

Contemporary Chinese Literature

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About the Instructor: Dr. Yanfeng Li received his Ph.D. in Chinese literature from University of Hawaii (2005). He taught at the University of Pennsylvania for four years and has been teaching international students at ECNU over the past 8 years. His research interest is post Cultural Revolution literature. Dr. Li teaches traditional Chinese Literature and Modern Chinese Literature alternatively in spring and fall semester.

Course Description and Learning Objectives

This course introduces students to contemporary Chinese literature produced after 1949, and particularly after the Cultural (1966-1976), by selecting literary works that are not widely taught outside China and that depict and directly affect life in China today. China has made some of the most dramatic changes in its history during the last thirty years, and the literary works created after 1976 are equally meaningful and certainly rival, if not surpass, many works produced during the Republic. Through the magnifying lens of contemporary literature, the course closely examines the cultural, social and environmental concerns of this remarkably transformative period.

Students will learn to contextualize modern and contemporary Chinese literature within specific historical periods and eras as a means to analyze and understand literature not just as an art but as an expression of social change. In other words, the historical use of literature for the purpose of addressing social problems and as a vehicle for social development in China is the main concern of this course.

Methods of Instruction

This is a seminar-style class, which emphasizes both informative lectures from the instructor and active student participation in discussions, so as to train students' critical thinking ability and oral argumentation. Multimedia aids will be used whenever possible, including film.

Course Requirements

Attendance and Participation

Attendance is extremely important and will have a significant impact on the final grade. Participation in classroom discussion will also be calculated separately into the final grade, so it is very important to prepare before class, and to have watched the assigned movie and read the assigned texts to be able to join class discussion.

Preview Homework

The preview homework is for checking if students have read the assigned readings before coming to class. The homework is due at the beginning of a class. Students are usually asked to provide brief answers for several questions.

Reading

Course readers will be distributed to students. Additional reading materials will be handed out by the instructor throughout the semester.

Writing Assignments

There will be three essays of 1,000 or more words in length each, and a final paper of no less than 1,500 words, not including bibliography.

Weekly Schedule (Subject to Change)

Please list your schedule of classes below for a 15-week term, including 12 weeks of instruction. The first week is Orientation Week, and there two weeks scheduled for the national holiday and the weeklong program fieldtrip. Please ask the Academic Support Coordinator for dates before scheduling classes. At least one week should include a required fieldtrip scheduled on Friday.

Week 1	Orientation Week, read stories below in course reader:
Week 2	Early Modern Period: Concerning the society
Week 3	Early Modern Period: Concerning the society and individuals
Week 4	Transition to Contemporary: Concerning the individuals
Week 5-6	Literature about Cultural Revolution: Scar Literature (1976-1980)
Week 7	Post Cultural Revolution Literature: Concerning the reform (1980s)
Week 8	Post Cultural Revolution Literature: Root search (1980s)
Week 9	Literature of Changing Values
Week 10	Literature of Changing Values
Week 11	Literature of Changing Values
Week 12	Literature of Human Nature Relation
Week 13	Literature of Environmental Concerns
Week 14	Literature of Environmental Concerns
Week 15	Class Conclusion and Final Paper Workshop