

CHES5001B Perspectives on Chinese Studies Issues in Contemporary China Stream

2021-22, Term 1
Monday 9.30 - 12.15
Venue: YIA503

Course Instructor: Dr. Tim Summers (summers@cuhk.edu.hk)

Teaching Assistant: Wen Mingrui

Course description

This is a required course for all students on the Issues in Contemporary China (ICC) stream of the MA in Chinese Studies. It has two aims:

- (i) To enhance students' academic literacy and develop writing and research skills required to complete the MA at the Centre for China Studies. The course will focus particularly on writing literature reviews and book reports, as well as citation guidelines and research ethics.
- (ii) To engage a broad selection of the English-language literature on contemporary China, to introduce debates relating to China's politics, society and international relations.

Learning outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students should:

1. Have improved their skills at academic writing, active reading, and critical thinking, in particular reviewing existing literature and understanding what is needed to produce a research paper to the standards required for the MA programme at CCS.
2. Be able to engage in informed discussion of issues in the study of contemporary Chinese politics, society and international relations, with reference to some of the major literature.

Learning activities

- The course will be delivered through weekly interactive lectures, tutorials, workshops and small-group discussions (see schedule below).
- Classes will take place in person (if necessary due to pandemic prevention measures, a simultaneous live stream by Zoom will be provided to registered students).
- Additional discussion sessions will be offered throughout term for those who wish to discuss in greater depth the issues raised in class (sign up will be through Blackboard).

Assessment and grading

Assessment will consist of four elements:

1. Academic writing and citation exercises (20%). Two short exercises will be set during class on **Monday 27 September**.
2. Book review (20%). Students should submit a review of around 800 words of one book on the course bibliography (available on Blackboard) by **Monday 4 October**.
3. Literature review of 2,500-3,000 words (50%) to be submitted by **Thursday 16 December**.
4. Attendance and participation in lectures and tutorials (10%). Credit will be given for good questions and comments and activities participation in discussions.

All written assignments should include a word count and be submitted to the lecturer by email in PDF format, including the signed Veriguide receipt, by **6pm** on the date for submission. Late submission will be penalized. For Veriguide, assignment numbers should follow the order in the list above (e.g. literature review is assignment number 3).

Further guidance on all assignments will be given in class at the beginning of term. For the literature review, students should review academic (secondary) literature relating to some aspect of contemporary China's politics, society, economy or international relations, based on reading five books or 20 articles (books and articles can both be used, with one book equivalent to four articles). Students are encouraged to select some books from the course bibliography for their review, but should also read some books or articles not on that list. The literature review should be 2,500-3,000 words, including footnotes and bibliography. It will be graded on content, structure and organization, language and overall presentation, and references and citations. The criteria for a good literature review will be further discussed in class.

Students who are considering taking the Independent Study Project (CHES5201A) in Term 2 are encouraged to discuss their interests with the lecturer when deciding on the topic of their literature review. Please consult the CHES5201A course outline for details of the Independent Study Project (Research Paper).

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

Course readings

There are many books about contemporary China, and a course bibliography will be posted on Blackboard at the start of term, with a long menu from which students can choose books to review. Readings to assist with research methodology will be posted separately on Blackboard.

The following books may be particularly helpful (electronic copies are available through the CUHK Library):

- Brown, Kerry. *China's Dream: The Culture of Chinese Communism and the Secret Sources of its Power*. Cambridge: Polity, 2018.
- Cheek, Timothy, David Ownby and Joshua A. Fogel, eds. *Voices from the Chinese Century: Public Intellectual Debate from Contemporary China*. Columbia University Press, 2020.
- Economy, Elizabeth. *The Third Revolution: Xi Jinping and the New Chinese State*. Oxford: OUP, 2018.
- Gao Mobo. *Constructing China: Clashing Views of the People's Republic*. London: Pluto Press, 2018.
- Heilmann, Sebastian. *Red Swan: How unorthodox policy making facilitated China's rise*. Hong Kong: CUHK Press, 2018.
- Hung, Ho-fung. *The China Boom: Why China Will Not Rule the World*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2016.
- Lardy, Nicholas R. *The State Strikes Back: The End of Economic Reform in China?* Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2019.
- Pun Ngai. *Migrant Labor in China*. Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2016 (no e-copy in the library).

Additional useful articles and book chapters will be made available via Blackboard at the start of term.

Lecture schedule

Unless otherwise stated, classes will be led by the lecturer for the course, Dr Tim Summers. Additional readings may be circulated in advance of each class.

In Weeks 4, 7 and 11 students will meet with the Lecturer or Teaching Assistant in small groups for workshops and discussion of progress with course assignments.

Week 1: Introduction (6 Sept.)

This class will discuss the course outline and requirements, the scope of 'issues in contemporary China', and the approach to be adopted in this course.

Week 2: Studying contemporary China (13 Sept.)

This lecture will provide a further introduction to the study of 'issues in contemporary China'.

- Kevin J. O'Brien. Speaking to Theory and Speaking to the China Field. *Issues & Studies* 54(4), 2018.
- Norman Stockman. Working in No Man's Land: Between Sociology and Chinese Studies. *Journal of the British Association for Chinese Studies* 8(2), 2018.
- [optional] Arif Dirlik. Global Modernity and the Predicament of Social Science: The Case of China. *Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences* 2(1), 2009.

Week 3: Academic literacy (20 Sept.)

This lecture will cover academic literacy and what is needed to produce a good book review and literature, requirements for academic citations, and techniques for paraphrasing.

Week 4: Academic literacy & research methods (27 Sept.)

This class will begin with **Assessment 1** (in class) on paraphrasing and citation. The lecturer will then give an overview of research methods and preparation of research proposals (including for CHES5201A in Term 2).

Additional material on academic literacy and useful additional readings for Weeks 3 and 4 will be posted on Blackboard.

Week 5: Interpreting the rise of China (4 Oct.)

This class will discuss different interpretations of the rise of China.

Book reviews (Assignment 2) are due on 4 October.

Week 6: China and globalization (11 Oct.)

This class will examine the rise of China in the context of a period of intensified globalization, and identify what this means for understanding China's development.

Week 7: Literature reviews - preparation (18 Oct.)

Students will meet with the lecturer in small groups to help with preparation for literature reviews. A detailed schedule will be circulated in advance.

Week 8: Issues in Chinese politics and society (25 Oct.)

This class will discuss issues in the development of Chinese politics and society, highlighting different views in the academic literature.

Week 9: Special topic / guest lecture (1 Nov.)

To be confirmed after the beginning of term.

Week 10: China and international politics (8 Nov.)

This class will examine the implications of the rise of China for international politics, with a particular focus on US-China relations.

Week 11: Group discussions (15 Nov.)

Students will meet in small groups with the lecturer to discuss progress with literature reviews. Each student will have the opportunity to introduce their topic and present their progress to their peers, followed by discussion. A detailed schedule will be circulated in advance.

Week 12: Are we living in a Chinese century? (22 Nov.)

This session will involve an extended class discussion around current debates about China's rise: is China the next superpower or a partial power?

Week 13: Conclusion (29 Nov.)

This class will review the main issues covered in the course.