

INST 341 – Contemporary China

Spring Semester 2012

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Office Hours – Wednesdays 11:00-12:15 and by appointment

I. Course Description and Goals

In the thirty years since Deng Xiaoping launched the “reform and opening up” (*gaige kaifang*) policies, China has witnessed rapid and far-reaching economic growth, a divorce between the Chinese Communist Party and China’s legacy of socialist revolution, and equally profound social change. Using both an historical perspective and interdisciplinary approaches, this course examines the implications of these changes for Chinese society. We will consider issues such as China’s environmental crisis, the growth of regional and income inequality, ethnicity and identity, the effects of the market reforms on different social strata—peasants, workers, intellectuals and entrepreneurs—as well as the various forms of social activism that have arisen in response to China’s transition from socialism. I hope that by a combination of lectures, readings from a variety of social science disciplines, and visual materials, each student will gain at least a fundamental understanding of contemporary China. Students may also use the course as a springboard for their senior thesis.

II. Texts

The following texts are available at the Student Union bookstore and placed on 24-hour reserve at the Williams Library.

Craig Calhoun, *Neither Gods nor Emperors: Students and the Struggle for Democracy in China* DS779.32.C35 1994

Anita Chan, *Workers under Assault: The Exploitation of Labor in a Globalizing Economy* HD8736.5 .C35 2001

Leslie Chang, *Factory Girls: From Village to City in a Changing China* HD9734.C55 C53 2008

Bruce Gilley, *Model Rebels: The Rise and Fall of China’s Richest Village* HC428.T23 G54 2001

Chen Guidi & Wu Chuntao, *Will the Boat Sink the Water? The Life of China’s Peasants* HD1537.C5 C47313 2006

Mo Yan, *The Garlic Ballads*

Bryan Tilt, *The Struggle for Sustainability in Rural China: Environmental Values and Civil Society* HC430.E5 T55 2010

Wang Lixiong and Tsering Shakya, *The Struggle for Tibet*

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- (1) One midterm exam: essay and short-answer format. (100 points)
- (2) Two five-page papers on assigned reading. (300 points)
- (3) One ten-page “review of the literature” paper on one of the main issues explored in class. (200 points)
- (3) Class participation (200 points)
- (4) Final comprehensive exam (200 points) Consists of essays and short-answer. All students must take the final exam in order to pass the course.

Attendance at class is required, and any record of excessive absences or tardiness will be treated as cause for lowering the final grade. With the exception of emergency-related absences, more than five absences may lead to a failing grade for the course. Make-up examinations or extensions to the due dates for essays will be granted only to students who have encountered well-documented health, family, or work-related emergencies. Papers should be handed in at the start of the class they are due.

Essays will be evaluated in the following terms: How cogent, compelling, and consistent is the argument of the paper? How well have you employed evidence drawn from the reading to support your argument, and how extensively? And, how clear and correct is the prose of the essay?

Statement on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:

There will be zero tolerance for academic dishonesty in any form, including cheating on exams and plagiarism, which means essentially the act of passing someone else’s work off as your own in any form. Such activities amount to theft of intellectual property. Assignments found to be in violation will be failed without the possibility of repeating them.

Classroom Etiquette:

Please come to class ready to learn. Students engaged in other activities during class distract the instructor and other students. This includes eating, reading the newspaper, doing other assignments, passing notes, texting, and talking to neighbors. Students found to be doing any of these activities will be asked to leave the classroom. Be sure to set your phone to vibrate. Also, this class has a no laptop policy. Students should bring a pen and paper to class for note taking.

IV. (Approximate) Schedule of Lectures and Readings

Code: Blackboard readings marked with *

Dates		Topics
Jan.23		Introduction “China: Century in Revolution: The Mao Years”
Jan.25		Remembering the Cultural Revolution-“Scar Literature” Read: Ba Jin* Wen Jieruo* Lu* Wang Zengqi* Chen Ruoxi*
Jan.26	7 pm	Public lecture: Prof.Virginia Bower University Museum
Jan.27		Prof. Bower: “Jingdezhen Porcelain in Contemporary China”
Jan.30		Reassessing Mao and the Rise of Deng Xiaoping Read: China Reader, pp.21-49*
Feb.1		Democracy Movement Read: Schell & Wei-Democracy Wall docs* Liu Binyan*
Feb.3		Deng’s Political, Bureaucratic and Economic Reforms Start reading GILLEY
Feb.6		ALL UNDER HEAVEN (video) Continue GILLEY
Feb.8		Decollectivization: Social & Economic Consequences Read: Hinton* Cheng Li, ch.14*
Feb.10		Rural Reforms and Resistance Discuss GILLEY First paper due
Feb.13		Rural crisis Read: Chen & Wu, ch.5, chs.1-2
Feb. 15		Solutions? Village Democracy? Read: Chen & Wu, ch.6, Li & O’Brien * Jacka*
Feb.16	Croft 107: 7 pm	Dr. Carl Riskin, “Obstacles to a Harmonious Society in China: Poverty, Inequality and Economic Imbalance”

- Feb.17 Discussion with Prof. Riskin
Read: Riskin, "Inequality: Overcoming the Great Divide"*
- Feb.20 Video: Carma Hinton's "Small Happiness"
- Feb.22 China's One Child Policy
Read: White-One Child Policy*
- Feb. 24 Market reforms & effect on rural families
Mo Yan, *The Garlic Ballads*
- Feb. 27 Market reforms & effect on urban families
Honig & Hershatter, "Family Relations"* & "Marriage"*
Zhang-Divorce*
- Feb. 29 The Consumer Revolution
Read: Davis-Intro and Ch.3*
- Mar. 2 Children and (Fast) Food
Chee*; Guo* Croll?
- Mar.5 Corruption & Bureaucratic Capitalism
Start reading CALHOUN
- Mar. 7 Film TBA
- Mar.9 MIDTERM
- Mar. 19 Tiananmen & Student Movement
Discuss CALHOUN (entire book)
- Mar.21 Market & labor reforms
Film: "The Giant awakes: The path of Chinese privatization"
- Mar. 23 China's new working class
Chan, chs.1-4
- Mar. 26 China's new working class
Finish CHAN
- Mar. 28 Film: Carma Hinton's "To Taste a Hundred Herbs"
Short statement of review of literature paper due

Mar. 30	Religious Revival and Repression Madsen-Chinese Christianity*
Apr. 2	The State & Falun Gong Thornton* & Ownby*
Apr.4	Video: “China from the Inside: Episode 3: Shifting Nature” Start reading TILT
Apr. 6	Good Friday
Apr. 9	China’s Environmental Crisis Tilt, chs.1-4
Apr. 11	China’s Environmental Crisis <u>Paper due on TILT</u>
Apr. 13	Rural-to-Urban Migration Start reading CHANG
Apr. 16	Dinner and a Movie (6 pm) Film: Last Train Home Keep reading CHANG
Apr. 18	Discussion: CHANG
Apr. 20	Discussion: CHANG
Apr.23	The Tibet Question: Historical Overview Draft of Review of Literature paper due (Worth 25% of total paper grade)
Apr. 25	Good Friday
Apr. 27	Tibet Read: <i>The Struggle for Tibet</i> , Ch.1-3
Apr. 30	Tibet Read: <i>The Struggle for Tibet</i> (finish book)
May 2	Student presentations
May 4	Student presentations
May 11	8:00-11:00 am Final Exam