



CIEE in Shanghai, China

Course name:	Issues in Contemporary Chinese Society
Course number:	EAST 3005 SCGC / SOCI 3001 SCGC
Programs offering course:	Shanghai Accelerated Chinese Language, Shanghai Business, Language and Culture, Shanghai China in a Global Context
Language of instruction:	English
U.S. Semester Credits:	3 semester/4.5 quarter hours
Contact Hours:	45
Term:	Spring 2019

Course Description

China's transition to a market economy and return to the global community have huge impacts over the lives of its people, as well as the rest of the world. While covering other fields such as anthropology, political science, gender studies and urban studies, this course mostly employs a sociological perspective to examine issues in contemporary Chinese society. Topics examined include not only these well-known aspects of Chinese society such as guanxi, collectivism and family-centered culture, but also the emerging civil society, ongoing sexual revolution, and increasing social polarization that are more likely associated with the enormous social change over the past three decades. Students will be asked to critically and creatively think about change and continuity in contemporary China in relation to the dynamic and complex interaction of local factors and global forces.

Learning Objectives

The objectives of this course are 1) to expose students to a broad overview of social issues in contemporary China; 2) to deepen students' understanding of historical change and continuity, cultural diversity and the complexity of Chinese society; 3) to enable students to analyze social issues of relevance in China and beyond from critical and comparative perspectives; 4) to familiarize students with available resources for learning about Chinese society; and 5) to facilitate students' exploration of the city life in Shanghai.

Course Prerequisites

No prerequisites, only curiosity and the desire for learning.

Methods of Instruction

The class will combine lectures, academic readings, class discussions, films and field trips.

Assessment and Final Grade

For this course, students will be assessed according to the following:

Class Participation: Discussion Questions	20%	40 points
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Group project on Urban Space	30%	60 points
Research Proposal	10%	20 points
Final Paper	40%	80 points
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Total	100%	200 points

Course Requirements

Attendance and Class Participation (15%)

All assigned readings, lectures, and discussions will be the basis for examinations. Students must read the assigned readings in a timely fashion before each class meeting. I expect you to be prepared to actively participate in class discussions and share your experiences and ideas that are relevant to the class. The more you attend and participate in class, the more prepared you will be to complete the assignments and exams. For these reasons, class attendance and participation are essential.

Based on the assigned readings, students are **required** to submit one discussion question to the email address disc_ques@126.com by 10pm each Sunday, starting from Week 3. Missing 2 or more discussion questions out of total 10 would lead to a grade of zero for participation.

Group Project on Urban Space Ethnography (30%)

For this exercise, you should choose a location in the city – a particular social space and observe it intensively with your group. You should visit the site no less than 3 times throughout the semester and with each visit no shorter than 1.5 hours. Detailed instruction will be provided.

Research Proposal for Final Paper (10%)

Develop a research proposal inspired by her/his observation from the group project. Students should first identify a research topic of their choice, and then conduct a literature research on this topic. The paper should include the discussion of at least five scholarly articles not included on this syllabus and can also include references to non-academic sources.

Final Paper (40%)

Conduct further research on the topic of choice. The paper must demonstrate a “sociological imagination” by linking what you observe in particular urban space to a social issue in today’s China. Highlight important findings and major critiques of your own research. Students will present their final paper that is scheduled in the last class.

NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

Introduction: Chinese Society in Transition

Week 2

Gender, Marriage and Family

- (1) Sandy To, "Understanding Sheng Nu ("Leftover Women"): the Phenomenon of Late Marriage among Chinese Professional Women", *Symbolic Interaction*, 36:1, 2013.
- (2) Deborah Davis. "Privatization of marriage in post-socialist China". *Modern China* 40, 2014.

Week 3

Ethnic Relations

- (1) Ma Rong, "A New Perspective in Guiding Ethnic Relations in the Twenty first Century: 'De-politicization' of Ethnicity in China, *Asian Ethnicity*, 8:3, 2008.
- (2) Agnieszka Joniak-Lüthi. "The Han Minzu, Fragmented Identities, and Ethnicity" *The Journal of Asian Studies* 72:4, 2013.

Week 4

New Class Society

- (1) Deborah Davis and Wang Feng, "Poverty and Wealth in Postsocialist China: An Overview", in Davis and Wang 2009.
- (2) Ching Kwan Lee, "From Inequality to Inequity: Popular Conceptions of Social (In)justice in Beijing", in Davis and Wang 2009.

Week 5

Migrant Workers

- (1) Tian Xiaoli and Deng Yunxue. "Organizational Hierarchy, Deprived Masculinity, and Confrontational Practices: Men Doing Women's Jobs in a Global Factory." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 1, 2015.
- (2) Xiong Yihan. "The Broken Ladder: Why Education Provides No Upward Mobility for Migrant Children in China" *The China Quarterly* 221, 2015.

Week 6

Urban Redevelopment

- (1) He, Shenjing and Wu Fulong. . Property-led Redevelopment in Post-reform China: A Case Study of Xintiandi Redevelopment Project in Shanghai. *Journal of Urban Affairs* (1), 2005
- (2) Amy Hanser "Street Politics: Street Vendors and Urban Governance in China" *The China Quarterly* 226, 2016.

Week 7

Religion

- (1) Karrie J. Koesel, "The Rise of a Chinese House Church: The Organizational Weapon" *The China Quarterly*, 2013.
- (2) Yoshiko Ashiwa and David L. Wank, "The Politics of a Reviving Buddhist



Temple: State, Association, and Religion in Southeast China”, The Journal of Asian Studies, 65, 2006.

Group Project Due and Presentation

Week 8

Internet Culture

(1) Joyce Y. M. Nip and King-wa Fu “Challenging Official Propaganda? Public Opinion Leaders on Sina Weibo” The China Quarterly 225, 2016.

(2) Marcella Szablewicz. “The ‘Losers’ of China’s Internet: Memes as ‘Structures of Feeling’ for Disillusioned Young Netizens. China Information, 28, 2014

Week 9

Individualization

(1) Yan Yunxiang “The Good Samaritan’s New Trouble: A Study of the Changing Moral Landscape in Contemporary China.” Social Anthropology 17 (1), 2009.

(2) Mette Halskov Hansen, “Learning Individualism: Hesse, Confucius, and Pep-Rallies in a Chinese Rural High School” The China Quarterly 213, 2013.

Research Proposal Due

Week 10

Social Space and Civil Mobilization

(1) Zhengxu Wang, Long Sun, Liuqing Xu and Dragan Pavličević . Leadership in China’s Urban Middle Class Protest: The Movement to Protect Homeowners’ Rights in Beijing. The China Quarterly, 214, 2013.

(2) Anthony J. Spires, “Contingent Symbiosis and Civil Society in an Authoritarian State: Understanding the Survival of China’s Grassroots NGOs”, American Journal of Sociology, 117, 2011.

Week 11

Sexual Revolution

(1) Everett Yuehong Zhang, “China’s Sexual Revolution”, in Kleinman et al. 2010

(2) Pei Yuxina and Petula Ho Sik Ying, “Gender, self and pleasure: young women’s discourse on masturbation in contemporary Shanghai”, Culture, Health and Sexuality, 11, 2009.

Week 12

Final Paper Due and Class Presentation.

Course Materials

Readings

Davis, Deborah and Wang Feng. *Creating Wealth and Poverty in Postsocialist China*. Stanford



University Press.

Gold, Thomas, Doug Guthrie and David Wank, *Social Connections in China Institutions, Culture, and the Changing Nature of Guanxi.* Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Kleinman, Arthur, Yunxiang Yan, Jing Jun, Sing Lee, Everett Zhang, Pan Tianshu, Wu Fei and Guo Jinhua. *Deep China: The Moral Life of the Person.* University of California Press, 2010.