Instructor: William Lavely  
lavely@uw.edu

Meeting: T-Th 12:30-2:20 in SWS 038

Office hour: Friday 11:00-12:00 in SAV 275

Course description: This course provides an overview of social change in China since 1949, with a major focus on family and marriage. The first three weeks will describe the establishment of social institutions in rural and urban China in the Mao era (1949-76), and the major political programs that shaped change, including land reform, collectivization, and the Cultural Revolution. Week 4 considers social stratification and mobility in the post-Mao Reform Era, with a particular emphasis on China’s rural-urban dualism. Week 5 considers the theory and practice of ideological control under Maoism and in the Reform Era. Week 6, the mid-point of the course, considers the continuities in China’s modernization over the past century. The three weeks following the midterm (7-9) are devoted to contemporary kinship, family and marriage. Week 7 examines the persistent importance of lineage groupings in contemporary China. Week 8 focuses on change in rural family structure and marriage, while Week 9 takes up urban marriage and family. The final week is devoted to understanding the social forces that have produced the individualization of Chinese society, and the nature of China’s “moral crisis”. The class format consists of lectures, video documentaries, and discussion. Some class time will be used to discuss current events in China; students are invited to propose journalistic articles for discussion.

The class is for upper division and graduate students. No prior knowledge of Chinese society is assumed, but students with little knowledge of Chinese history and culture should consult an introductory text, such as John K. Fairbank and Edwin O. Reischauer, *China: Tradition and Transformation* or Immanuel C.Y. Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China*.

Course readings: Most readings are available through the Libraries website under electronic journals. Others are available on the course website. Two texts are available for purchase at the University Bookstore:

Course website: The course website is at http://courses.washington.edu/sisea464. The website will make available the syllabus, other documents related to the course, and course readings. Note that the internal section of the web is password-protected. The instructor will provide the log-in information separately.

Course requirements: The course requirements consist of (1) an in-class midterm, (2) five one-page (double-spaced) response papers (out of several assigned); (3) a 3-page (double-spaced) guided essay on Yan Yunxiang’s Private Life Under Socialism; (4) a take home final exam; (5) occasional low-stakes diagnostic quizzes. Response paper questions will be issued week-by-week; the guided essay will be described in a separate document. For calculating the course grade, the midterm will count 25%; the response papers together will count 25%; the guided essay 20%; the final 25%; diagnostic quizzes (5%).

Graduate Students: Graduate students may elect to substitute a longer substantive paper for the short paper and final exam. Such a project should be approved by the instructor in advance.

Due dates:

- Response papers are due Tuesday following the week questions are distributed. Late papers will not be accepted.
- The in-class midterm will be on Thursday February 12.
- The guided essay on Private Life Under Socialism is due on Thursday February 19.
- The final will be distributed in class on Thursday March 12.
- The final should be delivered to the Sociology Advising Office (Savery 203) no later than the time of the scheduled final exam time, Thursday March 19 at 10:30 AM.
Note: Readings marketed with an asterisk * are suggested, not required.

**Week 1: Introduction**

1/6  Introduction and overview

1/8  The legacy of Late Imperial China


**Week 2: Rural Social Structure and Revolution**

1/13  Republican era social structure


  http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-1/mswv1_2.htm

  *The American Journal of Sociology* 52, 1: 1-17.  [jstor]


1/15  Land reform and class labels


  Yang, C.K.  1959 [1966].  Class struggle as the first step of land reform (pp. 131-145);  
  Confiscation and redistribution of land (pp. 146-152); Establishing the new power structure (pp. 167-175).


**Week 3: Collectivization, the Great Leap, and the Cultural Revolution**

1/20 Collectivization and the Great Leap


1/22 The Cultural Revolution


Week 4: Market Reform, Social Stratification, and Mobility

1/27 Market Reform


1/29 The rural-urban divide


Week 5: Socialist Culture and Reform Era Ideological Control

2/3 Art and socialist culture


2/5 Information control and civil society


Week 6: Is China Modern? Midterm exam

2/10 Is China Modern?

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2/12 In-class Midterm Examination
**Week 7: The Persisting Relevance of Lineage**

2/17  Lineage, stratification, and entrepreneurship


2/19  Birth control, son preference, and lineage


**Essay on Private Life Under Socialism due**

**Week 8: The Family Revolution in Rural China**

2/24  From patriarchy to companionate marriage

   Yan Yunxiang, *Private Life Under Socialism*

2/26  Demographic change and rural marriage


**Week 9: Urban Family and Marriage**

3/3 Urban mating and marriage

Zhang Jun and Peidong Sun. 2014. When are you going to get married? Chapter 5 in Deborah S. Davis and Sara L. Friedman (eds), *Wives, Husbands, and Lovers: Marriage and Sexuality in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and urban China* (Stanford).


3/5 Family, gender, and welfare


**Week 10: Individualization and the Moral Crisis**

3/10 The Individualization of Chinese society


3/12 Conclusions *Take home final distributed*