

University of North Carolina at Greensboro
MLS 610G – The Dragon Awakes: Charting the Path of Modern China

Online Course (CRN 13813)

Spring Semester 2006

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Introduction:

Napoleon once famously admonished Europe to “let China sleep, for when she awakes she will shake the world.” In recent years the People’s Republic of China has certainly stirred, and the whole world has taken notice. However, the China’s economic stirrings have been accompanied by mounting social and cultural tensions at the heart of Chinese society. In this course we will examine the political, social and cultural roots of modern China and discuss the varied nature of the nation’s future challenges. Topics will include state, society, and mass culture in the throes of reform, the global implications of China’s economic and diplomatic “Grand Strategy,” the widening urban-rural divide, and the role of the individual and individual dissent in modern Chinese society.

Students taking this course should reach the following goals by the end of the semester:

- ❑ Construct persuasive written arguments with the use of primary source materials as supporting evidence.
- ❑ Utilize the latest methods of Web-based technology to communicate with fellow students.
- ❑ Understand better the effect the ancient past has had on the modern world.
- ❑ Exhibit self-motivation and self-expression by exploring and asking questions regarding historical topics beyond personal life experiences.

Course Requirements

I expect all students to be active and productive participants during the semester. Moreover, the completion of all written assignments is necessary for a passing grade. No "incompletes" will be given for this class. Please remember to plan ahead! I will also require that all students establish e-mail accounts with Internet access. This course will occasionally involve interaction between the instructor and students outside of the lecture period. Please set up these accounts as soon as possible. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Grading:

| | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Graded Case Studies | 30% (15% each) |
| Short Paper #1 | 15% |
| Short Paper #2 | 15% |

Class Participation 40%

Detailed Description of Graded Assignments

1. Class presentations

All students will be required to complete two case studies to the class during the semester. We will discuss the nature of these exercises later on in the course.

2. Papers

The two “think piece” papers, to be written on assigned topics, will be based on your readings. This paper is not a research paper; therefore, no outside reading is required. However, the quality of your writing, particularly the clarity and persuasiveness of your argument, will factor into the final grading. Late papers will be penalized half a letter grade for each day beyond the original due date.

3. Class Participation

Discussion and the exchange of ideas are very important components of this course. Everyone will be required to participate, and you should feel free to ask questions at any time. Each student will enter into on-line discussions having read the texts and prepared to discuss them. The “participation” portion of the final grade is will calculated from the quality and quantity of the discussion submissions one makes.

Web Site notes

Students can access on-line course information, such as scheduled events (i.e. the syllabus), as well as links to web sites of interest to individual members of our class. However, I strongly urge everyone to visit the site *Critical Thinking on the Web: A Directory of Quality Online Resources* (<http://www.philosophy.unimelb.edu.au/reason/critical/>) before "surfing" through external links to these on-line materials. Moreover, I may include additional materials on the library's Electronic Reserve list. Please refer to the class Blackboard site periodically for such materials.

Required Reading

1. Gitting, John. *The Changing Face of China: From Mao to Market*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005. ISBN: 0192806122.
2. Blum, Susan D. and Lionel M. Jensen, eds. *China Off Center: Mapping the Margins of the Middle Kingdom*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002. ISBN: 0824825772.
3. Johnson, Ian. *Wild Grass: Three Stories of Change in Modern China*. New York: Vintage, 2005. ISBN: 0375719199.

4. Dai Sijie. *Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress*. New York: Knopf, 2001. ISBN: 037541309X.

Required Video

1. Chen Kaige. *Farewell My Concubine* (1993). US DVD Miramax Home Entertainment, 1999. ASIN: B00002RAPT.

2. *Tug of War: The Story of Taiwan* (1998). US VHS WGBH studio. ASIN: 6305374775

NOTE: Students can purchase this video at:

<http://shop.wgbh.org/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/ProductDisplay?storeId=11051&catalogId=10051&productId=11636&langId=-1>

Please allow enough time for delivery. This video is required for Case Study 1 in Unit 1 (see calendar for exact date).

All other materials for this course will be available on electronic reserve.