

UC 11850 12F

CBM003 ADD/CHANGE FORM

APPROVED APR 24 2013  
CJM

Undergraduate Council  
 New Course  Course Change  
 Core Category: Lang/Phil/Culture Effective Fall 2014

or

Graduate/Professional Studies Council  
 New Course  Course Change  
 Effective Fall 2014

1. Department: MCL College: CLASS  
 2. Faculty Contact Person: Xiaohong Wen Telephone: 713.743.3072 Email: xwen@uh.edu

3. Course Information on New/Revised course:  
 • Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:  
CHNS / 3360 / A Look into Modern China  
 • Instructional Area / Course Number / Short Course Title (30 characters max.)  
CHNS / 3360 / MODERN CHINA  
 • SCH: 3.00 Level: JR CIP Code: 1603010001 Lect Hrs: 3 Lab Hrs: 0

RECEIVED OCT 12 2012

4. Justification for adding/changing course: To meet core curriculum requirements  
 5. Was the proposed/revised course previously offered as a special topics course?  Yes  No  
 If Yes, please complete:

- Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:  
 \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
 • Course ID: \_\_\_\_ Effective Date (currently active row): \_\_\_\_

6. Authorized Degree Program(s): B.A., Chinese Studies  
 • Does this course affect major/minor requirements in the College/Department?  Yes  No  
 • Does this course affect major/minor requirements in other Colleges/Departments?  Yes  No  
 • Can the course be repeated for credit?  Yes  No (if yes, include in course description)

7. Grade Option: Letter (A, B, C ...) Instruction Type: lecture ONLY (Note: Lect/Lab info. must match item 3, above.)

8. If this form involves a change to an existing course, please obtain the following information from the course inventory: Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title  
CHNS / 3360 / Modern China  
 • Course ID: 298402 Effective Date (currently active row): 20068

9. Proposed Catalog Description: (If there are no prerequisites, type in "none".)  
 Cr: 3. (3-0). Prerequisites: ENGL 1304 Description (30 words max.): China's transformation in the last two decades and its understanding of modernity. Novels, essays, journals and films reveal conflicts between conventional Chinese values and modern legal systems, economic development and traditional living. Taught in English.

10. Dean's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 10/11/12

Print/Type Name: Sarah Fishman

## REQUEST FOR COURSES IN THE CORE CURRICULUM

Originating Department or College: Modern and Classical Languages

Person Making Request: Charles McArthur

Telephone: 832-922-1450

Email: cmmcarthur@uh.edu

Dean's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 7-31-2012

Course Number and Title: CHNS 3360 / A Look into Modern China

Please attach in separate documents:

- Completed CBM003 Add/Change Form with Catalog Description
- Syllabus

List the student learning outcomes for the course (Statements of what students will know and be able to do as a result of taking this course. See appended hints for constructing these statements):

1. Exhibit a survey knowledge of historical events that shape China's modern narrative (1900 to present), with focus on China's social development since the Deng Era as expressed in film and literature.
2. Ability to discourse on and debate social and cultural motifs, such as state-sponsored narratives of nation, development of the individual vis-a-vis the advent of commodity culture, the influence of popular music as rebellion against state hegemony, etc.
3. Learn to appreciate and explicate a film as a social text.
4. Differentiate and analyze basic narrative techniques of film and prose as relevant to constructing a

Component Area for which the course is being proposed (check one):

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication                             | <input type="checkbox"/> American History             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Government/Political Science |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Language, Philosophy & Culture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social & Behavioral Science  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creative Arts                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Component Area Option        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life & Physical Sciences                  |   |

Competency areas addressed by the course (refer to appended chart for competencies that are required and optional in each component area):

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Critical Thinking    | <input type="checkbox"/> Teamwork                           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication Skills | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social Responsibility   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Empirical & Quantitative Skills | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personal Responsibility |

Because we will be assessing student learning outcomes across multiple core courses, assessments assigned in your course must include assessments of the core competencies. For each competency checked above, indicate the specific course assignment(s) which, when completed by students, will provide evidence of the competency. Provide detailed information, such as copies of the paper or project assignment, copies of individual test items, etc. A single assignment may be used to provide data for multiple competencies.

### Critical Thinking

Assessment of Critical Thinking Skills will be done through regular short writing and a semester

### Communication Skills

Assessment of Communication Skills will be done through regular short writing and a semester essay. Please see appended document for sample writing questions addressing this competency.

### Empirical & Quantitative Skills

### Teamwork

### Social Responsibility

Social responsibility for Chinese 3360 will be met by ability to describe and debate themes of the class on the written exams. Please see appended document listing examples of sample questions.

### Personal Responsibility

Students will identify a list of ethical dilemmas posed to characters in films, and form questions that will enumerate consequences of the characters' choices. The instructor will edit these questions into one or more quizzes, which will be included on the final exam, and archived in Blackboard Learn.



Will the syllabus vary across multiple section of the course?

Yes

No

If yes, list the assignments that will be constant across sections:

Inclusion in the core is contingent upon the course being offered and taught at least once every other academic year. Courses will be reviewed for renewal every 5 years.

The department understands that instructors will be expected to provide student work and to participate in university-wide assessments of student work. This could include, but may not be limited to, designing instruments such as rubrics, and scoring work by students in this or other courses. In addition, instructors of core courses may be asked to include brief assessment activities in their courses.

Dept. Signature: for \_\_\_\_\_

## Appended Document - Specific course assignments to provide evidence of the competencies.

**Critical Thinking Skills** - to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information

Assessment of Critical Thinking Skills will be done through the regular short writing and a semester essay. Two sample topics for short writing could be given here.

### Sample one – analytical comment on a short story:

Introduce Zhu Wen's "A Boat Crossing" and make an analytical comment on it.

Include:

1 An opening paragraph to introduce the story. Tell who Zhu Wen is, and give a few sentences to sketch some themes and plot of *A Boat Crossing*. Two paragraphs are acceptable, but be concise. Obviously you cannot capture all details; the key is to *sketch* what will be relevant to the rest of your analysis.

2 Give a brief analysis of "A Boat Crossing." Say something about the author's style (narrative voice, use of suspense, character description, setting, etc.) and the content (Does the author have an obvious or subliminal social message, is it a psychological journey with some universal relevance, does it paint a distinct picture of China?).

3 Although you are writing for a class assignment, try to write as if your audience is a prospective reader of the story, so you are giving the reader a preview. You are free to choose the stylistic and content themes to analyze, but make sure you have a clearly stated thesis, and stick to your point(s).

### Sample two – analytical comment comparing two films:

Write a short essay of one to – one 1/2 pages (double-spaced) comparing the narratives of *Tiananmen* and *The Forbidden City*. Here are the general guidelines.

We can assume that *Tian'anmen* is meant as positive propaganda to convey a sense of achievement and pride in commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the founding of the P.R.C. At the same time the movie is a relatively successful artistic product that creates likeable and realistic characters that give the movie a very human touch. The *Forbidden City* is a documentary which at the time of production was intended to introduce the *Forbidden City* and Chinese society of the late 1970s to American television audiences. However, *The Forbidden City* is not narrated objectively, but rather presents Chinese society from the perspective that the Chinese government wants told.

Your job is to introduce and compare the two perspectives or "narratives" of the movies. In other words, what is the point of view of each movie, and what is some simple evidence from each movie that makes this point of view clear? For each movie, you can pick a simple scene or scenes that illustrate your explanation. For example from *Tiananmen*, how does a particular scene speak to a general theme (such as working collectively to contribute towards "the new society.") From the *Forbidden City*, what makes clear that the movie really carries the Chinese government's point of view, and not NBC's?

Assume that your reader has seen the movie. Avoid plot summary, although you will need to briefly describe the scene(s) you talk about. Follow the simple, basic conventions of an argumentative essay, so identify the problem (thesis), give your analysis (explain how your clips give evidence for your argument, and give your conclusion. Make sure your conclusion doesn't just simply restate the thesis; you want to remind the reader why your explanation was worth mentioning in the first place. Try to make your conclusion interesting enough so a reader might want to re-watch the scenes you mentioned and look for the details you've pointed out.

## Rubric

For short writing assignments, in addition to the detailed instructions, students are scored according to this general guideline:

#### Grading Standards:

“A” is excellent. An A paper reads effortlessly, has persuasive power, and has little to correct. It can be shown to another instructor who quickly agrees it is an A.

“B” is above average. “B” papers may have minor writing errors, are somewhat persuasive yet not totally convincing, and have some minor corrections regarding style or logic.

“C” is average. “C” papers are not very convincing and/or have errors of logic or style. However “C” papers do generally follow the instructions given for writing the essay.

A semester essay will also assess critical thinking. There are a wide range of essay topics available to assess a student’s content knowledge and critical thinking. By the time of the semester essay, students will have already received substantial feedback on their writing and critical thinking. Some sample topics are given here:

#### *Choice One.*

The status of women as portrayed in *Still Life* and *Lost in Beijing*. (If you like, you may substitute another movie we have watched). Both movies include examples of how women struggle, survive, and to some extent prevail. If you chose this topic you have freedom to develop the theme as you like, but the general theme should be the status of women. You only have one page, so you may exclusively write about either movie, but may write about both movies if you like. You could also choose to mention both movies, and focus on one of them.

#### *Choice Two.*

The mixture of “art” and “reality” in *Still Life*. You have freedom to develop this topic as you chose, as long as you discuss art and so-called reality. You may interpret the word “reality” as realistic portrayals of life given in the film. Don’t worry about literary definitions of realism. Regarding “art,” you will need to give your own simple definition of what makes a movie artistic, and explain how you feel *Still Life* is an artistic movie. For this topic, one way to treat the subject could be to discuss the use of music; another could include choice of scenes, camera shots, or transitions. Or something else of your choice, as long as you discuss art and reality.

*Choice Three* – Sexuality in any of the movies we have watched. An obvious choice would be *Fish and Elephant*, but could probably be applied to many of the films we’ve watched. If you choose this topic, you will need to formulate your own thesis, and you might want to check with me (email) before you begin writing.

*Choice Four* – A movie we have not watched is *Blind Shaft*. This movie is a dramatic treatment of illegal coal mines in China. The movie deals with many social themes; lack of government regulation, unemployment, prostitution, and general neglect of citizens by the socialist state. If you choose this movie, you will need to develop your own thesis, and should check it with me before writing. You may also find an excellent reference source in the “readings” folder, which is a detailed interview with the director on the process of making the film.

**Communication Skills** - to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.

Communication skills are assessed through short writing and the semester essay, as in the above exams and essay. It is assumed that communication skills are subsumed in competent exposition of critical thinking competencies. Writing assignments are evaluated through a rubric that assumes basic writing conventions (mechanics) and style (clarity of expression). In addition to the specific topic, and the general guideline listed above, students also receive this more mechanical rubric:

#### **Mechanical Rubric**

Pay attention to:

Clearly stated argument

Clear transitions between paragraphs

Essay flows well in terms of logic.  
Use precise, accurate language.  
Stated in neutral language  
Avoid generalization (unsubstantiated assertions).  
Avoid “moral” arguments.  
Inappropriate use of first person.  
Inappropriate use of personal experience.  
Assignment instructions

**Social Responsibility:** to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities

Social responsibility for Chinese 3360 will be met by ability to describe and debate themes of the class. This will be tested through short answer questions on the written exams. Social issues discussed in the class are typically interconnected to policy decisions of the state. For example abortion, displacement, joblessness, and the wealth gap can easily be related to the one-child policy, construction of the Three Gorges Dam, dismantling of State Owned Enterprises, “Socialism with Chinese Characteristics,” etc. Therefore – through film and literature -- students become familiar with how “The State” affects “The Individual,” and students must show intercultural competence to dispassionately debates responsibilities of the state to society, and vice-versa. Here are sample exam questions that would show conversancy in this area:

- 1) How does the advent of consumerism since Deng Xiaoping’s early market reforms manifest different different social significances in the films *Ermo* and *Unknown Pleasures*?
- 2) How does state control of public space intertwine with the lives of the characters in the films *Sunflower*, *Unknown Pleasures*, and *Platform*?
- 3) In *Tiananmen*, how does the bathhouse scene (the PLA soldiers visit) express hope that all social classes in China can be unified?
- 4) How does the music in *Unknown Pleasures* evidence relaxed state control of the individual, and what does the music say about the relationship with the Chinese diaspora?

**Personal Responsibility** - to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.

Through discussion students and the instructor will identify a list of ethical dilemmas posed to characters in films, and form questions that will enumerate consequences of the characters’ choices. The instructor will edit these questions into one or more quizzes, which will be included on the final exam, and archived in Blackboard Learn.

Sample Questions:

- 1) In the film *Sunflower*, the father forces his son’s girlfriend to have an abortion. Explain how according to Confucian patriarchy, abortion is not “immoral” or “unethical,” and actually serves in the story to preserve the family unit.
- 2) In the film *Unknown Pleasures*, the character Bin Bin learns that he is a carrier of hepatitis B. Explain the apparent “ethical” choice Bin Bin makes to curtail the relationship with his girlfriend.

## Fall 2014- Chinese 3360: A Look into Modern China

**Instructor:** Marshall McArthur, Instructional Assistant Professor of Chinese

**Office:** Agnes Arnold 661

**Office Hours:** By appointment at the following times: Monday 5:15-6:15 PM; Thursday 2:45-4:45.

**Email:** cmmcarthur@uh.edu

**Phone:** 832-922-1450

### Overview

This course focuses on contemporary China where economic reform has brought drastic changes to people's daily lives. Readings are selected from political, economic, social, cultural, and literary perspectives. Film is an integral part of the course and is investigated as a social text. The course presents China's social transformation, and changes in the understanding of Chinese modernity and economic globalization. The course explores conflicts between conventional Chinese values and the modern legal system, rapid economic development and traditional ways of living, the prosperity of cities and the poverty of the country, and contradictions between materialism and ethical behavior.

Chinese 3360 intends to develop students' critical thinking and analytical skills, and to broaden students' knowledge of contemporary China. Students will be required to write and discourse coherently and objectively on socio-cultural issues of contemporary Chinese society. The course is taught in English. All the readings are in English or English translation and films are English subtitled.

### Learning Outcomes:

1. Exhibit a survey knowledge of historical events that shape China's modern narrative (1900 to present), with focus on China's social development since the Deng Era as expressed in film and literature.
2. Ability to discourse on and debate social and cultural motifs, such as state-sponsored narratives of nation, development of the individual vis-a-vis the advent of commodity culture, the influence of popular music as rebellion against state hegemony, etc.
3. Learn to appreciate and explicate a film as a social text.
4. Differentiate and analyze basic narrative techniques of film and prose as relevant to constructing a view of contemporary Chinese society.

### Core Requirement.

This class is designated as a Core Humanities course that addresses Core Objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility. These four objectives are assessed through the exams, writing assignments, and semester essay. Personal Responsibility is assessed through exam. The other three objectives are assessed by demonstrating the ability to write cogently and critically on the Course Outcomes

*Students are expected to know the UH Academic Honesty Policy. Any violations will be duly processed.*  
*Link: <http://www.uh.edu/dos/hdbk/acad/achonpol.html>*

### Required Texts:

1. Berry, Michael. *Jia Zhangke's 'Hometown Trilogy': Xiao Wu, Platform, Unknown Pleasures*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. ISBN-13: 978-1844572625
2. Kraus, Richard Curt. *The Cultural Revolution: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2012. ISBN-13: 978-0199740550
3. Mitter, Rana. *Modern China: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2008. ISBN-13: 978-0199228027
4. Wasserstrom, Jeffrey N. *China in the 21st Century: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford University Press, 2010. ISBN-13: 978-0195394122



5. Zhu, Wen. *I Love Dollars and Other Stories of China*. Columbia UP, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-14-31127-0.

**Films:** *Forbidden City* (NBC documentary), *China: A Century of Revolution* (Sue Williams), *Sunflower* (Zhang Yang), *Tian'anmen*, *Ermo* (Zhou Xiaowen), *Platform*, *Still Life*, and *Unknown Pleasures* (Jia Zhangke), other selected films.

### Film Viewing

Some films will be screened in class; you are responsible to watch other films on your own. Films are available in the Language Acquisition Center, 320 Agnes Arnold Hall, <http://www.class.uh.edu/lac/>. It is your responsibility to watch and/or acquire films not screened in class. Many films are also available through subscription services such as NetFlix.

### Course Requirements and Grading

\* Reasonable adjustments to the grading scale may be made with consultation and consent of class members.

1 Homework writing 25%

2 Quizzes 30%.

3 Semester exam 25%

4 Semester essay on a pre-approved topic. 20%.

5 Attendance. You are allowed two absences. Barring extenuating circumstances, your grade will be marked down one ½ letter grade for each subsequent absence, at the discretion of the instructor. Please strive to be on time. If you feel you have a legitimate and unavoidable reason for missing a class, please let me know (in advance if possible) through Webct email.

### Grades:

- Reasonable adjustments to the grading scale may be made with consultation and consent of class members.

Meaning of Letter Grades as listed in the Undergraduate Catalog. Please see:	Guideline to determine final letter grades in this course.
<a href="http://www.uh.edu/academics/catalog/policies/academ-reg/grades/index.php#grades">http://www.uh.edu/academics/catalog/policies/academ-reg/grades/index.php#grades</a>	
A = Excellent	<b>Grading Scale:</b>
A-	A 100 - 93
B+	A- 92.5 - 90
B = Good, exceeding all requirements	B+ 89.5 - 87
B-	B 86.5 - 83
C+	B- 82.5 - 80
C = Average (Satisfactorily meeting all requirements)	C+ 79.5 - 77
C-	C 76.5 - 73
D = Poor, passing	C- 72.5 - 70
F = Failing and unsatisfactory work.	D+ 69.5 - 67
	D 66.5 - 63
	D- 62.5 - 60
	F < 60

### Tentative Schedule – Schedule

This schedule approximates the content sequence for both Fall and Spring semesters. Minor adjustments may be made within a semester, such as variation in film selection and required readings. Detailed instructions for each semester will be found in the Blackboard "Assignments" folder

Week	Film	Reading	Writing / Exam
One	Sunflower	None	
Two	Tian'anmen,	Wasserman	Homework writi
Three	Forbidden City (NBC documentary)	Wasserman, Zhu Wen	
Four	China: A Century of Revolution	Mitter, Zhu Wen	Homework writi
Five	China: A Century of Revolution	Mitter	
Six	China: A Century of Revolution	Mitter	Homework writi
Seven	Ermo	Kraus	
Eight	Kekexili	Kraus	Homework writi
Nine	Unknown Pleasures	Jia Zhangke's 'Hometown Trilogy'	
Ten	Platform	Jia Zhangke's 'Hometown Trilogy'	Homework writi
Eleven	Still Life	Jia Zhangke's 'Hometown Trilogy'	
Twelve	Shower	Jia Zhangke's 'Hometown Trilogy'	
Thirteen			Semester Exam
Fourteen			
Fifteen			Semester Essay I

