

**SOCY 145/EAST 380: Inequality and Social Change in China,  
Fall 2020**

**Instructor:** Emma Zang ([emma.zang@yale.edu](mailto:emma.zang@yale.edu))

**Class Meeting Time:** Tuesday & Thursday 3:30-4:20pm

**Office Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday 1-3pm. Make an appointment here

(<https://signup.com/go/CeAKCFT>)

**Zoom Link:** <https://yale.zoom.us/j/92006960800>

**Overview:**

This course offers an introduction to major social and economic issues in contemporary China. It provides a survey of the ongoing reforms and the Chinese society in conjunction with a focus on selected policy issues. There are two class meetings every week. In most weeks, the first class is reserved for a lecture by the instructor or a guest lecturer, and the second class is reserved for student-led discussions of pre-circulated questions. This course is designed for undergraduates and Masters students.

**Objectives:**

- Understand how social and economic institutions have evolved in China since the late 1970s, with a focus on structural conditions since 2000
- Examine how individual lives have been shaped by institutional continuities and change
- Appreciate the context and complexity of social reforms
- Form a deeper understanding of social problems within the Chinese context

**Required Materials:**

- Naughton, B. J. (2018). *The Chinese Economy: Adaptation and Growth*. MIT Press.

Other readings (such as research papers) will be uploaded to the course website when needed.

**Course Requirements:**

- **Student-led discussions.** Each student is expected to lead class discussion at least once throughout the semester. Students will be assigned to groups. Each group should read the supplemental materials assigned for their week, give a mini-lecture, and lead class discussion on questions that they have pre-circulated to the class. Responses from the rest of the students on how much they think they have learned in the class that week will determine your grade.
- **Debate.** There will be two debates throughout the semester. Students will be assigned to groups and each student is expected to participate in one of the debates. One week before their debate, each student should send the instructor a two-page opening demo articulating their main arguments. The grading of the debate performance is based on the quality of the opening demo, the logic of the arguments during the debate, and the usage of qualitative and quantitative evidence supporting the arguments.
- **Final paper.** Each student is required to pursue a semester-long project. Students are required to integrate readings covered in the course, search for more literature, and conduct an in-depth analysis on a topic they are interested in. The final report is expected to be at least 10 pages for undergraduates and 20 pages for graduate students

(double-spaced, excluding figures, tables and references). The final paper is due on December 15<sup>th</sup>.

- **Interview.** Students are required to interview someone with a mainland China background and write up a report. The interviewee cannot be someone from the class. Students should meet with their interviewee for at least three times throughout the semester, and make sense of their personal life story with the knowledge learned from this course. After each meeting with their interviewee, students should submit a 2-page summary of the meeting. The report should be around 10 pages (double-spaced).
- **No late submissions are accepted without a dean's excuse.**

**Course Assessment:**

See the table below for grade allocation and cut-points:

Grade Allocation		Cut-points for Final Grades		
Item	% of Final Grade	Final grade (undergraduate)	Final grade (graduate)	% Point Range
Student-led discussions	20%	A	Honors	95-100
Debate performance	20%	A-	Honors	90-94
Final project	40%	B	High Pass	85-89
Interview	20%	B-	High Pass	80-84
		C	Pass	75-79
		C-	Pass	70-74
		D	Fail	65-69
		D-	Fail	60-64
		F	Fail	0-59

**Class Participation:**

I expect you to participate actively in this course. As you likely already know, the best way to learn is to be directly involved in making meaning out of the knowledge with which we're wrestling. Not only do I welcome your comments, thoughts, questions, and challenges – I expect them. From my perspective, active participation means that you come prepared to be intellectually curious, emotionally and cognitively present, and ready to engage in our class and its community.

**Academic Integrity:**

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are unacceptable and be handled according to university guidelines. The instructor will strictly adhere to university regulations concerning academic integrity, and shall report all suspected violations of the policy (including suspicion of plagiarism and/or cheating). Familiarize yourself with the university's policy on academic integrity which can be found at: <http://yalecollege.yale.edu/content/cheating-plagiarismand-documentation>.

**Disability Statement:**

Students with disabilities that may affect their ability to participate fully in the class or to complete all course requirements are encouraged to bring this to the instructor's attention promptly so that appropriate accommodations can be made. Please also see the website of

Yale Resource Office on Disabilities for more information (<https://rod.yale.edu/student-information>).

**Preferred Contact:**

Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor via email with any questions or comments. Expect a response within two business days of email delivery.

**Course Schedule:**

Week	Topics	Required Readings	Supplementary Readings
Week 1	<p>Course Overview</p> <p>Topic 1 (population): <i>Who are the people living in China?</i></p>	<p>Chapter 2 in Naughton (2018)</p> <p>Wu, X., &amp; He, G. (2016). Changing ethnic stratification in contemporary China. <i>Journal of Contemporary China</i>, 25(102), 938-954.</p>	<p>YouTube video: 101 Facts About China (<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84De2XheYEo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84De2XheYEo</a>).</p> <p>Documentary: A Bite of China 舌尖上的中国 (you can randomly watch an episode or two)</p>
Week 2	<p>Topic 2 (Income and Wealth): <i>How well-off is China's lower class, middle class, and higher class?</i></p>	<p>Chapter 10 in Naughton (2018)</p> <p>Piketty, T., Yang, L., &amp; Zucman, G. (2019). Capital accumulation, private property, and rising inequality in China, 1978–2015. <i>American Economic Review</i>, 109(7), 2469-96.</p> <p>Xie Yu &amp; Yongai Jin, 2015. "Household Wealth in China," <i>Chinese Sociological Review</i> 47.3:203-229.</p> <p>Xie, Y., &amp; Zhou, X. (2014). Income inequality in today's China. <i>Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences</i>, 111(19), 6928-6933.</p> <p>Gao, Q., Ying, Q., &amp; Luo, D. (2015). Hidden income and occupational background: Evidence from Guangzhou. <i>Journal of Contemporary China</i>, 24(94), 721-741.</p>	<p>Chapter 3-5 in Naughton (2018)</p>

<p>Week 3</p>	<p>Topic 3 (Marriage and Family): <i>What is different about dating and getting married in China?</i></p>	<p>Han, H. (2010). Trends in educational assortative marriage in China from 1970 to 2000. <i>Demographic Research</i>, 22, 733-770.</p> <p>Yu, J., &amp; Xie, Y. (2015). Changes in the determinants of marriage entry in post-reform urban China. <i>Demography</i>, 52(6), 1869-1892.</p> <p>Mu, Z., &amp; Xie, Y. (2014). Marital age homogamy in China: A reversal of trend in the reform era?. <i>Social Science Research</i>, 44, 141-157.</p> <p>Yu, J., &amp; Xie, Y. (2015). Cohabitation in China: Trends and determinants. <i>Population and development review</i>, 41(4), 607-628.</p> <p>Chen, F., Liu, G., &amp; Mair, C. A. (2011). Intergenerational ties in context: Grandparents caring for grandchildren in China. <i>Social forces</i>, 90(2), 571-594.</p>	<p>Michelson, E. (2019). Decoupling: marital violence and the struggle to divorce in China. <i>American journal of sociology</i>, 125(2), 325-381.</p> <p>Raymo, J. M., Park, H., Xie, Y., &amp; Yeung, W. J. J. (2015). Marriage and family in East Asia: Continuity and change. <i>Annual Review of Sociology</i>, 41, 471-492.</p> <p>YouTube video: SK-II Marriage Market Takeover (<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=irfd74z52Cw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=irfd74z52Cw</a>)</p>
<p>Week 4</p>	<p>Topic 4 (Gender): What is the experience being a woman in China today?</p>	<p>Attané, I. (2012). Being a woman in China today: A demography of gender. <i>China perspectives</i>, 2012(2012/4), 5-15.</p> <p>Davis, Deborah, Pierre Landry, Yusheng Peng, Jin Xiao, 2007. "Gendered Pathways to Rural Schooling," <i>The China Quarterly</i> No. 189:60-82.</p>	<p>Fincher, L. H. (2016). <i>Leftover women: The resurgence of gender inequality in China</i>. Zed Books Ltd.</p> <p>Zang, E. (2020). <i>When Family Property Becomes Individual Property: Intrahousehold</i></p>

		<p>Hannum, E., Kong, P., &amp; Zhang, Y. (2009). Family sources of educational gender inequality in rural China: A critical assessment. <i>International journal of educational development</i>, 29(5), 474-486.</p> <p>Ji, Y., Wu, X., Sun, S., &amp; He, G. (2017). Unequal care, unequal work: Toward a more comprehensive understanding of gender inequality in post-reform urban China. <i>Sex Roles</i>, 77(11-12), 765-778.</p>	<p>Property Ownership and Women's Well-Being in China. <i>Journal of Marriage and Family</i>.</p> <p>Wei, S. J., &amp; Zhang, X. (2011). The competitive saving motive: Evidence from rising sex ratios and savings rates in China. <i>Journal of Political Economy</i>, 119(3), 511-564.</p>
Week 5	<p><i>Topic 5 (Sexuality): Is China a queer-friendly nation?</i></p> <p>Guest lecturer: Darius Longarino, Yale University</p>	<p><a href="https://outrightinternational.org/content/precarious-progress-advocating-lgbt-equality-china">https://outrightinternational.org/content/precarious-progress-advocating-lgbt-equality-china</a></p>	TBD
Week 6	<p><i>Topic 6 (Migration and Geographic Inequality): How different is the life in different regions of China?</i></p>	<p>Chapter 6 in Naughton (2018)</p> <p>Kanbur, R., &amp; Zhang, X. (2005). Fifty years of regional inequality in China: a journey through central planning, reform, and openness. <i>Review of Development Economics</i>, 9(1), 87-106.</p> <p>Chan, K. W., &amp; Zhang, L. (1999). The hukou system and rural-urban migration in China: Processes and changes. <i>The China Quarterly</i>, (160), 818-855.</p>	<p>Hannum, E., &amp; Meiyang, W. (2006). Geography and educational inequality in China. <i>China economic review</i>, 17(3), 253-265.</p> <p>Zhang, X., &amp; Zhang, K. H. (2003). How does globalization affect regional inequality within a developing country? Evidence from China. <i>Journal of Development Studies</i>, 39(4), 47-67.</p> <p>Bao, S., Chang, G. H., Sachs, J. D., &amp; Woo, W. T. (2002). Geographic factors and China's regional development under market reforms,</p>

		Fan, S., Kanbur, R., & Zhang, X. (2011). China's regional disparities: Experience and policy. <i>Review of Development Finance</i> , 1(1), 47-56.	1978–1998. <i>China Economic Review</i> , 13(1), 89-111.
Week 7	Topic 7 (Education): <i>Does China have a good education system?</i>	<p>Wu Xiaogang and Zhuoni Zhang. 2010. "Changes in Educational Inequality." <i>Research in Sociology of Education</i> 17: 123-152.</p> <p>Loyalka, P., Chu, J., Wei, J., Johnson, N., &amp; Reniker, J. (2017). Inequalities in the pathway to college in China: When do students from poor areas fall behind?. <i>The China Quarterly</i>, 229, 172-194.</p> <p>Cherng, H. Y. S., &amp; Hannum, E. (2013). Community poverty, industrialization, and educational gender gaps in rural China. <i>Social forces</i>, 92(2), 659-690.</p>	<p>Chang, H., Dong, X. Y., &amp; MacPhail, F. (2011). Labor migration and time use patterns of the left-behind children and elderly in rural China. <i>World Development</i>, 39(12), 2199-2210.</p> <p>Zhou, M., Murphy, R., &amp; Tao, R. (2014). Effects of parents' migration on the education of children left behind in rural China. <i>Population and Development Review</i>, 40(2), 273-292.</p> <p>Liu, Y. (2013). Meritocracy and the Gaokao: a survey study of higher education selection and socio-economic participation in East China. <i>British Journal of Sociology of Education</i>, 34(5-6), 868-887.</p>
Week 8	Debate		
Week 9	Topic 8 (Population Health): <i>Are Chinese</i>	Chen, F., Yang, Y., & Liu, G. (2010). Social change and socioeconomic disparities in health over the life course in China: A cohort analysis. <i>American</i>	Yip, WCM, and Hsiao, William, "Harnessing the Privatization of China's Fragmented Healthcare Delivery," <i>Lancet</i> , 2014.

	<i>people healthier than Americans?</i>	<p>Sociological Review, 75(1), 126-150.</p> <p>He, J., Gu, D., Wu, X., Reynolds, K., Duan, X., Yao, C., ... &amp; Klag, M. J. (2005). Major causes of death among men and women in China. <i>New England Journal of Medicine</i>, 353(11), 1124-1134.</p> <p>Li, Xi, Jiapeng Lu, Shuang Hu, KK Cheng, Jan De Maeseneer, Qingyue Meng, Elias Mossialos, et al. 2017. "The Primary Health-care System in China." <i>Lancet</i> 390 (10112): 2584–2594.</p>	<p>X. Zhang. Chen X. and XB. Zhang. 2018. "Air Pollution and Cognitive Performance". In press. <i>Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences</i>.</p> <p>Qiu, Y., Chen, X., &amp; Shi, W. (2020). Impacts of social and economic factors on the transmission of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in China. <i>Journal of Population Economics</i>, 1.</p>
Week 10	Topic 9 (Aging): <i>Does China have an aging problem?</i>	<p>Chapter 8 in Naughton (2018)</p> <p>Chen X. 2016. "Old-Age Pension and Extended Families: How is Adult Children's Internal Migration Affected?" <i>Contemporary Economic Policy</i>. 34(4): 646659.</p> <p>Chen X, A. Sun., and K. Eggleston. 2017. "The Impact of Social Pensions on Intergenerational Transfers and Living Arrangements: Comparative Evidence from China", <i>Journal of the Economics of Aging</i>.</p>	<p>Yan, B., Chen, X., &amp; Gill, T. M. (2020). Health inequality among Chinese older adults: The role of childhood circumstances. <i>The Journal of the Economics of Ageing</i>, 17, 100237.</p> <p>Zhang, Z., Gu, D., Hayward, M. (2008). Early life influences on cognitive impairment among oldest old Chinese. <i>Journal of Gerontology, Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences</i>, 63(1), S25-S33.</p>
Week 11	Topic 10 (Poverty): <i>What is China's approach to reduce poverty?</i>	<p>Gao, Q., Yang, S., &amp; Zhai, F. (2019). Social Policy and Income Inequality during the Hu–Wen Era: A Progressive Legacy?. <i>The China Quarterly</i>, 237, 82-107.</p>	<p>Du, Y., Park, A., &amp; Wang, S. (2005). Migration and rural poverty in China. <i>Journal of comparative economics</i>, 33(4), 688-709.</p>



		<p>Fan, S., Zhang, L., &amp; Zhang, X. (2004). Reforms, investment, and poverty in rural China. <i>Economic Development and Cultural Change</i>, 52(2), 395-421.</p> <p>Zhou, Y., Guo, Y., Liu, Y., Wu, W., &amp; Li, Y. (2018). Targeted poverty alleviation and land policy innovation: Some practice and policy implications from China. <i>Land Use Policy</i>, 74, 53-65.</p> <p>Liu, Y., Guo, Y., &amp; Zhou, Y. (2018). Poverty alleviation in rural China: policy changes, future challenges and policy implications. <i>China Agricultural Economic Review</i>.</p>	<p>Park, A., Wang, S., &amp; Wu, G. (2002). Regional poverty targeting in China. <i>Journal of Public Economics</i>, 86(1), 123-153.</p> <p>Gao, Q., Garfinkel, I., &amp; Zhai, F. (2009). Anti-poverty effectiveness of the minimum living standard assistance policy in urban China. <i>Review of Income and Wealth</i>, 55, 630-655.</p>
<p>Week 12</p>	<p>Topic 11 (Work and Occupation): <i>What are the most popular jobs in China?</i></p>	<p>Bian, Y., Breiger, R., Galaskiewicz, J., &amp; Davis, D. (2005). Occupation, class, and social networks in urban China. <i>Social forces</i>, 83(4), 1443-1468.</p> <p>Lin, N., &amp; Bian, Y. (1991). Getting ahead in urban China. <i>American journal of sociology</i>, 97(3), 657-688.</p> <p>Bian, Y. (2018). The prevalence and the increasing significance of guanxi. <i>The China Quarterly</i>, 235(3), 597-621.</p> <p>Xiao, Y., &amp; Bian, Y. (2018). The influence of hukou and college education in China's labour market. <i>Urban Studies</i>, 55(7), 1504-1524.</p>	<p>Bian, Y., Miao, X., Lu, X., Ma, X., &amp; Guo, X. (2020). The emergence of a COVID-19 related social capital: the case of China. <i>International Journal of Sociology</i>, 1-15.</p> <p>Opper, S., &amp; Brehm, S. (2007). Networks versus performance: political leadership promotion in China. Department of Economics, Lund University.</p>

		Lin, N., & Xie, W. (1988). Occupational prestige in urban China. <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> , 93(4), 793-832.	
Week 13	Debate		