The course focuses on today’s China where economic reform has brought drastic changes to people’s daily life. Readings of the course are selected from political, economic, social, cultural, and literary perspectives to help students develop their literary critiques and intellectual inquiry. The course materials include genres of novels, essays, journal reports, and films published in the 1990s and the beginning of the 21st century. The course materials present the social transformation, and changes of people’s understanding of Chinese modernity and economic globalization. They reveal conflicts between conventional Chinese values and the modern legal system, fast economic development and traditional ways of living, the prosperity of cities and the poverty of the country, materialism and a good sense of values.

The course intends to develop students’ critical thinking and analytical skills, to broaden their knowledge on today’s China by requiring them to use the larger socio-cultural context to support their analysis and interpretation, to develop their understanding of the complexity of socio-cultural issues, and consequently, to think and function independently as responsible individuals. The course is taught in English. All the readings are in English or English translation and films are English subtitled.

Students are expected to know the UH Academic Honesty Policy. Any violations will be duly processed. Link: [http://www.uh.edu/dos/hdbk/acad/achonpol.html](http://www.uh.edu/dos/hdbk/acad/achonpol.html)

The learning outcomes of the course:

1. To demonstrate your understanding of the course readings as expressions of individual and human values within an historical and social context.
2. To demonstrate your critical thinking on the social and cultural discussed in the course.
3. To express your original ideas and viewpoints analytically, clearly, and coherently.

Required Readings


1. Chen shixu: The general and the small town
2. Su Shuyang: Between life and death
3. Liu Xinwu: Black Walls
4. Bi Shumin: One centimeter
5. Cai Cehai: The distant sound of tree felling
6. Wang Anyi: Life in a small courtyard
7. Wang Anyi: Between themselves


Required Films

- Carma Hinton, *Morning Sun*
- Zhang Yimou, *To live*
- Zhou Xiaowen, *Ermo*
- Feng Xiaogang, *Big Shot’s Funeral*
- Yang Yazou, *Pretty Big Feet*
- Wu Tianming, *C. E. O.*
- Zhang Yimou, *Story of Qiuju*
- Wang Xiaoshuai, *Beijing Bicycle*
- Zhang Yang, *Shower*

Required electronic materials: Available through Webct.

Recommended books and films

Books

Films
Zhang Yimou, *Not one less*
Huang Jianzhong, *Spring Festival*
Zhang Yimou, *The Story of Qiu Ju*
Chen Kaige, *Together*

Course Requirements and Grading
1. Two essays based on the readings and films. The first essay is on a film plus stories from the course, the second is on a chapter chosen from chapters 7-12 in the book by Link et al (50%)
2. Four quizzes on the required readings and films (20%)
3. Two Oral presentations. You will have 15 minutes to present your essay in class. Group (2 students) presentation is welcome. The first one is on the film and stories and the second is on one chapter chosen from Chapters 7-12 (20%)
4. Attendance and participation (10%). Try to maintain perfect attendance. You will have one free cut. You will lose one point for each additional absence. Two to three times of tardiness will be considered as one absence. Participation in the class discussion is important.

Notes on the essays and quizzes.
1. The length of the essays: minimum 1000 words or 4 pages each.
2. All the essays are assigned to you as home work. Please be aware of the due day in Course Schedule below.
3. All the quizzes are close-book tests.

90-100: A- --A; 80-89: B- --B+; 70-79: C- --C+; 60-69: D- --D+; Below 60: F.

Course Schedule
Wk 1, 8/22, 24  Introduction to the course, readings, and expectations.
   Introduction to the Cultural Revolution 1967-1977 and Mao Zedong
   Film screening: *The morning Sun*

WK 2, 8/29, 31  Introduction to the Cultural Reflection Movement in the 1980’s.
   Unit 1: The Cultural Revolution.
   Introduction to Zhang Yimou, and the events in *To live*.
   Assignments: Film screening: *To live*;
   Readings: Stories 1, 2, and 3: The General and Small Town, Between Life and Death, Black Walls.

Wk 3, 9/5, 7  Introduction: *Popular China* and Perry Link
   Unit 2: Search for modernity and desire for globalization
   Quiz 1 on Stories 1 2 and 3 and the film *To live*.
   Discussion *To live* and Stories 1 and 2.
   Film screening: *Er Mo*
   Assignments: Chapter 1 of *Popular China* “I believe you can fly”, the story: One Centimeter.

Wk 4, 9/12, 14  Discussion of Chapter 1 and the story in the previous week.
   Unit 3: Corruption
   Introduction to Chapter 2: Corruption in Popular Culture.
   Film screening: *Big Shot’s Funeral*
   Assignments: Chapter 2

Wk 5, 9/19, 21  Quiz 2 on Chapters 1 and 2, and story One centimeter.
   Discussion: Chapter 2 and *Big Shot’s Funeral*
   Assignments: Chapter 3 and story The distant sound of tree felling.

Wk 6, 9/26, 28  Discussion Chapter 3 and the story The distant sound of tree felling.
   Unit 4: Commercialization and Gender Studies
   Film screening: *Pretty Big Feet*
   Assignments: Chapters 4 and stories: Life in the courtyard, Between themselves.

Wk 7, 10/3, 5  Quiz 3 on Chapters 3 and 4 and the last three stories.
   Unit 5: Adaptation
   Discussion of Chapter 4 and the stories.
   Film Screening: *CEO*
   Assignments: presentations for the next week.
Wk 8, 10/10, 12  Students presentation on a film and stories.  
Assignments: Chapters 5 and 6

Wk 9, 10/17, 19  Quiz 4 on Chapters 5 and 6. The first paper on film and stories is due.  
Unit 6: Social development and social problems  
Discussion: Chapters 5 and 6  
Assignments: prepare for your presentation. Submit your choice the chapter for the presentation.

Wk 10, 10/24, 26  Introduction of Chapter 7  
Unit 7: Urban Women  
Film screening Story of QL?  
Assignments: Reading Chapter 7, Prepare your presentation

Wk 11, 10/31, 11/2 Finishing the film and discussion Chapter 7.  
Unit 8: Migrant workers  
Film screening: Beijing Bicycle  
Assignments: Prepare your presentation

Wk 12, 11/7, 9  Discuss Chapter 7 and Unit 8: Migrant workers  
Film screening: Shower

Wk 13, 11/14, 16  Students presentation and discussion  
Wk 14, 11/21  Students presentation and discussion  
Wk 15, 11/28, 30  Cultural Day! The second essay is due. Course evaluation.