Course | UGEA2180 Chinese Culture and Society  
---|---  
Class Time | 09:30-12:30 Tue, Wed, Thu  
Class Location | YIA 505  
Teacher | Dr. Kevin LATHAM  
Senior Lecturer in Social Anthropology  
Department of Anthropology and Sociology, SOAS, University of London  
Visiting Scholar, The Chinese University of Hong Kong  
Email | TBC  
Teaching Assistant | TBC  

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course provides an anthropological approach to China. Discussions concentrate on major cultural and social institutions of China, both traditional and contemporary, such as family, marriage, kinship, lineage and clan, economic system, religion and value orientation.

Remarks:  
UGE2180 is double-coded with ANTH2410.  
Not for Anthropology Majors and CUHK students who have taken ANTH2410.  
Co-requisite: UGFH1000 or UGFN1000 (only applicable to CUHK students admitted to the 4-year curriculum).

**LEARNING OUTCOME(S)**

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:  
1. Analyze Chinese culture and society holistically and demonstrate how religion, ideas about gender, economic and political culture, and other aspects of culture all shape Chinese society and influence each other,  
2. Recognize the core cultural characteristics and important social institutions of Chinese society historically, and  
3. Discuss the impact of the current communist state on Chinese culture and social structure. Students will also, through this course, develop their own specific interests in the study of Chinese culture and society.

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOK**


**READING(S)/REFERENCE(S)**

*Note: you are not expected to read all of these texts in preparation for every class. You should read at least the main reading. There is one main reading per class. Ideally you will also read at least one of the further readings listed, but this may not always be possible.*

You will find it useful to read more in preparation for your essay assignment.
READING(S)/REFERENCE(S)

Class 1 (26 June, Wednesday): Introductions, overview and historical contextualization

MAIN READING

FURTHER READINGS

Class 2 (27 June, Thursday): Traditionalising China: Culture and the Power of Representation

MAIN READING

FURTHER READINGS

Class 3 (2 July, Tuesday): Social Organisation: Past and Present

MAIN READING

FURTHER READING
Class 4 (3 July, Thursday): Exploring religion in Contemporary China
MAIN READING

FURTHER READING

Class 5 (4 July, Thursday): Performing Culture? Ritual and Religion in China
MAIN READING

FURTHER READING

Class 6 (9 July, Tuesday): Family, Kinship and Marriage
MAIN READING

FURTHER READING

Class 7 (10 July, Wednesday): Gender and Patriarchy
MAIN READING

FURTHER READING
Class 8 (11 July, Thursday): Film Viewing and Discussion: A Girl from Hunan (1986, Dir. Xie Fei)

NB: THE CLASS TEST WILL BE SAT IN THE FIRST HOUR, BEFORE THE FILM VIEWING – PLEASE ENSURE YOU ARRIVE PROMPTLY

MAIN READING

FURTHER READING

This film from the early post-Mao period offers us a chance to reflect upon the issues of gender, patriarchy, family and marriage as well as the issues of tradition and modernity.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
What does this film say about family, gender and marriage in China? What messages does the film try to get across? The film is based on a short story from the early C20th (Xiaoxiao by Shen Congwen). How relevant is it to contemporary China? How important is it to understand when this film was made?

NB: FILM REACTION PAPER DUE 23:59, MON JULY 15

Class 9 (16 July, Tuesday): The Self and Social Relations

MAIN READING

FURTHER READING


Class 10 (17 July, Wednesday): Social Stratification and Difference: From Class to Strata and Suzhi

MAIN READING

FURTHER READING


Class 11 (18 July, Thursday): VISIT TO HONG KONG MUSEUM OF HISTORY

Class 12 (23 July, Tuesday): Film Viewing and Discussion: Last Train Home (2009, Dir. Li Xinfan)

MAIN READING
FURTHER READING

This film follows a family of migrant workers in Guangdong Province and their efforts to return home to the countryside for the Chinese New Year festival. The film offers another opportunity to think about the challenges facing families in contemporary China as well as the issues of migration, social status and rural-urban differences.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
How does this film help you understand social stratification in contemporary China? What does it say about the transformation of traditional values in contemporary families? What are the drivers of change and transformation?

Class 13 (24 July, Wednesday): Mediating China: from televisions to cellphones

MAIN READING

FURTHER READING


MAIN READING

FURTHER READING


NB: ESSAY ASSIGNMENT DUE 23:59, FRI JULY 26

Final Exam Day (29 July, Monday): Group presentations
GRADING WEIGHTS

- 30% - Class test
- 20% - Film reaction paper
- 20% - Museum visit presentation (10% whole group + 10% individual)
- 10% - Museum visit presentation - peer assessment
- 20% - Final essay assignment

ATTENDANCE

Students should report all leave and absences, including sick leave and absences from class, to their course teacher and the Office of Academic Links. In case of illness/injury necessitating absence, a medical certificate is required as documentary evidence. A student who has been absent for a continuous period exceeding two consecutive days shall be considered to have withdrawn from the International Summer School. All fees paid will not be refunded.

GRADE DESCRIPTOR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Overall course</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.</td>
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ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION & FEEDBACK

30% - Class test – to be taken in the first hour of class 8, week 3 (Thursday, July 11th). The test will be a one hour multiple choice paper concentrating on contextual facts and history and materials covered in the first weeks of the course. The results from the test should be returned by the first class of week 4 (Tuesday, July 16th).

20% - Film reaction paper - (due 23.59, Monday, July 15th). This should be no more than 1,000 words in length and offer your thoughts on the film Girl from Hunan and how it speaks to the issues and materials covered by the course. You should make reference to some of the literature you have read and that has been discussed in classes and lectures. Although some description may be necessary, the focus of the paper should be on analysis.

All papers should be submitted (uploaded) through the University’s proprietary plagiarism detection tool, VeriGuide. Any written work submitted without the VeriGuide confirmation and the signed declaration of honesty will not be graded. All papers should ALSO be submitted electronically (uploaded), together with the signed honesty declaration, using the CUHK essay submission software on the blackboard virtual learning environment for the course.

Grade and comments for the paper should be returned by July 22nd on blackboard.

20% - Museum visit presentation (10% whole group + 10% individual) – (Slide submission – due 23.59, Sunday, July 28th, Presentation - July 29th). Prior to the museum visit on Thursday, July 18th, students will be allocated to a small project group for the purposes of the visit and the final presentation. Key tasks and objectives will be set in good time before the visit and groups with each group designated a topic or issue to explore. Groups will be expected to meet up and prepare for the visit in advance. During the museum visit
students should work with their fellow group members to seek out data and information that will help them with their final presentation on their designated topic or issue.

Following the visit, groups should meet up again as much as they feel necessary in order to prepare a final presentation which will be made on final exam day (July 29th) to the rest of the class. Presentation slides should be submitted by a representative in the group on blackboard the day before final presentation. This is likely to require at least two meetings. The presentation should address the designated topic/issue of the group and explain how the key objectives were met making reference BOTH to the materials gathered on the museum visit AND other materials covered in the course (lectures, readings, class discussion etc.). Each member of the group should have clearly pre-defined tasks and given an appropriate role in the presentation. The assessment of the presentation will be of the whole process (pre- and post-visit preparation, the visit itself and the presentation) and content of the presentation.

Grade and comments for the presentation should be returned by August 2nd on blackboard.

10% - Museum visit presentation - peer assessment (July 29th). Group members will be asked to fill in anonymously a brief peer assessment form commenting on the work and contributions of the classmates in their group.

20% - Final essay assignment (due 23.59, Friday, July 26th). Essay questions will be provided in the first lecture of the course and will cover a range of topics and issues covered by the course. Consequently, in order to reduce the amount of work expected in the last week of the course, when museum visit presentations also have to be prepared, it is recommended that students start work on this assignment as early as possible in the course. Even if the question chosen relates to a topic later in the course (e.g. media, popular culture, social stratification etc.) students can gear their earlier reading on related topics to that question in preparation for classes. They can also read ahead for their own topic and work on plans or early drafts of the essay prior to the key class or lecture on that topic.

As with the film reaction paper, ALL essays should be submitted (uploaded) through the University’s proprietary plagiarism detection tool, VeriGuide. Any written work submitted without the VeriGuide confirmation and the signed declaration of honesty will not be graded. All papers should ALSO be submitted electronically (uploaded), together with the signed honesty declaration, using the CUHK essay submission software on the blackboard virtual learning environment for the course.

Grade and comments for the paper should be returned by August 2nd on blackboard.

In all written assignments, students should cite all references by the bibliographic system, which is adopted by The Journal Of The Royal Anthropological Institute: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/page/journal/14679655/homepage/forauthors.html

Bibliographical references should be cited in the text by the author's last name, date of publication, and page, e.g. (Firth 1954: 285) or, if the author's name is mentioned in the text, by the date and page reference only, e.g. (1954: 285). Every quotation must be page referenced as must be references to sections of texts in which specific concepts, debates, or ethnographic examples are discussed. Entries in the references should be in alphabetical order of authors and should include the following: name and initials (not full given names) of author(s), date, title, and (for books) place of publication as well as, if published in 1901 or after, name of publisher. For articles the name of journal should be provided in full with the volume number (arabic numbers to be used throughout) and pagination. Include both volume and issue number only where a journal is paginated by issue rather than in one sequence across the volume. Always include pagination for chapters within books. Translators should be credited for translated works. Where the original date of publication differs significantly from the date of the edition being cited, the date of original publication should also be included in square brackets.

Examples are:


### CLASS SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Main readings</th>
</tr>
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NB: FILM REACTION PAPER DUE 23:59, MON JULY 15
### CLASS SCHEDULE (CONTINUED)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Main readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Thu, July 18</td>
<td>VISIT TO HONG KONG MUSEUM OF HISTORY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### NB: ESSAY ASSIGNMENT DUE 23:59, FRI JULY 26

### ACADEMIC POLICIES

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at [http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/](http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/).

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures.

- In the case of group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration, each of whom is responsible and liable to disciplinary actions should there be any plagiarized contents in the group project, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has contributed directly or indirectly to the plagiarized contents.

- For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. A user manual of VeriGuide can be found at: [https://academic.veriguide.org/academic/documents/VeriGuide_Academic_Student_User_Manual_CUHK.pdf](https://academic.veriguide.org/academic/documents/VeriGuide_Academic_Student_User_Manual_CUHK.pdf)

Assignments without the properly signed declaration will not be graded by teachers.

Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.
The submission of a piece of work, or a part of a piece of work, for more than one purpose (e.g. to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration to this effect shall be regarded as having committed undeclared multiple submission. It is common and acceptable to reuse a turn of phrase or a sentence or two from one’s own work; but wholesale reuse is problematic. In any case, agreement from the course teacher(s) concerned should be obtained prior to the submission of the piece of work.