World Cultures: China, V55.0512

Introduction
As the most populous nation on earth, China's role in the world economy is a crucial one. An understanding of China's place in the world must begin with an understanding of its modern history—from the Qing Dynasty and the Western encroachment to the recent economic reforms of the People's Republic of China. This course introduces some of the major events, issues, and themes that have shaped modern Chinese society. The course is structured not as a historical chronology, but as a sampling of topics and views of Chinese society from various analytical perspectives. The focus of the course is the period from the Opium War to the present day. Through various social scientific lenses, we will examine issues of war, political upheaval and crisis, social movements and the struggle for Democracy, the structure of communist society, and the period of economic reform.

Texts

There is also a reader for the course, which can be purchased at Unique Copy on Greene Street. Books can be found at the University Bookstore. An asterisk (*) beside an author indicates an article in the Reader. A double asterisk (**) indicates an article accessible through Blackboard.

Lecture
Attendance at lecture is required. You are responsible for material covered in the lecture as well as the material covered in all assigned readings. In other words: anything in lecture or the readings is fair game for the mid-term and final exams. I will post a version of the lecture slides on Blackboard as powerpoint documents. The slides will not match those that you will see in the lecture, but they will be close.

Discussion Section
Discussion section will be divided into two parts. In the first few minutes of section, your preceptor will lead a (short) class discussion, the goal of which is to answer any questions you have from the readings or the lectures. The remainder of the time will be occupied by small group discussions on specific issues. These discussions will cover an issue your group has selected, developing research strategies for learning more about the issue and developing
arguments that will help you formulate an educated opinion on the issue. These issues are broad and deep, so it should take multiple class periods to fully explore a given issue. In the first module, your group work will focus on the topic upon which you will write your midterm paper. Groups will work collectively on how to approach the midterm paper, though papers will be written individually. Module 2 will focus on a group-written opinion article on an important debate issue that is relevant in Chinese society today. These papers will be handed in during section on the week 11/8; in addition, during section in the weeks of 11/8 and 11/15, each group will be responsible for one presentation during the class. Your group will present your analysis and findings in a formal, professional 10-minute presentation, with a 5-minute Q&A session to follow. The third section module of the semester will be organized around the essay for your final exam. Attendance in section is required. Failure to attend section will result in a low participation grade, which will have a significant impact on your grade overall.

**Grading**

The final grade is based strictly on a distribution curve. This means that final grades are calculated relative to the performance of the rest of the class. Thus, grades have no meaning independent of the performance of the rest of the class. Note that this means that there is no inherent grade attached to a given percentage score on a given exam or paper. Two different distribution curves are employed in the calculation of your grades: first, for in-class exams where there is no subjective component to the grading (i.e., the in-class midterm and final), I use a class-wide distribution curve; second for grades for which there is a subjective component (i.e., those grades that are judged by your TA), I use an intra-section distribution curve. The distribution curve I employ is the following: 10% of the class will receive a grade of A; 15% will receive A-; 20% will receive B+; 25% will receive B; 20% will receive B-; 10% C+ or lower.

Grading for the course will be based on the following criteria:

1. **Section (1/3 of grade), comprised of:**
   - ✓ Attendance
   - ✓ Participation in group work
   - ✓ Written work from week 11/8
   - ✓ Group presentation from weeks 11/8, 11/15

2. **Mid-term (1/3 of grade), comprised of:**
   - ✓ Mid-term paper (1/6 of grade)
   - ✓ In-class mid-term exam (1/6 of grade)

3. **Final exam (1/3 of grade), comprised of:**
   - ✓ Take-home final essay (1/6 of grade)
   - ✓ In-class final exam (1/6 of grade)
Reading Schedule

I. Introduction
1. Tues., 9/7: Introduction to a Sociological Approach to History, Culture, and Politics in China

II. Historical Context: Cultural Forces and Institutional Change
2. Thurs., 9/9: Classical Background: Confucianism
   Readings: Mote, chapters 1-3; Ogden, pp. 162-68.

3. Tues. 9/14: Classical Background: Daoism and Beyond
   Readings: Mote, chapters 4, 6-7.

Thursday 9/16: no class

4. Tues. 9/21: The Western Encroachment and the Opium War
   Readings: Kristof and WuDunn, chapter 2.

5. Thurs. 9/23: The Crisis Within
   Readings: Ogden, pp. 15-17, 58-61.

6. Tues. 9/28: Fifty Years of Upheaval and War
   Readings: Kristof and WuDunn, chapter 10.

7. Thurs. 9/30: The Cultural Revolution
   Readings: Reflections from the perspective of Mao's wife: Min*.

8. Tues. 10/5: Movie: To Live, Part I

9. Thurs. 10/7: Movie: To Live, Part II

Friday 10/8, midterm papers due at 5pm in my mailbox in the Department of Sociology, 269 Mercer St., 4th floor

III. The Economy
10. Tues. 10/12: Economic Policy in Mao's China
    Readings: Guthrie, chapters 1-2; Ogden, pp. 20-34.

11. Thurs. 10/14: Economic Policy in Reform Era China
    Readings: Guthrie, chapters 3-5; Fishman**; Ogden, pp. 34-39.

12. Tues. 10/19: China in the World Economy
    Readings: Guthrie, chapters 6-7; Kristof and WuDunn, pp. 315-31.

    Readings: Guthrie, chapter 8; Hsing*.

14. Tues., 10/26: Midterm Exam
    In-class midterm exam

IV. The Changing Structure of Chinese Society
15. Thurs. 10/28: Social Institutions: The Family
    Readings: Davis and Harrell*, Gates*.

16. Tues. 11/2: The State
17. Thurs. 11/4: The Military
Readings: Ogden, pp. 50-51; Kristof and WuDunn, chapter 11.

Section Week of 11/8: Hand in group debate essay in section; section weeks 10, group presentations

18. Tues. 11/9: Legal Change
Readings: Ogden, pp. 42-47, 169-70; Guthrie**.

19. Tues. 11/16: Entrepreneurship and the Emergence of a New Middle Class
Readings: Goodman*; Parris*; Kristof and WuDunn, chapter 7; Ogden, pp. 169-70.

Section Week 11/15: Continue group presentations

20. Thurs. 11/11: Class and Stratification
Readings: Walder* ("Property Rights..."); Walder* ("Career Mobility..."); Kristof and WuDun, chapter 12; Ogden, pp. 111-15.

21. Thurs. 11/18: Economic Change and New Freedoms
Readings: Ogden, pp. 106-08, 120-23, 147-50; Guthrie**.

22. Tues. 11/23: The Environment
Readings: Kristof and WuDunn, chapter 13.

Thursday 11/25: no class

VI. Social Movements, Democracy, Sovereignty, and Human Rights in China
23. Tues. 11/30: Tiananmen
Guthrie*; Bei Dao*.
Movie: The Gate of Heavenly Peace (excerpts)

24. Tues. 12/7: Religious freedom and Tibet
Readings: Hessler*.

25. Thurs. 12/9: Taiwan and Hong Kong

Readings: Guthrie, chapter 9.

Final exam:
Part I: Essay question will be posted on Blackboard 48 hours before in-class final
Part II: In-class final exam; take-home essay will also be handed in at the in-class final