

ANT 265: Contemporary Chinese Society and Culture
Fall 2013 M,W,F 10:30-11:20 am, Chambers 2068

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Office Hours: M - F 9:00 – 10:00 am
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This seminar examines Chinese society from the “bottom up,” with an emphasis on the structure of everyday life. The course will explore current issues in Chinese society and culture by examining in detail particular ethnographic case studies from contemporary China, including a study of one of China’s minority groups. The goal of this course is to introduce you to the social and cultural issues that are facing the people who live in a rapidly-changing Chinese society. In the first week, as a class we will select two additional topics, and I will provide readings then that address these issues.



Contemporary China will be studied from the anthropological perspective – largely a “bottom-up,” comparative examination of particular social processes that is presented in the form of ethnographic monographs and articles that describe everyday life in detail. Our emphasis will be on understanding how Chinese traditions and culture have shaped Chinese society today. What is uniquely Chinese in Chinese culture? How have over three thousand years of history and tradition and its emergence out of Maoist socialism shaped everyday life in China? How do social units like the family or practices such as life-cycle rituals give structure to Chinese society?

Course Readings

Wasserstrom, Jeffrey N. 2010. *China in the 21st Century: What Everyone Needs to Know*. New York: Oxford University Press. (ISBN: 978-0195394122)

Chen, Nancy, Constance Clark, Suzanne Gottschang, and Lyn Jeffery. 2001. *China Urban: Ethnographies of Contemporary Culture*. Durham: Duke University Press. (ISBN: 978-0822326403)

Lin, Yi-Chieh Jessica. 2011. *Fake Stuff: China and the Rise of Counterfeit Goods*. New York: Routledge. (ISBN: 978-0415883030)

Economy, Elizabeth C. 2010. *The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China’s Future*, 2nd ed. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. (ISBN: 978-0801476136)

Kleinman, Arthur et.al. 2011. *Deep China: The Moral Life of the Person*. Berkeley: University of California Press. (ISBN: 978-0520269453)

Additional articles will be available on Moodle.

Course Requirements

The most important work in this course is to be prepared for each class meeting; this means having thoroughly read the material and being prepared to discuss particular points from the reading. Readings are due on the day listed in the class schedule. Your engagement with the material is vital for the success of this learning experience.

Class Participation: 10%

The most important work in this course is to be prepared for each class; this means having thoroughly read the material and being prepared to discuss particular points from the reading. Readings are due on the day listed in the class schedule. I will not summarize the readings in lecture, but will discuss the implications and difficult points in the material. Remember, there is no such thing as a dumb question or comment. A good strategy is to mark a part of the reading that you feel is important, unclear, or thought-provoking – you can then share the passage with the class.

Response Papers: 10%

You will write five (5) response papers throughout the term, no more than two pages and double-spaced. They will be graded ($\sqrt{+}$, $\sqrt{}$, $\sqrt{-}$) and require timely submission for full credit. Response papers will serve as a diagnostic for me to help me see how much you understand the reading and the concepts that we will discuss in class. See the handout on the moodle site for more information.

Review Essay: 25% (1 short essay)

This assignment is designed to help you review the literature that we have read and give you the opportunity to think through a particular issue that we have encountered in our readings on China; it should also help prepare your thoughts for your research paper. There will be one short essays of no more than five pages, double-spaced. I will have handouts on your writing and my grading of these essays on the course website. The essay is due on **7 October**.

Research Paper (total 55%: proposal 5%, in-class presentation 10%, poster presentation 10%, final paper 30%): Based on your research interests, you will select a particular topic for more in-depth research and analysis. I will distribute handouts on the proposal and citing format for this term paper of no more than fifteen pages. This can be an expansion of a review essay. I would recommend that you meet with me individually or email me to discuss possible topics before submitting your proposal. The proposal is due on **16 September** and the final paper is due on, **19 December**.

Submission of Writing Assignments: All assignments must be submitted to me electronically by email. If you have any questions about how to submit assignments, please see me individually. I will be returning your work to you electronically as well, with comments visible in Adobe Acrobat.

Grading System:

Grades will follow the college system using the 4.0 scale (i.e., A=4.0, A-=3.7, B+=3.3, etc. – see the college catalog) and weighted for each assignment as described above.

While students working with each other outside of class is highly encouraged, all graded, written work must be your own and pledged accordingly. All work is subject to the Davidson College Honor Code as stated in the student handbook. If there are individual accommodations for special needs, please let me know and authorize the Dean of Students to contact me so that we can work something out.

Class Schedule (subject to modification)

Monday, 26 August	Class Introduction
Wednesday, 28 August	Overview of Chinese History Reading: Wasserstrom, Ch 1-2
Friday, 30 August	Reading: Wasserstrom, Ch 3-4
Monday, 2 September	Reading: Wasserstrom, Ch 5-6 Assignment: Response Paper Due
Wednesday, 4 September	Urban China Reading: China Urban: Introduction, Hoffman, Efirid
Friday, 6 September	Reading: China Urban: Gottschang, Clark, Brownell
Monday, 9 September	Reading: China Urban: Chen, Junghans, Zhang
Wednesday, 11 September	Reading: China Urban: Schein, Hertz
Friday, 13 September	Environmental Politics in China Reading: Economy, Ch 1-2
Monday, 16 September	Reading: Economy, Ch 3-4 Assignment: Research Paper Proposal due
Wednesday, 18 September	Reading: Economy, Ch 5-6
Friday, 20 September	Reading: Economy, Ch 7-8 Assignment: Response Paper Due
Monday, 23 September	Film: The Warriors of Qiugang
Wednesday, 25 September	Popular Culture Reading: Lin, Ch. 1-2
Friday, 27 September	Reading: Lin, Ch. 3-4
Monday, 30 September	Reading: Lin, Ch. 5-6 Assignment: Response Paper Due
Wednesday, 2 October	Choice Topic 1 Reading: TBD, on Moodle
Friday, 4 October	Reading: TBD, on Moodle

Monday, 7 October	Reading: TBD , on Moodle Assignment: Short Essay Due
Wednesday, 9 October	Reading: TBD , on Moodle
Friday, 11 October	Reading: TBD , on Moodle
Monday, 14 October	Davidson Fall Break
Wednesday, 16 October	Chinese Ethics and Values Reading: Deep China: Introduction, Ch 1
Friday, 18 October	Reading: Deep China: Ch 2-3 Assignment: Response Paper Due
Monday, 21 October	Reading: Deep China: Ch 4-5
Wednesday, 23 October	Reading: Deep China: Ch 6-7
Friday, 25 October	Reading: Deep China: Ch 8
Monday, 28 October	Choice Topic 2 Reading: TBD , on Moodle
Wednesday, 30 October	Reading: TBD , on Moodle
Friday, 1 November	Reading: TBD , on Moodle
Monday, 4 November	Reading: TBD , on Moodle
Wednesday, 6 November	Reading: TBD , on Moodle
Friday, 8 November	Reading: TBD , on Moodle
Monday, 11 November	Research Presentations 5 students
Wednesday, 13 November	Research Presentations 5 students
Friday, 15 November	Research Presentations 5 students
Monday, 18 November	Research Presentations 5 students
Wednesday, 20 November	Research Presentations 5 students
Friday, 22 November	AAA meeting: No class
Monday, 25 November	Research Presentations 5 students
27 -29 November	Thanksgiving Break

Monday, 2 December	Poster presentations
Wednesday, 4 December	Poster presentations
Friday, 6 December	Last Day of Class: Overview
Thursday, 19 December	Assignment: Final Papers Due (5:00 pm)