu

Office: 211 Tarbutton Hall

Office Hours: 2:30PM-3:45PM Monday and Wednesday (by appointment)

The instructor reserves the right to modify, change, reschedule any parts of the lecture, assignments etc.

This course aims to gain a deeper and broader understanding of the structures and processes that constitute the contemporary Chinese society and culture. It starts with a review of the Chinese society in the period of 1949-1976. The main part of the course introduces students to many aspects of Chinese social life since 1976, including social stratification, communities, gender, cultural objects and industry, interpersonal relations, civil society, collective memory, etc.

The major pedagogical methods include lecturing, in-class discussion, and film screening. The instructor's lectures provide a concise outline of the major points of the readings, introduce background for every topic, and discuss some updates on the topic. The lectures will NOT repeat everything in the readings, but students are expected to read the materials carefully and come to class with thoughts and questions. There will be discussion/film screening sections, led by the instructor and/or teaching assistant, for students to engage in constructive discussions and deepen understanding of the materials. Reading materials for discussion sections are mostly accessible and intriguing, including novels, short stories, poems, and some readable academic studies. The readings are often combined with in-class film screening, which is followed by a discussion. For example, the first discussion section, we read Yu Hua's novel *To Live* (huozhe) and bring our thoughts to the class and combine them with an in-class documentary showing and discussion (*China: A Century of Revolution*).

My Teaching Philosophy

In addition to conventional expectations on participation, punctuality, diligence, and so on, there is one principle I want to emphasize: **Reading is essential to education**. If you intend to take this class by playing some "non-reading tricks" (attending class, hearing lecture and other students' discussions, and drawing what you hear to say a few random words to "participate"), this course is not for you. If you are busy in extra-curricular activities in order to put things on your resume but pay significantly less attention to class reading, please read the following article by Professor Bill Hurst at Northwestern and rethink about what is important for you: "End the Extracurricular Arms Race" (<http://goo.gl/KBPzvx>).

Textbook and Readings

We use the following book as our major textbook:

(W&C) Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom & Maura Elizabeth Cunningham. 2018. *China in the 21st Century: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford University Press.

The book can be purchased at Emory campus bookstore or from amazon.com.

Journal articles can be downloaded from the library's website.

Other readings (scanned book chapters) will be distributed via Canvas.

Requirements

Attendance

Attendance is required. The instructor/TA will take attendance in the beginning/end of each class. Students who participate in University-sanctioned events, or have illness, or have emergency must inform the instructor in advance with appropriate verification documents. They also must make up any work they missed. Students who miss two (2) classes without reasons will only get 5 (out of 10) for attendance credit. Students who miss four (4) classes will not get any attendance credit.

5 Response Pieces for Discussion

Prior to each discussion section, please post your response piece to Canvas. Each piece should be one or two paragraphs long (no more than 400 words) outlining the most interesting things you find in the readings, explaining why you are interested, and raising questions that you think are worth discussing in class. All pieces should be posted by **6pm on the day prior to class** to allow class members to read and discussion leaders to compile.

Quizzes

There will be **four (4) in-class, open-book** quizzes based on readings. Each quiz consists of 5 multiple-choice questions.

Midterm

There will be a **take-home** midterm, which consists of two essay questions.

China Talks Attendance and Reflection Papers

In the fall term, there will be a few China-related talks on campus, given by scholars at Emory and from outside. Each student is required to attend **TWO** talks and write brief reflection papers, which summarizes the talk and discuss your response. Here are some talks (among others) that have been scheduled:

1. September 14 by Bin Xu (Emory)
2. September 24 & 25 Deborah Davis (Yale)
3. October 23 Ching Kwan Lee (UCLA)

Final Paper

You are expected to write a final paper which addresses one of the topics about contemporary Chinese society and culture. The topic should be more specific than the chapter topics in Contemporary China. For example, "China's education" is not proper (think about

whether you can finish writing a paper with this title in three weeks). A paper on “education of migrant workers’ children” will be great.

The paper is expected to be something like a “literature review.” This means that you do NOT do original research but summarize and review what scholars and intellectuals already know about the topic. What is their consensus on the topic? What are the major approaches? What are the policy implications of their findings? What is your opinion on their ideas? What research should be done in the future?

Some guidelines can be found in the following link:

<http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/ReviewofLiterature.html>

Another way to think about the genre of this paper is to imagine you are a journalist sent by the *New York Times* or *The New Yorker* to China. You find a social phenomenon particularly important and shocking—for example, the high suicide rate among migrant workers’ children who go to schools in the cities where their parents work instead of in their hometowns—and decide to write an in-depth article or a long investigative report on it. Before writing about this particular topic, you feel you need to do a systematic survey on what scholars have said about the migrant workers’ children’s schools. With this survey, you can identify possible causes of the suicide rate, find things to investigate, and contact the right scholars to interview with. The final paper is something similar to this survey (not the report). So, this genre has some practical uses for your future career.

Working Process of the Final Paper (Total 35%)

- 1) Initial topic and research question: Students come up with an interested topic and a research question.
- 2) Discussion and feedback: In-class discussion of the topic and receive feedback from the instructor and fellow students.
- 3) Bibliography (5%): Draw a bibliography with major works on the topic.
- 4) Presentations (5%): Students present their work-in-progress, which includes an annotated outline of claims, arguments and some analysis of evidence. Receive further feedback from the class.
- 5) Individual consultation: On a voluntary basis, students sign up with the instructor to discuss their specific concerns about the paper.
- 6) Final research paper (25%): final paper is due by the end of the term.

Requirements about the paper:

1. The length should be **at least 10 double-spaced pages**.
2. Please follow **Chicago Style**: (author-date version, http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html). You are encouraged to use any bibliographical software.
3. The deadline of the final paper: **TBA**
4. Grading criteria (raw score 25):
 - 1) 22.5: paper that earns a 22.5 (A) is truly exceptional. It is grammatically flawless; there are no spelling errors. There is a thesis paragraph that provides a road map for the rest of the paper, which ends with a meaningful conclusion. Statements are supported by evidence, which is judiciously assembled to make a case. The writing is clear and concise; the analysis is sophisticated and thoughtful. The argument is logically developed and well organized. Complexities are recognized and addressed. Supporting sources are smoothly

integrated into the body of the text. There is mature sentence variety and paragraph development.

- 2) 20: papers represent strong, solid work. They are well organized, comprehensive, and clear, with few grammatical errors. Complexities are recognized; supporting evidence is provided. Supporting work is incorporated, but not always paraphrased. There may be an over-reliance on quotes and secondary resources. There is adequate sentence variety and paragraph development.
- 3) 15-17.5 papers meet the minimum requirements, low Cs barely do. They are often poorly organized, which prevents a clear argument. They can fail to acknowledge more than one approach and do not harness all the available evidence. They have many grammatical and spelling errors and provide only passing reference to supporting work. They are weakened by a lack of clear purpose, thesis or conclusion. There are organizational and argumentative weaknesses.
- 4) Less than 15 papers fail to make an argument, or do so in such a confusing, disorganized way that the meaning is lost on the readers. They are replete with errors. The arguments provided are often contradictory. There is usually only superficial discussion of the issues.
- 5) Not following the **Chicago Style**: -1
- 6) Not proofread: a significant number of grammatical and spelling errors: -1

Academic Integrity

Students who are admitted to Emory College of Arts and Sciences agree to abide by the provisions of the Honor Code: <http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policies-regulations/honor-code.html>

Access and Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and have anticipated barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, or presume having a disability (e.g. mental health, attention, learning, vision, hearing, physical or systemic), and are in need of accommodations for this semester, we encourage you to contact the Office of Access, Disability Services, and Resources (ADSR) to learn more about the registration process and steps for requesting accommodations. If you are a student that is currently registered with ADSR and have not received a copy of your accommodation notification letter within the first week of class, please notify ADSR immediately. Students who have accommodations in place are encouraged to coordinate sometime with your professor, during the first week of the semester, to communicate your specific needs for the course as it relates to your approved accommodations. All discussions with ADSR and faculty concerning the nature of your disability remain confidential. For additional information regarding ADSR, please visit the website: equity.emory.edu/access.

Peer Tutoring Writing Support

Tutors in the Emory Writing Center and the ESL Program are available to support Emory College students as they work on any type of writing assignment, at any stage of the composing process. Tutors can assist with a range of projects, from traditional papers and presentations to websites and other multimedia projects. Writing Center and ESL tutors take a similar approach as they work with students on concerns including idea development, structure, use of sources, grammar, and word choice. They do not proofread for students. Instead, they discuss strategies and resources students can use as they write, revise, and edit their own work. Students who are

currently enrolled in an ESL-supported section of English 101, English 123, or English 221 or who plan to take one of those courses next semester should see ESL tutors, as they are specifically trained to support students in ESL Program courses. To learn more about ESL tutoring or to make an appointment, go to tinyurl.com/eslemory. All other students in the college should see Writing Center tutors who are trained to work with this broader population. Learn more and make an appointment at writingcenter.emory.edu. Please review tutoring policies before your visit.

Grades

Requirements	Grades
Attendance	10
Response Pieces	5 (1 each)
Quizzes	20 (5 each)
Midterm	20
China Talks	10 (5 each)
Final Paper	35
Total	100

Reading and Class Schedule

Reading and Class Schedule

#	Date	Topic	Reading	Activities
1	August 29	Introduction	No	Lecture and Discussion
2	September 5	Historical Overview 1949-1966 I	W&S P.23-65	
3	September 10	Historical Overview 1949-1966 II	Yu Hua. <i>To Live</i> (a novel) (excerpts)	Documentary showing and discussion. <i>China: A Century of Revolution</i>
4	September 12	The Cultural Revolution I	Richard Kraus. <i>The Cultural Revolution: A Very Short Introduction</i> . (Chapters 1 & 2)	<i>China: A Century of Revolution</i>
5	September 17	The Cultural Revolution II	Reading: <i>Born Red</i> (a memoir by Gao Yuan) (Online access, Emory Library website) Skip the following chapters: The thirty-six stratagem Hidden Messages Ox Ghosts and Snake Spirits Going to See the Great helmsman Uncommon Laughter Class Brothers Take Revenge The Radiance of the Setting Sun	Response #1 (on Born Red) due 6pm the day before class Documentary showing and discussion. <i>Morning Sun</i> .
6	September 19	Coming to Terms with the Maoist Legacies	Excerpts from <i>Mao's Harvest</i> Introduction by Siu and Stern Pan Xiao's <i>Why is Life's Road Getting Narrower and Narrower?</i> Gu Gong. <i>The Two Generations</i> . Two poems. Gu Cheng. <i>A Generation</i> . Bei Dao. <i>Reply</i>	
7	September 24	New Era: 1977-1989 (I): <i>The Road to Tiananmen</i>	W&S. pp.75-96	

8	September 26	New Era: 1977-1989 (II): Remembering and Forgetting	Louisa Lim, <i>The People's Republic of Amnesia</i> (Chapters 4 and 5, "Student" and "Mother")	Response #2 (on <i>The People's Republic of Amnesia</i>) due 6pm the day before class Documentary and Discussion: <i>The Tank Man</i>
9	October 1	State-Society Relations	W&S. pp.96-119	
10	October 3	Personal Connections (<i>guanxi</i>)	Mayfair Yang. <i>Gifts, Favors, and Banquets</i> . (Chapter 3)	
11	October 10	Urban Communities	Luigi Tomba. <i>The Government Next Door</i> . (excerpts; online access)	
12	October 15.	Social Class and Stratification (I): Working Class and Gender	Amy Hanser. <i>Service Encounter</i> . (Introduction, Chapter 5)	Response #3 (on <i>Service Encounter</i>) due 6pm the day before class
13	October 17.	Social Class and Stratification (II): the Middle Class	Li Zhang. <i>Chinese Middle Class</i> . (Introduction, Chapter 4)	
14	October 22.	Global China	Ching Kwan Lee. <i>The Specter of Global China</i> . (excerpts)	
15	October 24.	Social Class and Stratification (III): the Rich	Osburg. <i>Anxious Wealth</i> (Online access, Introduction and Chapter 1)	
16	October 29.	Gender, Class, and Service Work	Eileen Otis. <i>Markets and Bodies: Women, Service Work, and the Making of Inequality in China</i> (excerpts)	Final Paper Project: Initial topic and research question posted on Canvas
17	October 31.	The Floating Population: Migrant Workers	Li Zhang. <i>Strangers in the City: Reconfigurations of Space, Power, and Social Networks within China's Floating Population</i> (excerpts)	Response #4 (on <i>Strangers in the City</i>) due 6pm the day before class
18	November 5.	Research Paper Project/Librarian's visit. We meet in Room 314, Library	No	1. Final Paper Project: Discussion and feedback: In-class discussion of the topic and receive feedback from the instructor and fellow students. 2. Discussion with the librarian on looking for primary and secondary sources
19	November 7.	Cultural Production: Movies	Kokas. <i>Hollywood Made in China</i> . (Excerpts)	
20	November 12.	Cultural Production: Popular Music	Andrew Jones. <i>Like a Knife: Ideology and Genre in Contemporary Chinese Popular Music</i> . (Introduction, Chapters 4 & 5)	Music listening/video screening: Cui Jian
21	November 14.	Civil Society and Civic Engagement I	Spires, Anthony J. 2011. "Contingent Symbiosis and Civil Society in an Authoritarian State: Understanding the Survival of China's Grassroots NGOs." <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> 117 (1):1-45.	Final paper project: Individual consultation (from this week to the end of class)
22	November 19.	Civil Society and Civic Engagement II	Bin Xu. <i>The Politics of Compassion</i> . (Excerpts)	1. Final Paper Project: Bibliography due 2. Film screening: <i>China's Unnatural Disaster</i>
23	November 26.	Ethnic Relations	Tom Cliff. <i>Oil and Water: Being Han in Xinjiang</i> . (Excerpts)	Response #5 (on <i>Oil and Water</i>) due 6pm the day before class
24	November 28.	Transnational Life and the Younger Generation	Vanessa Fong. <i>Paradise Redefined: Transnational Chinese Students and the Quest for Flexible Citizenship in the Developed World</i> (excerpts; online access))	Film screening: <i>Mainland</i> .
25	December 3.	Presentations	No	

26	December 5.	Presentations	No	
27	December 10.	Presentations	No	