

Sophia University – Summer Session 2024

June 28th – July 19th, 2024 *June 28th: Orientation *July 5: No-class day

Date: February 12, 2024

Course Title	Contemporary Chinese Society
Course Code	SOZ440
Instructor	Yuxin Pei
Class Period	1st period: 9:00-10:40
Course Format	In-Person
Language of Instruction	English
Course Description	<p>This class offers an overview of contemporary Chinese life in reform-era China (1978-present). We will explore various aspects of Chinese society, including "migration," "urbanization," "media and popular culture," "family and reproduction," "marriage," "gender and sexuality," "feminism," "civil society and social work," with a particular focus on the global impact: the influence of "globalization" on China and China's impact on the rest of the world. Through this analysis, students will gain a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of the Chinese people, as well as the causes and consequences of social inequality, conflicts, and change. The class will incorporate movie clips, social media accounts, controversial current events, popular TV programs, and readings to provide students with a comprehensive view of the evolving society of China.</p>
Course Objectives	<p>This course aims to examine the critical issues of contemporary China from both an "inside" perspective, focusing on the lived experiences and local perspectives of the Chinese people, as well as a sociological lens, which delves into broader social structures, inequalities, and systemic factors. By adopting these dual perspectives, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of China's complex societal dynamics, including its social, economic, and political landscape, and the challenges and opportunities it presents.</p>
Expected work outside of class	<p>Students are expected and encouraged to work collaboratively on the preparation of group presentations, with ongoing effort and dedication outside of class time. This may involve reading, planning, and coordination to ensure the successful delivery of group presentations. This could take 1 - 1.5 hour per class depending on the individual.</p>
Course Materials	<p>The course materials will include selected video clips and readings, carefully chosen to complement the topics covered in the class and provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter</p>
Moodle	-

Contact Instructor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • via Email <p>*The email address will be available at CGED office or informed by the instructor in the first class if needed.</p>
Evaluation (Attendance, Class participation, in-class assignments, final exam, quizzes, etc.)	<p>Students' performance will be evaluated based on attendance, class participation, in-class assignments, final exam, and other relevant activities. The evaluation will consist of a mid-term group presentation (30%) and a final exam (70%). Additionally, students will engage in group discussions and presentations focusing on course topics. Furthermore, students will be required to write short essays that demonstrate their understanding and interpretation of theories and phenomena related to Chinese society. Class discussions will also be encouraged to assess students' progress and comprehension of the readings</p>
Other comments	-
Class schedule	<p>*June 28: Orientation</p> <p>*July 5: No-class day</p>
	<p>[DAY 1]</p> <p>Introduction</p> <p>To understand China's great changes over the past 40 years, its perceived status as a potentially threatening country, and the perspectives of its people on their lives and the country's future, one must consider a range of factors. These include China's economic reforms and rapid development, its geopolitical influence, cultural and societal transformations, as well as the government's policies and international relations. Additionally, examining the aspirations, concerns, and experiences of the Chinese populace is essential to gaining a holistic understanding of these complex issues.</p>
	<p>[DAY 2]</p> <p>Hukou System and migration</p> <p>The Hukou system in China is a household registration system that categorizes individuals as urban or rural residents, and it heavily influences access to social services, such as education and healthcare, as well as employment opportunities. The system has historically restricted rural residents' ability to migrate to urban areas and has contributed to the challenges faced by migrant workers.</p>

Migrant workers often leave their hometowns in search of better employment opportunities and higher wages in urban areas. However, they frequently encounter difficulties such as inadequate housing, limited access to social services, and separation from their families. The Hukou system exacerbates these challenges by restricting their access to essential urban services and benefits, contributing to the marginalized living conditions experienced by many migrant workers in urban areas. Understanding the complexities of the Hukou system and the experiences of migrant workers is essential to comprehending the impact of migration and urbanization in China.

[DAY 3]

Urbanization and the House Market: The impact of urbanization on the housing market, including trends in housing demand, development of urban infrastructure, and the challenges of providing affordable housing in rapidly growing urban areas.

The Collapse of the Real Estate Market: The factors leading to the collapse of the real estate market, including speculative bubbles, overvalued properties, and the economic and social repercussions of such a collapse on homeowners, investors, and the broader economy.

[DAY 4]

China's Media Censorship: The extensive control and regulation of media content by the Chinese government, including censorship of news, online platforms, and social media to align with state narratives and maintain political stability.

Booming of Social Media, Live Streaming and TikTok: The rapid growth and popularity of social media live streaming platforms and apps like TikTok (known as Douyin in China), their impact on Chinese internet culture, entertainment, and the challenges they pose to government censorship and control.

[DAY 5]

Popularity of Japanese and Korean Soap Operas in China: The widespread appeal and influence of Japanese and Korean television dramas in China, including their impact on Chinese popular culture, entertainment preferences, and the cultural exchange between East Asian countries.

Fan Culture: The dedicated and passionate fan communities that have emerged around Japanese and Korean soap operas in China, their influence on consumer behavior, social media trends, and the broader implications for cross-cultural interactions and media consumption.

[DAY 6]

Digital Economy and Live-Streaming E-commerce: The integration of live-streaming technology with e-commerce in China's digital economy, its impact on consumer behavior, marketing strategies, and the evolution of online retail and entertainment.

Women Entrepreneurs: The rising presence and influence of women entrepreneurs in China's digital economy, including their contributions to innovation, leadership, and the challenges and opportunities they encounter in the tech and e-commerce sectors.

[DAY 7]

Family Planning Policy: The historical and contemporary impact of China's family planning policies, including the One-Child Policy and its subsequent modifications, on population growth, demographic shifts, and social attitudes towards family size and planning.

[DAY 8]

Group Presentation

[DAY 9]

Filial Piety and Intergenerational Relationships: The traditional value of filial piety in Chinese culture and its influence on intergenerational relationships, caregiving dynamics, and the evolving role of elderly family members within modern family structures.

[DAY 10]

Domestic Violence: The prevalence, causes, and consequences of domestic violence within Chinese families, including efforts to address and prevent such abuse, changes in public awareness, and the impact on family dynamics and societal attitudes towards gender-based violence.

Divorce in China: The dynamics and trends of divorce in China, including the factors contributing to rising divorce rates, the legal and social implications of divorce, the impact on family structures, and the evolving attitudes towards marriage and relationships in Chinese society.

[DAY 11]

Love and Marriage in China:

Dating Apps and 相親 (Matchmaking): The impact of dating apps and traditional matchmaking practices on modern courtship and marriage in

	<p>China, including changes in social interaction, relationship dynamics, and the evolving role of technology in shaping romantic connections.</p> <p>New Rituals of Proposal and Wedding: The emergence of contemporary rituals and customs in marriage proposals and wedding ceremonies in China, reflecting shifts in cultural norms, individual expression, and the fusion of traditional and modern elements in matrimonial practices.</p>
	<p>[DAY 12]</p> <p>Virginity Discourses and Gendered Sexual Rights: The societal attitudes and cultural norms surrounding virginity, gendered expectations, and sexual rights in China, including the impact on individuals' autonomy, gender equality, and the broader discourse on sexual behavior and identity.</p> <p>Commercial Sex Work: The complexities and social issues related to commercial sex work in China, including the legal framework, public health concerns, social stigma, and the intersection of gender, labor rights, and human rights within the context of commercial sex work.</p>
	<p>[DAY 13]</p> <p>State, Market, and Feminism: The interplay between the state, market forces, and feminist movements in China, including the government's stance on feminist activism, the influence of market dynamics on gender equality, and the evolving landscape of feminist discourse within the context of state and market interactions.</p> <p>LGBTQ issues</p>
	<p>[DAY 14]</p> <p>Screening one iconic and influential movie that represents China screening and concluding the class</p>

*Course format, evaluation methods and class schedule may be subject to change.