(CHINESE 322)
20th and 21st-Century Chinese Literature in English

Instructor: Professor Emily Wilcox

COURSE TIME and LOCATION: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00-12:20, Wren Hall, Room 2
OFFICE HOURS: Wednesdays 11am-1pm and other times by appointment. To set up an appointment, email 12 hours in advance to: eewilcox@wm.edu.
OFFICE LOCATION: Washington Hall 316

Course Description:
The twentieth century in China is one of the most tumultuous periods of social change and cultural creativity in human history. In 1911, a tradition of imperial dynasties several thousands of years old fell to a group of young revolutionaries who wanted a new direction for their country. After decades of war -- with groups both within and without -- a faction of revolutionaries, known as Chinese Communists, emerged victorious. In 1949 they established “New China” (The People’s Republic of China), under a government that, although highly experimental, was stable enough that it lasted through the rest of the century and into the present. Now the fastest growing economy in the world, with rapidly changing mores and values, ways of living, and social structures, China’s dynamism continues to be palpable.

This class explores China’s long century of revolution (including the first decade of the 21st century) through the work of its writers. Inspired by sources ranging from personal experiences to political conviction to the works of other writers domestic and abroad, China’s writers during the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries have produced a massive and hugely varied collection of works (including novels, short stories, essays, poetry, and plays), which are characterized by expansive and vibrant literary imagination and artistic depth. The works of China’s writers tell us a great deal about China. Yet, they also tell us about universal human problems and experiences, and about issues of the contemporary world that confound geographical or cultural boundaries. Reading the Chinese works in their English translation, and from the vantage of varied cultural, linguistic, and historical positions, we recognize a certain distance between ourselves and the writers who produced these works. To more fully overcome this distance, and to use the works as a means to understand Chinese society and culture, we learn about the significances of words, images, places, and historical references as they relate to a particular context of creation and reception in China. At the same time, however, we treat these works as literary worlds unto themselves, asking not only what they can tell us about China but what new experiences and meaning we produce in the works as we explore and experience them anew for ourselves. Chinese literature, like all literature, is a living form; with each new reading, it takes on a new life. As such, it tells us as much about those who wrote it and their world as it does about ourselves and the world in which we live today.
Course Objectives:
This course fulfills a dual objective of providing disciplinary training for students majoring or minoring in the program in Chinese Language and Culture, as well as offering broad knowledge to non-specialized students enrolled through the General Education curriculum. Because of this dual role, the course as two sets of primary objectives:
1. Chinese Language and Culture
As an upper-division course in the Chinese program, Chinese 322 is an integral part of the curriculum in Chinese Language and Culture, with the following goals:
• Introduce students to important authors, works, and movements in 20th and 21st-century Chinese literature, as they relate to larger themes in modern Chinese language and culture;
• Provide students with the disciplinary vocabulary and knowledge to engage in rigorous reading, discussion, reflection and writing on Chinese literature that reflects training in the field of Chinese literary and cultural studies.
2. General Education
As a GER 4B/5 course, this class fulfills specific objectives set out for the General Education curriculum in “World Cultures and History” and “Literature and History of the Arts.” These include:
• Students will understand important cultural and historical topics, issues, or themes in more than one period or in one critical period or in a movement or movements;
• Students will understand institutions, movements, or cultural practices in historical context;
• Students will understand critical historical and cultural events, institutions, ideas, or literary/artistic achievements;
• Students will become conversant with at least two major forms, genres, eras, cultures, or movements; or with at least two methods of analysis of art or literature;
• Students will become familiar with the vocabulary of the discipline and be able to apply the appropriate methodologies for critical analysis.
The full description is online here: http://iae.wm.edu/GER/ger_learning_expectations_rpt.cfm.

Course Requirements:
Assignments and activities for this course are broken down into the following categories:
- Reading Quizzes 20% of total grade
- Response Papers/ Journals 10% of total grade
- Midterm Exams (2) 30% of total grade
- Final Exam 25% of total grade
- Participation 15% of total grade

The specific descriptions of these requirements are explained below:

Reading Quizzes: The most important homework for this course is reading the assigned works of literature. To ensure that students keep up on the readings, occasional in-class reading quizzes will be given, with an average frequency of once per week. Quizzes will take place during the first 15 minutes of class, will occur randomly during the semester, and will deal only with the section of the reading assigned for that particular day. No books, notes, or computers may be used during the quizzes. Quizzes will consist of 10 true or false questions that should be easy to answer if one has completed the assigned reading.
Response Papers/Journals: In order to encourage deeper reflection on the readings and in-class lectures and discussions, weekly informal response papers/journals are assigned. These papers are due by midnight each Monday night (except on Midterm Exam days) and deal with the previous week’s materials, including readings, lectures, and in-class discussions. They should be written in paragraph form (not bullet points or outline) and should deal with at least one theme, question, or passage discussed in the previous week, of the student’s choice. Each response paper/journal will be 1 page, submitted electronically as a .doc file via Blackboard. The papers should be double-spaced, in 12 point New Times Roman font, with one-inch margins. No more than 5 single-spaced lines may be used for the header/title. Response papers/journals will be graded on a scale of 0 to 2 as follows: “0” - not submitted; “1” - submitted but does not follow directions (for example, because it is too short, it is submitted late, it does not deal with the contents from the week, etc.); “2” - submitted on-time, follows directions, and shows significant reflection on the contents from the week.

Midterm Exams: Midterm exams will be given at the end of Units One and Two as listed in the syllabus. The exams will cover the readings and in-class lectures and discussions from each Unit and will not be cumulative. They will be given in class, and no notes, readings or computers will be allowed. The exams will consist of a combination of short response and fill-in-the-blank questions and one essay question. The exams will test the student’s knowledge of the materials presented in readings and lectures, as well as the student’s ability to produce original analysis of the readings in light of the concepts and vocabulary presented in class discussion. Students will be provided with a study guide that includes possible essay questions for each exam, as well as a list of general content to be covered.

Final Exam: The Final Exam will take place during the Exam Period, according to the time designated by the official College of William and Mary exam schedule. The first part will consist of short response and fill-in-the-blank questions and one essay related to Unit Three only (similar in format and length to the Midterm Exams). This first part will not be cumulative. The second part will consist of one longer essay question that requires students to reflect upon the materials from the entire semester. As with the Midterm Exams, a study guide will be provided.

Participation: In class discussions and explorations of the assigned readings are a very important part of this class, in which all students are expected to be active participants. Students will be given a grade at the end of each week that assesses their in-class participation for that week. Students can ask to see these grades at any time. The average of these weekly grades will constitute the overall participation grade. Participation grades will be given on a scale of 0-7, taking into account the following factors: attendance, timeliness, respect for other students and for the instructor, contribution to large group discussions, contribution to small group discussions, attendance at office hours (expected minimum twice per semester), preparedness (bringing assigned readings to class, having completed the assignment for the day) and level of intellectual engagement as demonstrated in quality of verbal and written contributions (including response papers/journals).
Course Expectations:
Apart from the assignments outlined above, the following are general expectations for students:

- Bring the assigned readings for the day with you to every class meeting, either in hard or electronic copy;
- Email me or come to office hours if you have questions or concerns about the course that cannot be addressed during class time, or if you need extra help. (Office hour and email information can be found at the top of this syllabus);
- Let me know immediately (preferably during class) if assignments or expectations are unclear;
- Feel free to interrupt lectures at any time if you have questions about the material presented;
- Maintain a standard of behavior that accords with the College’s Honor Code, and feel free to cooperate with other students while maintaining the integrity of your own work;
- Regular attention to emails from the instructor and to posted course materials on Blackboard.

In addition, students can expect the following from the instructor:

- Equal and fair treatment of all students regardless of background, major, year in college, linguistic ability, etc.
- Genuine passion for teaching students and demonstrated desire to help them improve;
- Clear explanations of class assignments and expectations, including criteria of evaluation for all papers, exams, and quizzes;
- Timely return of graded assignments with feedback as appropriate;
- Regular use of Blackboard to distribute electronic course readings, to post handouts and course assignments (including PPT files and links used in lectures as appropriate), and to report student grades in a transparent and accessible manner;
- Timely response to emails, and availability to students during office hours and appointments;
- Overall commitment to student learning in and outside the classroom;
- Openness to student feedback and ideas.

Note: If you have special circumstances that cause you to miss class for any reason, please email me in advance of your absence and provide a written statement indicating that the absence should be excused, for what reason, and proof of the reason. While attendance will not be taken in class, failure to attend will influence your overall grade. Quizzes missed due to unexcused absences cannot be retaken.
COURSE SCHEDULE

Week One: Introduction to the Course
Thursday, January 19th
Recommended Background Reading: Patricia Ebrey Illustrated History of China. “Chapter 10 Taking Action: The Early Twentieth Century;” “Chapter 11 Radical Reunification: The People’s Republic.” (Both chapters are posted on Blackboard)
Film (view in class): Mongol

UNIT ONE - Grasslands and Alleys: Place and Space in Chinese Literature

Week Two: Ethnic Space/Place - The Grassland in Literary and Cultural Imagination
Tuesday, January 24th

Thursday, January 26th

Week Three: Animals and People - Environmentalism, Anthropomorphism, and Totems
Tuesday, January 31st
*Response paper/journal due via Blackboard by midnight Monday night.
Film (view in class): The Blue Knight (2009)

Thursday, February 2nd

Week Four: Camels in the City - Beijing in Literary and Cultural Imagination
Tuesday, February 7th
*Response paper/journal due via Blackboard by midnight Monday night.

Thursday, February 9th
Film (view in class): Luotuo Xiangzi (Rickshaw Boy)

Week Five: The Individual in Society – Class and Place
Tuesday, February 14th
*Response paper/journal due via Blackboard by midnight Monday night.

**Thursday, February 16th**
Required Readings: Shen Congwen “Xiaoxiao” pp. 102-119; Huang Chunming “The Fish” pp. 224-231; Mao Dun “Spring Silkworms” pp. 1-26

**Week Six: Midterm Exam on Unit One**
**Tuesday, February 21st**
*No Response paper/journal due.
Midterm Exam on Unit One

UNIT TWO - The New Woman: Gender, Revolution, and Love

**Week Seven: Playing with Women - Theater and the Gender Revolution**
**Thursday, February 23rd**
Required Reading: Bai Wei, *Breaking out of Ghost Pagoda* (1928), pp. 164-226

**Tuesday, February 28th**
*Response paper/journal due via Blackboard by midnight Monday night.
Film (view in class): *The Red Detachment of Women*

**Week Eight: Duty and Lust - What is Feminist Literature?**
**Thursday, March 1st**

**Tuesday, March 6th**
*NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK*

**Thursday, March 8th**
*NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK*

**Tuesday, March 13**
*Response paper/journal due via Blackboard by midnight Monday night.

**Week Nine: “Bourgeois” Love - Romance as Anti-Politics**
**Thursday, March 15**
Film (watch in class): *In the Mood for Love*
Tuesday, March 20
*Response paper/journal due via Blackboard by midnight Monday night.

Week Ten: Midterm Exam on Unit Two
Thursday, March 22
Midterm Exam on Unit Two

UNIT THREE - From Lu Xun to Han Han: Literature as Social Critique

Week Twelve: China as Problem: Critical Realism and Chinese Literary Modernism
Tuesday, March 27

Thursday, March 29

Week Thirteen: Rejecting Tradition - New Symbols of Old China
Tuesday, April 3rd
*Response paper/journal due via Blackboard by midnight Monday night.

Thursday, April 5th
Required Reading: Tian Han “Guan Hanqing” pp. 598-673

Week Fourteen: The New Realism - Literary Social Critique in the Reform Era
Tuesday, April 10th
*Response paper/journal due via Blackboard by midnight Monday night. Bei Dao (Poems), and Zong Pu “Who Am I?” pp. 30-37, 95-104
Film (view in class): Wanzhu (Stubborn Guy)

Thursday, April 12th

Week Fifteen: Censorship and Humor - Irony as Method
Tuesday, April 17th
Thursday, April 19th
Film (view in class): *Xingfu Shiguang* (*Happy Times*)

**Week Sixteen: New Rebels - Youth Writers and the Internet**

Tuesday, April 24th

Thursday, April 26th
Review for Final Exam

**Final Exam: May 9th, 2:00-5:00pm. Location TBA.**