

SOCI2216/UGEC2963 Social Problems in China

Second Term, 2020/21

Friday 9:30-11:15am Online Teaching

Instructor: Prof. Sara Hua ZHONG (office hour: by appointment)
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Tutors:

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

China's opening to the world has facilitated not only massive social and economic transformations, but also the emergence of many social problems. This course explores some of the major social problems faced by modern China. The nature of these social problems and their possible causes will be critically examined, in the context of a changing China under modernization, with the help of related concepts and theories in sociology. By the end of the course, students are expected to have a basic understanding of the major social problems in contemporary China and their implications for social and economic development of China in future.

This class touches upon various Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). There is an emphasis on "Reduced Inequality" (Goal 10). You can find a full list of the 17 goals and their targets here: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

The grade descriptors for this course are as follows:

Grade A: Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.

Grade A-: Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.

Grade 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.

Grade C: Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.

Grade D: Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes.

Grade F: Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirement.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will be able to gain a basic intellectual understanding of the nature and possible causes of the major social problems faced by a changing China.
2. Students will be able to develop critical thinking on the public perception of social problems in

China.

3. Students will be able to apply the theoretical perspectives and concepts gained from this course to analyze social problems they encounter in contemporary China.

HONESTY IN ACADEMIC WORK

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/academic_honesty/.

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. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

COURSE ASSESSMENT

1 Group Tutorial Presentation & Paper: 35%

Students will divide themselves into groups of 2 or 3 (2 is preferable). Each group is required to do a presentation (15%) on a topic and write a tutorial paper (20%). Paper topics and guidelines will be provided in the first tutorial class. The objective of the tutorial paper is to encourage students to reap more in-depth understanding of some specific social problem topics related to the lecture content. The length of the main text of the paper should be around 8-10 pages in English (double space and font size 12). But not less than 8 pages.

In addition to submitting a soft copy of the group tutorial paper in the form of a computer-generated document via VeriGuide, a soft copy with the signed VeriGuide receipt should be submitted to the corresponding Blackboard folder on or before April 30, 2021 (Friday). Late submission would receive a 10% daily deduction from your paper marks.

2 Tutorial Performance 15% (two short summaries 5% & participation 10%)

There will be five tutorial lessons and they are mainly conducted in English. Participation of each tutorial class is required. In the first tutorial lesson, students should submit two summaries (maximum 300 words each) about two assigned readings. At the end of each summary, please raise 2-3 questions on the reading. These questions will be discussed in the tutorial class. Five points for each summary but totally occupy 5% of your overall grade. Students should discuss the two required readings led by tutors and need to form their paper groups at this time.

In the following three tutorials, the tutor will lead each group to complete the group paper step by step. In the last tutorial, all groups need to present their papers and each of the presentation is about 15-20 minutes. In the tutorial classes, students should not just focus on

their own topics. There will be an emphasis on students' discussions, which will be in the form of exchanging ideas and giving comments on the presentations made by different groups. Detailed tutorial guidance will be announced later.

3 Class Discussion Questions: 10%

In total five short essay questions (related to the class content learnt on that day) will be distributed at the end of some classes. Students are required to turn in their answers in the following class (2 points each). The answers could be hand-writing and the length is about one paragraph. The summaries of these essay question answers will be uploaded to blackboard.

4 Final exam: 40%

The final online exam includes two components: 20 MC questions and TWO essay questions in our last class (open-book). The questions will cover lecture content and required readings. This final exam aims to evaluate students' sociological understanding of social problems in China. The detailed format and overview will be announced later.

COURSE CONTENT & REQUIRED READINGS

(subject to change with prior notice)

1. Jan 15: The Sociological Approach to Social Problems

Rubington, E. and M.S. Weinberg. 2011. *The Study of Social Problems—Seven Perspectives (Chapter 9: Pp 357-363)*. London: Sage Publications.

Nisbet, R.A. 1961. "The Study of Social Problems", Pp 3-18 in *Contemporary Social Problems*, edited by R.K. Merton and R.A. Nisbet. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.

2. Jan 22: Modernization and Social Problems in China

Levy, Marion J. "Patterns (structures) of modernization and political development." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 358.1 (1965): 29-40.

Yang, Kuo-Shu. "Chinese responses to modernization: A psychological analysis." *Asian Journal of Social Psychology* 1.1 (1998): 75-97.

Saich, Tony. 2004. "China's Changing Road to Development: Political History, 1949-78", Pp 25-56 in *Governance and Politics in China*. NY: Palgrave MacMillan.

3. Jan 29: Evolution of the Communist Party and State since 1978 (Political Problem)

Walder, Andrew G. 1995. "The Quiet Revolution from Within: Economic Reform as a source of Political Decline", Pp. 1-26 in *The Waning of the Communist State: Economic Origins of Political Decline in China and Hungary*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Chan, K.M. 2001. "Towards an integrated model of corruption: Opportunities and control in China." *International Journal of Public Administration* 23(4):507-551.

4. Feb 5: Rural Problems

Oi, Jean C. and Scott Rozelle. 2000. "Elections and Power: the Locus of Decision-Making in Chinese Villages." *The China Quarterly* 162: 513-539.

Huang, Philip, Gao Yuan, and Yusheng Peng. 2012. "Capitalization without Proletarianization in China's Agricultural Development." *Modern China* 38 (2): 139-173.

5. Feb 19: Urbanization and migration

Hu, X., Wang, G.T. and Zou, Y. 2002. "Political economy of the floating Chinese population." *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 32(4):536-552.

Zhao, Shaohua. 2011. "What determines migrant workers' life chances in contemporary China? Hukou, social exclusion and the market." *Modern China* 37: 243-285.

6. Feb 26: Social inequality

Bian, Yanjie. 2002. "Chinese Social Stratification and Social Mobility." *Annual Review of Sociology* 28: 91-116.

Chen, W., Wu, X., & Miao, J. 2019. "Housing and Subjective Class Identification in Urban China". *Chinese Sociological Review* 51(3): 221-250.

7. March 5: Social Resistance

Pei, Min Xin. 2010. "Rights and resistance: the changing contexts of the dissident movement", Pp 22-46 in *Chinese society: change, conflict and resistance*, edited by Elizabeth J. Perry and Mark Selden. New York: Routledge.

Spires, Anthony J. 2011. "Contingent Symbiosis and Civil Society in an Authoritarian State: Understanding the Survival of China's Grassroots NGOs." *American Journal of Sociology* 117(1):1-45.

8. March 12: Population and the challenge of Chinese growth

Greenhalgh, Susan. 2003. "Science, Modernity, and the Making of China's One-Child Policy". *Population and Development Review* 29: 163-196.

Zhao, Zhongwei & Wei Chen. 2011. "China's far below-replacement fertility and its long-term impact: Comments on the preliminary results of the 2010 census". *Demographic Research* 25: 819-835.

9. March 19: Crime trends and responses of criminal justice system

Liu, J. 2005. "Crime patterns during the market transition in China." *British Journal of Criminology* 45: 613-633.

Biddulph, S., Nesossi, E., & Trevaskes, S. 2017. "Criminal justice reform in the Xi Jinping era." *China Law and Society Review* 2(1): 63-128.

10. March 26: Environmental Problems

Xu, Yuan. 2020. *Environmental Policy and Air Pollution in China* (Chapter 8). Routledge.

Wu, Fengshi and Edmonds, Richard L. 2017. "China's Three-Fold Environmental Degradation" in *Critical Issues in Contemporary China*, 2nd edition, edited by Czeslaw Tubilewicz, Routledge. Available at SSRN:
https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Fengshi_Wu/publication/310463191_China's_Three-Fold_Environmental_Degradation/links/582eb5d508ae102f072ed6cc.pdf

11. April 9: Illicit Drugs and AIDS

Zhang, Yunran and Jakob Demant. *Forthcoming*. "Effects of self-control, deviant peers, and family attachments on illicit drug use among Chinese users: A gender-specific analysis." *Drug and Alcohol Review*

Guo, Z., Xiao, D., Xu, S., & He, K. 2020. Analysis and forecast of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Mainland China, 1985–2016. *Journal of Public Health* 42(4): e458-e467.

12. April 16: Good/Bad Technology

Lüthje, B. 2019. "Platform Capitalism 'Made in China'? Intelligent Manufacturing, Taobao Villages and the Restructuring of Work". *Science, Technology and Society* 24(2): 199- 217.

Wang, H., Cai, T., Mou, Y., & Shi, F. 2018. Traditional resources, Internet resources, and youth online political participation: The resource theory revisited in the Chinese context. *Chinese Sociological Review* 50(2): 115-136.

13. April 23: In-Class Test (open-book)

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

1. Perry, Elizabeth J and Mark Selden (ed.). 2010. *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict and Resistance* (3rd edition). Routledge.
2. Chan, Kin Man & Hua Zhong (ed.). 2016. *A Difficult Transition: Modernization and the Chinese Society (in Chinese)*. CUHK press.

REMARKS

- Weekly lecture notes and required readings will be uploaded to Blackboard on every Thursday.
- Please inform the TA or the instructor about your absence and the reason (with evidence) BEFORE that class/tutorial to allow the necessary arrangements.
- Please check the following website for Basics on Contemporary China:
<http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/soc/socionexus/resources/chisoc/f-chisoc.htm>