



CHES1100

Unofficial China¹

2020-21 Term 1, CUHK

Time & Venue: Mon 16:30 - 18:15 @ ELB_LT3 or on Zoom
 Wed 11:30 - 12:15 @ FYB_LT4 or on Zoom
 Instructor: Prof. LING Minhua (mhling@cuhk.edu.hk)
 Instructor Office: Rm1106, Centre for China Studies, 11/F, YIA
 Office Hours: Mon 12:00 – 14:00 or by email appointment
 Teaching Assistant: Ms. LIU Yiling (LiuYiling@link.cuhk.edu.hk)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

What is it like to live as a child, a gay, a migrant, a non-Han, a disabled, or an online celebrity in today's China? How do we decode the Chinese society and culture beyond cannons and official records? This English-taught course moves beyond state ideologies and official accounts by exploring the multiplicity of Chinese livelihoods and their underlying sociocultural meanings and implications. It adopts an interdisciplinary approach to offer a survey of Chinese cultures and societies as expressed and experienced at the grassroots level. Students will be guided to engage with both textual and non-textual materials produced by Chinese individuals and groups to appreciate the multiplicity of social lives and form critical understanding of Chinese social norms, cultural patterns and their deviations. This Faculty Package course serves as an introduction to Chinese Studies.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the term students should have a working knowledge of:

- Recognize social institutions and cultural patterns key to Chinese societies
- Think perceptively about the multiplicity of livelihoods and values in China
- Comprehend and contextualize primary sources (including visual and audio-visual materials) to make informed analysis
- Develop appreciation of the interdisciplinary approach to understand a culture and society

ASSESSMENT

¹ Depending on the progress of learning, this syllabus may change during the course. Changes will be announced by the instructor via Blackboard.

Class Attendance & Participation (15%)

Regular, on-time class attendance in person or on Zoom is required. You are expected to come to class prepared, **having completed the required readings and watched the assigned audio-visual materials**. Active participation (with camera on) in tutorials is strongly encouraged. Students with more than 3 unexcused absences will receive no points for participation. Extreme lateness will be counted as absence.

In-class Quizzes (15%)

You will take **three multiple-choice quizzes** administered via Zoom during class between Week 3 and Week 7. These assignments aim to enhance students reading comprehension and facilitate class discussion.

Out-of-class Assignment (20%)

You are responsible to **find a relevant source** that can be understood or investigated through the specific concepts, theories or problems discussed in this class. Sources could be a newspaper article, YouTube clip, blogpost, movie, advertisement, song, etc. The source you choose can be in **English or Chinese**, and you need to **provide either online link or PDF of the sources**. As part of this assignment, you will write a 800-word **comment (in English)**, in which you explain why and how the source you choose is related to the class readings of the week, what analytical questions or problems it raises, and/or answers it provides. Due by **noon, Oct. 30, 2020**. Your comment submitted without the **signed VeriGuide receipt** will **NOT** be graded.

Final Project (50%)

You are required to make a one-minute film to demonstrate your understanding of class materials. You should use one or two concepts from the course readings to help you frame the film. Detailed guidelines will be posted on Blackboard.

The film project, due by **noon, Dec. 6, 2020**, will be **screened** either in class or on Zoom in the afternoon of **Dec. 7 (20%)**.

For the final project, you also need to submit 2 pieces of writing:

1) a 250-word **synopsis** (a summary of what you intend this film to be about. Explain how the concept you are using helps you execute the film). Due by **noon, Nov. 8, 2020**. Feedback will be given in class or via email (10%).

2. a 1000-word **commentary**. Due by **noon, Dec. 6 (20%)**. Your commentary submitted without the **signed Veriguide receipt** will **NOT** be graded.

➤ Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Students should submit written assignments to the Veriguide system and print out the Veriguide receipt and scan it into a PDF file before submitting to the Blackboard.

See the website: https://services.veriguide.org/academic/login_CUHK.jspx. Any cases of plagiarism will be severely penalized and reported to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, which could result in failure or expulsion from the University.

<http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

GRADE DESCRIPTORS

Grade	Overall course
A	Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.
A-	Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.
B	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.
C	Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.
D	Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes
F	Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.

COURSE ANNOUNCEMENT & COMMUNICATION

- This course uses the CUHK Blackboard system for course-related communication. Make sure to **check Blackboard and your CUHK email regularly**.
- Students are more than welcome to ask questions or offer comments in Discussion on Blackboard or by emailing the instructor individually.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE & REQUIRED READINGS

- The required readings are downloadable in PDF files from Blackboard. Videos can be viewed either online or via CUHK Library Reserve.
- A reading recommendation list will be available on Blackboard. Students are encouraged to check out the additional readings for references.

Week 1

Sept. 7 Course Introduction

Sept. 9 Tutorial

- Chan, Fruit. 2000. *Durian Durian* (榴蓮飄飄).

Please watch the film before the tutorial.

Part I *Drawing Fine Lines between Official and Unofficial*

Week 2

Sept. 14 Making Official: Ethnic Classification in PRC

Sept. 16 Tutorial

- Mullaney, Thomas S. 2011. Ch4 “The Consent of the Categorized.” *Coming to Terms with the Nation: Ethnic Classification in Modern China*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- 2018 CCTV Spring Festival Gala Performance. ([WebLink](#))

Week 3

Sept. 21 Reinventing Tradition: Reforms and Rituals

Sept. 23 Tutorial

- Siu, Helen F. 1990. "Recycling Tradition: Culture, History and Political Economy in the Chrysanthemum Festivals of South China." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 32 (4):765-794.

Week 4

Sept. 28 Missing Voices: Memory and Politics

Sept. 30 Tutorial

- Ai, Weiwei. 2009. *So Sorry* (深表遺憾) (Documentary). ([WebLink](#))
- Xu, Bin. 2017. Ch4 "Forgetting, Remembering, and Activism." In *The Politics of Compassion: The Sichuan Earthquake and Civic Engagement in China*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Week 5

Oct. 5 Becoming Outcaste

Oct. 7 Tutorial

- Junker, Andy. 2019. Ch4 "Falun Gong: Qigong Fad, New Religion, Protest Movement" & Ch5 "Falungong's History of Stepping Forward." In *Becoming Activists in Global China: Social Movements in the Chinese Diaspora* (pp. 61-101). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Part II Living Experiences on the Edge

Week 6

Oct. 12 Desire and Disability

Oct. 14 Tutorial

- Yu, Xiuhua. 2015. Selected poem from *搖搖晃晃的人間: A Collection of Yu Xiuhua's Poems*. Xinbei, Taiwan: INK.
- Fan, Jian. 2017. *Still Tomorrow*. (Documentary) ([WebLink](#))

Week 7

Oct. 19 Migrant Labor and Love

Oct. 21 Tutorial

- Wu, Feiyue, and Feiyu Qin. 2015. *The Verse of Us 我的詩篇* (Documentary).
- Photography "Love on the Assembly Line": http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_5d08950b0100y611.html
- Sun, Wanning. 2018. pp. 70-71. Excerpt from "Romancing the vulnerable in contemporary China: Love on the assembly line and the cultural politics of inequality." *China Information* 32 (1):69-87.

Week 8

Oct. 26 NO Class (Public holiday: Chung Yeung Festival break)

Oct. 28 Tutorial: Childhood and Rurality

- Jiang, Nengjie. 2014. *Children at a Village School* (村小的孩子) (documentary)

Please watch the documentary before the tutorial.

Out-of-class Assignment due by 12:00, Oct. 30.

Week 9

Nov. 2 Place and Identity

Nov. 4 Tutorial

- Ling, Minhua. 2020. Ch5 “To Go Home or Not.” From *The Inconvenient Generation: Migrant Youth Coming of Age on Shanghai's Edge*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Part III: Searching for Alternatives: Cyberspace, Celebrity, and Capital

Week 10

Nov. 9 Microblog, Youtube, and Censorship

Nov. 11 Tutorial

- “Linear Innovations: Han Han” in *Internet*, 93-107. ([WebLink](#))
- Kan, Karoline. “Once a Voice of Young China, Han Han Stakes Out a Different Path.” *The New York Times: Sinosphere*. 20 Sept 2016. ([WebLink](#))
- Channel NewsAsia Interview with Han Han. 20 Sept 2011. ([WebLink](#))
- Interview with China’s mysterious internet celebrity Li Ziqi. ([WebLink](#))
- Li Ziqi video “The Life of Tomato.” ([WebLink](#))

Week 11

Nov. 16 Fandom and Participatory Culture

Nov. 18 Tutorial

- Jian, Yi. 2007. *Super, Girls!* (Documentary)
- Yang, Ling. 2014. "Reality Talent Shows in China: Transnational Format, Affective Engagement, and the Chinese Dream." In *A Companion to Reality Television*, edited by Laurie Ouellette, 516-40. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Week 12

Nov. 23 Courtship on Screen

Nov. 25 Tutorial

- Clips of *You Are the One* (非誠勿擾 feicheng wurao) ([WebLink](#))
- Guo, Shaohua 2017. "When Dating Shows Encounter State Censors: A Case Study of If You Are the One." *Media, Culture & Society* 39 (4):487-503.

Week 13

Nov. 30 Sexuality on Cyberspace

Dec. 3 Tutorial

- Humayun, Hira and Susannah Cullinane. "Taiwan voters reject same-sex marriage." *CNN*. 25 Nov 2018. ([WebLink](#))
- Wang, Shuaishuai. 2020. "Chinese Gay Men Pursuing Online Fame: Erotic Reputation and Internet Celebrity Economies." *Feminist Media Studies* 20 (4):548-564.

Final Project due by noon, Dec. 6, 2020!

NO late submissions will be accepted.

Week 14

Dec. 7 Student film screening

