

SOCI 280-401 / AMES 290-401: Social Issues in Contemporary China

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TR 3-4:30 MCNB 410

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OVERVIEW

China's transition to a market-oriented society has effected fundamental changes in the lives of citizens. As a discipline centrally interested in issues of inequality, sociology offers a unique perspective on these changes through its focus on the distribution of social welfare goods, such as wealth, health and education.

This class will consider pressing social concerns that China must struggle to address as it continues down the path of market reforms. Using topical problems to illustrate broader issues of participation in the new economy, we will consider questions such as the following: How are women and men faring differently in China's new labor market and workplaces? Are rural peasants and the emerging underclass of urban laid-off workers being left behind by market transition? How are minorities faring in China's transition? How does the emerging digital divide play into the dichotomies of east-west and urban-rural in China? What is the plight of millions of "floaters" migrating into China's cities, with minimal legal rights and protections? Can China's rapidly-changing public health system handle emerging diseases such as SARS and AIDS? How has the one-child policy affected women, children, and society in China? Who are the "missing girls" of China, and what are the social implications of their disappearance?

The objectives of the course are 1) to offer exposure to a broad overview of social issues in contemporary China, and 2) to familiarize students with available resources for learning about Chinese society. The class will combine lectures, academic readings, narrative accounts, films, and discussions. Students will make a short current events presentation, write a short background paper, complete a group "webliography", and complete a mid-term and final exam.

REQUIREMENTS

Assignment	Due	Length	Points
Mid-Term	10/28	NA	20
Group Webliography (annotated report, organized links)	11/11	3-5 Pages	15
Presentation	Prep. for 11/11	10-12 Min.	5
Background Paper	12/14	5-7 Pages	30
Current Events Presentation	Varies	3-5 Min.	5

Final	TBA	NA	20
Participation in In-Class Activities	NA	NA	5
Total:			100

Scale:

98-100=A+	88-<90=B+	78-<80=C+	68-<70=D+	<60=F
93-<98=A	83-<88=B	73-<78=C	63-<68=D	
90-<93=A-	80-<83=B-	70-<73=C-	60-<63=D-	

ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES

Group Webliography (annotated report for uploading to the course web site, organized links, presentation)

For this class, we define a “webliography” as a web page that organizes on-line and off-line resources on a topic of interest. In groups of 3-4, you will create a 3-5 page webliography consisting of the following elements:

- A brief, one-page overview of the topic.
- A set of annotated links to on-line and off-line resources for conducting research on that topic.

Each group will make a brief, informal presentation of their web page to the class.

Background Paper (report)

Background papers provide a critical assessment of available information and research on a specific policy issue or social problem. They are used by organizations, development agencies, government agencies, and scholars to prepare for large-scale projects or to provide a context for more focused research. On an individual basis, students will create a 5-7 page background paper on a social issue.

The paper should consist of the following elements:

- A one-paragraph rationale—you should come up with a plausible, hypothetical audience (or client) for your work, and a hypothetical assignment. For example, you might state that your background paper on son preference in rural China has been commissioned by a development agency (or an NGO, or the government, or another proponent) in preparation for a project designed to promote girls’ schooling in western China.
- An overview of relevant academic and policy research and other types of relevant information, such as published data and policies.
- Recommendations for your hypothetical client or audience, based on your findings.

Your paper should include a 2-3 page bibliography that includes books, leading journals in appropriate fields, and if relevant, sources of data or other information (e.g., policies, statistical information, etc.).

Current Events Presentation or Seminar Attendance Report

Students should sign up for current events presentations. These should be a brief, 3-5 minute *informal* presentations of articles from the English (or Chinese, if you prefer) press on a current social problem or phenomenon. Each presentation should consist of the following elements:

- a statement of where you found the article
- a brief overview of the content of the article
- a statement of how the article relates to social problems considered in class, and
- a discussion question for the class to consider.

You should submit one paragraph containing the above elements to me, along with a hard copy of the article. You should also provide directions on how to access the article (such as a web address of the paper or the name of the database where you found the paper).

PLEASE NOTE: As an alternative to a current events presentation, you may choose to attend a university seminar on a topic related to China. In order to receive credit, you should submit a one-page summary and critique of the talk.

Exams

The first and second tests will be in-class, containing identifications/definitions and short-essay questions. The tests will ask students to demonstrate a clear grasp of readings and offer critical discussions of issues raised in readings. I will provide a review sheet in advance of the exam that will give clear guidelines about topics that will be covered.

Class Participation

Discussions of the issues raised in this course will be greatly enriched by active contributions from all class members. A student's participation will be evaluated in the following terms:

- Timely attendance of class sessions.
- Demonstration of preparedness through active, informed contributions to the class discussions.
- Full participation in any in-class activities.
- Timely submission of all assignments.

CLASS POLICIES

Assignment Submission Policy

Assignments are due by the **start of class on the specified due date**. Late submission (including submission at the end of class) will result in a reduction of the assignment score by ten percent per day.

Please note: in fairness to all class members, I cannot make exceptions to this policy except in cases of well-documented emergencies, such as medical emergencies.

Evaluation Policy

In general, assignments will be evaluated on two scales: (1) substantive merit and (2) logic, flow, and clarity of writing.

Regarding the first point, papers must exhibit evidence that students have made full use of appropriate academic databases available through Penn's library. Regarding the second, papers should be well organized, the writing should be polished, and the text should not contain typographical, grammatical, or spelling errors.

Please note that for written assignments, normal standards of academic integrity apply. SOURCE

MATERIALS MUST BE FULLY REFERENCED. If you have questions about what “fully referenced” means, please come see me before completing assignments. The format for footnotes, references, etc. should consistently follow a standard academic format of your choice.

CLASS MATERIALS

The books listed below have been placed on order at the Penn Book Center (www.pennbookcenter.com). The Penn Book Center is located at 130 S. 34th St. (34th and Sansom Streets) Philadelphia, PA 19104, Phone: (215) 222-7600, Fax: (215) 222-7610, E-mail: anick@juno.com. Hours are Monday-Friday 10am-6pm and Saturday 10am-4pm (closed on Sunday).

1. Bossen, Laurel. 2002. *Chinese Women and Rural Development: Sixty Years of Change in Lu Village*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield; ISBN: 0742511081.
2. Solinger, Dorothy J. 1999. *Contesting Citizenship in Urban China: Peasant Migrants, the State, and the Logic of the Market*. Berkeley: University of California Press; ISBN: 0520217969.
3. Tang, Wenfang and William L. Parish. 2000. *Chinese Urban Life Under Reform*. New York: Cambridge University Press; ISBN: 0-521-77085-8.
4. Yang, Erche Namu and Christine Mathieu. 2003. *Leaving Mother Lake: A Girlhood at the End of the World*. Boston: Little Brown and Company; ISBN: 0316124710.

All other readings are offered free of charge through the course Blackboard site.

CLASS SCHEDULE (🎬=FILMS 📺=OTHER MULTI-MEDIA)

I. Introduction

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 9

Introduction and Logistics

Hale, David and Lyric Hughes Hale. 2003. “China Takes Off.” *Foreign Affairs* 82 (6): 36-53.

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 14

Context of Market Reforms

🎬 Viewing of China Yellow, China Blue (1949-1996)

THURSDAY SEPT 16

Library Resources for Studying Social Issues in China

Lecture by Jidong Yang, Chinese Studies Librarian at Penn, on resources available to you in your quest to learn more about China (and in your quest to complete the assignments for this class).

NOTE: Today’s class will meet in the **Goldstein Electronic Classroom**, located on the 1st floor of Van Pelt Library.

II. Market Reforms and Social Goods

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2004

Reforms and Urban Social Change

Tang, Wenfang and William L. Parish. 2000. *Chinese Urban Life Under Reform*. New York: Cambridge University Press; ISBN: 0-521-77085-8. Chapter 1, "Socialist and Market Contracts;" Chapter 2, "The Urban Social World;" Chapter 3, "Life Chances: Education and Jobs"; and Chapter 4, "Economic Rewards".

☛ Short selections from and discussion of *China in the Red*

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2004

Reforms, Growth and Poverty

Yao, Shujie. 2000. "Economic Development and Poverty Reduction in China Over 20 Years of Reforms." *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 48 (3): 447-74.

2001. White Paper on Poverty Reduction in Rural Areas. Full text contained in "China Issues White Paper on Poverty Reduction in Rural Areas"; BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific - Political; Oct 15, 2001; 1. (Skim to understand location of rural poverty in China.)

Song, Shunfeng. 2003. "Policy Issues of China's Urban Unemployment." *Contemporary Economic Policy* 21 (2): 258-270.

Qian, Zhihong and Tai-Chee Wong. 2000. "The Rising Urban Poverty: A Dilemma of Market Reforms in China." *Journal of Contemporary China* 9 (23) : 113-126.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2004, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2004

Social Welfare Reforms: Education and Health

Hannum, Emily and Albert Park. 2002. "Educating China's Rural Children in the 21st Century." *Harvard China Review* 3 (2): 8-14.

Strand, Mark A. and Alice I. Chen. 2002. "Rural Health Care in North China in an Era of Rapid Economic Change." *The Yale-China Health Journal* (<http://www.yalechina.org/publications/healthjournal/>) 1 (Autumn):11-24.

Liu, Xingzhu and Anne Mills. 2002. "Financing Reforms of Public Health Services in China: Lessons for Other Nations." *Social Science and Medicine* 54:1691-1698.

Gao, J, S. Tang, R. Tolhurst, and K. Rao. 2001. "Changing Access to Health Services in Urban China: Implications for Equity." *Health Policy and Planning* 16 (3): 302-312.

☛ Short selections from and discussion of *China in the Red*

III. Women's Issues

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 05, 2004

Overview

☛ Viewing of *From Mao Towards Full Equality (Chinese Women, the Great Step Forward)*

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 07, 2004

Women and Rural Socio-Economic Change

Bossen, Laurel. 2002. *Chinese Women and Rural Development: Sixty Years of Change in Lu Village*. Lanham, Md: Rowman and Littlefield. (As you read, please focus on a) what you perceive as the important continuities and changes in rural women's lives, b) the pros and cons of changes, and c) how the accounts related in the book can be placed in the context of larger social policy changes. Please be prepared to offer discussion questions and to defend your own views in a discussion of these themes.)

Phillips, Michael R., Xianyan Li and Yanping Zhang. 2002. "Suicide Rates in China." *The Lancet* 359 (9309): 835-840.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2004

Women and Urban Socio-Economic Change

Tang, Wenfang and William L. Parish. 2000. *Chinese Urban Life Under Reform*. New York: Cambridge University Press; ISBN: 0-521-77085-8. chapter 9, Gender and Work, and Chapter 10, Gender and Family.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2004; TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2004

Family Planning, Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights

Greenhalgh, Susan. 2001. "Fresh Winds in Beijing: Chinese Feminists Speak Out on the One-child Policy and Women's Lives." *Signs* 26 (3): 847-888.

Chu, Junhong. 2001. "Prenatal Sex Determination and Sex-Selective Abortion in Rural Central China." *Population and Development Review* 27 (2): 259-281.

☛ Viewing and discussion of *Through Chinese Women's Eyes*

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2004

Mid-Term Exam

IV. Rural Poverty, Children and Youth

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2004; TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 02, 2004

Rural Poverty, Families and Child Welfare

Attané, Isabelle. 2002. "A Half Century of Chinese Socialism: The Changing Fortunes of Peasant Families." *Journal of Family History* (27) 2: 150-171.

Ma, Yan (with Pierre Haski). 2004. *The Diary of Ma Yan*. London: Virago Press (Selections on Blackboard site).

☛ Viewing and discussion of *Sparrow Village*

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 04, 2004

The Girl Child: Discrimination in Life Chances and Education Chances?

Croll, Elisabeth. 2001. *Endangered Daughters: Discrimination and Development in Asia*. New York: Routledge (photocopied sections on Blackboard).

Tsui, Ming and Lynne Rich. 2002. "The Only Child and Educational Opportunity for Girls in Urban China." *Gender and Society* 16 (1): 74-92.

Hannum, Emily and Peggy Kong. 2002. Family Sources of Educational Gender Inequality in Rural China: A Critical Assessment.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 09, 2004

Webliography Presentations

V. Part III: Migration and Migrant Experiences

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2004

Labor Migration and the Floating Population

Liang, Zai. 2001. "The Age of Migration in China." *Population and Development Review* 27 (3): 499-524.

Goodkind, Daniel and Loraine A. West. 2002. "China's Floating Population: Definitions, Data and Recent Findings." *Urban Studies* 39 (12):2237-2250.

☛ View and discuss short film *Working Sister*

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2004

The Floating Population: A New Urban Underclass?

Solinger, Dorothy J. 1999. *Contesting Citizenship in Urban China: Peasant Migrants, the State, and the Logic of the Market*. Berkeley: University of California Press. (As you read this book, please prepare for a discussion of the policy challenges facing the government in dealing with rural-urban migration and the floating population. Be able to give two examples of specific policy challenges, and articulate a position on how the government could address these challenges. Be able to defend this position using material from Solinger and the other migration readings.)

Webliography Presentations (only if needed)

VI. Part IV: Ethnicity

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2004

Demographics of China and Issues facing Minority Ethnic Groups

Iredale, Robyn, Naran Bilik, Wang Su, Fei Guo, and Caroline Hoy. 2001. *Contemporary Minority Migration, Education and Ethnicity in China*. Chapter 3, "Ethnicity and Minority Education Policy," pp. 51-85. Edward Elgar: Northampton Mass.

Schein, Louisa. 1997. "Gender and Internal Orientalism in China." *Modern China* 23 (1): 69-99.

Webliography Presentations (only if needed)

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2004; TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2004

Case Discussion: Mosuo

Yang, Erche Namu and Christine Mathieu. 2003. *Leaving Mother Lake: A Girlhood at the End of the World*. Boston: Little Brown and Company. (Be prepared to give examples of linkages between this case and broad themes related to ethnicity, rural social change, and the rural-urban divide. Please prepare discussion points on this issue.)

☛ Viewing and discussion of *Without Fathers or Husbands*

VII. Special Topics: HIV in China

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 02, 2004

Scope of HIV in China

Gill, Bates, Jennifer Chang, and Sarah Palmer. 2002. "China's HIV Crisis." *Foreign Affairs* 81 (2): 96-110.

Eberstadt, Nicholas. 2002. "The Future of AIDS." *Foreign Affairs* 81 (6):22-(NA).

☰ Discussion of short excerpts from *The Connection* radio program on HIV in CHINA.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 07, 2004

Narrative Experiences

Gao, Yaojie. 2001. "My AIDS Prevention Journey." The American Embassy in China, Sources for the Study of Environment, Science, Technology and Health in the PRC.

<http://www.usembassy-china.org.cn/sandt/gaoyaojie--aidsprevention.html>, available through Blackboard.

☰ Discussion of interview selections from a BBC radio program on living with HIV in CHINA.

VIII. Special Topics: Information Revolution

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 09, 2004

The Internet Explosion; Combating the Digital Divide

Hachigian, Nina. 2001. "China's Cyber-Strategy." *Foreign Affairs* 80 (2):118-134.

China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC [sic]). 2003. 12th Statistical Survey on the Internet Development in China, <http://www.cnnic.net.cn/download/manual/en-reports/12.pdf>, available through Blackboard.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2004

Controlling Information Flow

Zittrain, Jonathan and Benjamin Edelman. 2002. Empirical Analysis of Internet Filtering in China. Berkman Center for Internet and Society, Harvard Law School,

<http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/filtering/china/>, available through Blackboard.

☞ View *China Opens Up: Freedom and Censorship in China*