

Chinese Studies
Faculty of Humanities and Performing Arts
University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Understanding Contemporary Chinese Culture and Society
Module Code: HPCH4002

Block 7: 13th May – 7th June 2019, 2-5pm, Arts 06



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AIM(S)

- To introduce students with no previous knowledge of China to the major developments in history, society and culture that have shaped contemporary China.
- To prepare students for the year abroad in China.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon the successful completion of this module, the student should be able to demonstrate the ability to:

- Interpret key developments in contemporary China within the context of Chinese culture and way of life.
- Locate appropriate secondary literature relevant to the topics covered in the module.
- Communicate the results of their independent study accurately, with structured arguments.

INDICATIVE CONTENT

Topics covered in this module may vary according to current developments in China, but may include all or some of the following:

- Essential Facts of Chinese culture and society.
- Traditional Chinese calendar and Festivals.
- Foundations of Chinese identity.
- Rituals and life cycle.
- Family and marriage.
- Community and neighbourhood.
- Status and hierarchy.
- Chinese Networking: guanxi.
- Political system and economy.
- Education.

READING LIST

Module Code	HPCH4002	
Module Title	Understanding Contemporary Chinese Culture and Society	
Classification	Reading List entry	Electronic*
Essential	Clunas, Craig (1996) <i>Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China</i> . Durham: Duke University Press.	☒
Essential	De Bary, Wm. Theodore; Bloom, Irene (comp.) (1999) <i>Sources of Chinese Tradition</i> . 2 vols. 2 nd Edn. New York: Columbia U.P.	☐
Essential	Gries, Peter Hays (2005) <i>China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics, and Diplomacy</i> . Berkeley: University of California Press.	☒
Essential	Jankowiak, William (2008). "Ethnicity and Chinese Identity: Ethnographic Insight and Political Positioning." In Louie, Kam (ed.). <i>Modern Chinese Culture</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.	
Essential	Jervis, Nancy (2005). "The Meaning of Jia." In: Knapp, Ronald G.; Lo, Kai-Yin (eds.). <i>House, Home, Family: Living and Being Chinese</i> . Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.	☐
Essential	Knapp, Ronald G.; Lo, Kai-Yin (eds.) (2005) <i>House, Home, Family: Living and Being Chinese</i> . Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.	
Essential	Louie, Kam (2008) <i>The Cambridge Companion to Modern Chinese Culture</i> , Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.	☒
Essential	Wu, David Yen-ho (1991). "The Construction of Chinese and Non-Chinese Identities." <i>Daedalus</i> 120:2, pp.159-179.	
Essential	Yang, Mayfair Mei-hui (1994) <i>Gifts, Favors, and Banquets: The Art of Social Relationships in China</i> . Ithaca: Cornell U.P.	
Further	Bruun, Ole (2008) <i>An Introduction to Feng Shui</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.	☒
Further	Chang, K. C. (1981) <i>Food in Chinese Culture</i> . New Haven: Yale University Press.	
Further	Harrell, Stevan (1979) "The Concept of Soul in Chinese Folk Religion." <i>Journal of Asian Studies</i> 38:3, pp. 509-528.	☐
Further	Harrell, Stevan (1987) "The Concept of Fate in Chinese Folk Religion." <i>Modern China</i> 13:1, pp. 90-109.	☐
Further	King, Ambrose Yeo-chi (1991). "Kuan-hsi and Network Building: A Sociological Interpretation." <i>Daedalus</i> 120:2, pp.63-84	☐
Further	Ebrey, Patricia (1991) <i>Confucianism and Family Rituals in Imperial China</i> . Princeton: Princeton University Press.	☒
Further	Giskin, Howard; Bettye S. Walsh (eds.) (2001). <i>An Introduction to Chinese Culture Through the Family</i> . Albany: State University of New York Press.	☒
	Reilly, James (2012) <i>Strong Society, Smart State: The Rise of Public Opinion in China's Japan Policy</i> , New York: Columbia University Press.	☒

Week 1: Chinese Calendars and Festivals & Ethnicity and Chinese Identity

Reading 1: Junjie Huang; E Zurcher, *Time and space in Chinese culture*, Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1995.

Reading 2: Jankowiak, "Ethnicity and Chinese Identity"; Mackerras, *The New Cambridge Handbook of Contemporary China*, pp. 252-66.

Reading 3: Wu, "The Construction of Chinese and Non-Chinese Identities."

Week 2: Languages in China and the Chinese Writing System & 'Harmony' and Fengshui & Family and Self

Reading 1: Moore, *Chinese*, pp. 54-76; Ledderose, *Ten Thousand Things* (ch. 6: "The Word in Print")

Reading 2: Harrell, "The Concept of Fate in Chinese Folk Religion"; *ibid.* "The Concept of Soul in Chinese Folk Religion"

Reading 3: Clunas, *Fruitful Sites*, pp. 177-202 (Ch. 5 "The Landscape of Number")
Knapp, *House, Home, Family*, pp. 99-137.

Reading 4: DeBary, *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, pp. 819-40; Jervis, "The meaning of Jia."

Week 3: Networks (guanxi) & Ritual and Propriety & China and 'The West'

Reading 1: King, "Kuan-hsi and Network Building: A Sociological Interpretation"; Yang, *Gifts, Favors and Banquets*, pp. 75-108.

Reading 2: DeBary, *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, pp. 174-77, 342-43; Seligman et al., *Ritual and its Consequences*, Introduction.

Reading 3: Gries, *China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics, and Diplomacy* (Chapter 2: Chinese Identity and "the West")

Week 4: Presentation

Assignments (2018-19):

1. One essay of 2,000 words (50%)
2. 5 minutes oral presentation (25%)
3. A written transcript for 5 minutes presentation (500 – 1,000 words) **Or** A book review of 1,000 words (25%)

Assignments Deadlines:

Assignment 2: **3rd June 2019**

Assignment 1 & 3: **9th June 2019**

Suggested Essay Titles:

1. The concept of the Yin-Yang is fundamental to Chinese culture. How did the Chinese apply this understanding to their understanding of the role of gender?
2. How can study of Chinese culture be associated with the study of Chinese history?
3. 'Foods in China demonstrate a sense of harmony that people wish to achieve'. Discuss.
4. Why Face Culture is so popular in China?
5. 'Family is very important to the Chinese'. Discuss.
6. *Guanxi* is very important in Chinese society. In what extend can we say Guanxi is difference from networking?
7. Holistic Thinking is important for Chinese Society, what philosophical principle support such a way of thinking?
8. Is there any sense of individualism practiced in Chinese culture and society? How?