This writing-intensive seminar explores transformations in popular culture and everyday life in Chinese society since 1949 through an analytical focus on political economy and material culture. Drawing upon ethnographic studies, we will investigate how the forces of state control and global capitalism converge to shape consumer desires and everyday habits in contemporary China. Case studies include eating habits, fashion standards, housing trends, entertainment, sexuality, and car culture.

**Prerequisite:** previous course in China studies (anthropology, economics, history, literature, philosophy, or political science) required.
READING MATERIALS

Required Books:


Key to Symbols:

📖 Reading from required course book.

➡️ Electronic article available through Ares (http://ares.wustl.edu/ares/).
COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING POLICY

❖ Attendance and Participation (worth 20% of overall grade)

Regular class attendance is mandatory. Your grade will be based on your preparation for and contribution to class discussion. To that end, all students are required to complete the assigned readings (75-150 pages per week) before the scheduled sessions. Active participation is a crucial part of the seminar experience, and I expect each student to contribute substantively to our discussions every week. If you are already used to lively debate and argumentation, you will find yourselves getting the most out of the semester by drawing your quieter peers out in discussion.

As part of the participation grade, each student will serve as the discussant for one class session. The discussant is responsible for leading the discussion on the scheduled day with a short presentation (10-15 minutes) that critically reviews the readings, identifies major themes, poses key questions for the class to address, and highlights key insights from other classmates' blog posts.

Each student will also serve as the class rapporteur for another class session. This will involve taking careful notes during the session, revising them in narrative form, and then posting the final synthesis on the course blog within one week. These rapporteurs' notes will serve as a cumulative record of the course to help enhance the continuity of our discussions.

❖ Online Response Posts (worth 20% of overall grade)

As part of our inquiry into popular culture and consumption in modern China, each class participant is required to write online response posts in no fewer than 10 different weeks of the semester. Your comments should address the week's readings and must be posted in the "Discussion Board" section of the course website (https://bb.wustl.edu) no later than 10 pm on the day before class to receive credit.

Your online response post (300–400 words) should analyze the key argument(s) of the readings. In other words, what is the author trying to convince you to believe or accept? What reasons or evidence does the author give for his or her claims, and how effective are they? Where does the reasoning break down or what things do not make sense? You should also situate the text(s) within the context of the course as a whole. How do the readings contribute to the main concepts and themes of the course? How do they compare (or contrast) to the ideas presented by previous readings? How has your thinking been altered by the reading(s)?

Response posts will be graded as check-plus/check/check-minus (or zero for non-submission). You are encouraged to respond to your classmates' postings as well as post links to relevant news articles, resources, videos, websites, etc. Doing so on a regular basis will boost your overall response grade.
Mini-Ethnography (worth 30% of overall grade)

In this assignment, you will engage in anthropological fieldwork of your own by studying the interaction of food and culture in a Chinese setting. This project entails conducting an initial survey followed by a more in-depth analysis of particular issues in order to produce an ethnography of a local Chinese food establishment.

For the first stage of your fieldwork, you will engage in at least one extended participant-observation session (2-3 hours) of a local Chinese food establishment (e.g. Chinese grocery store, restaurant, bakery, tea shop, etc.) You should take careful notes on what you observe and hear during this session, including a detailed description of the place, a comprehensive list and description of the people present, a chronological account of events that occur, etc. You should also make note of your own assumptions, impressions, and interpretations.

For the second stage of your fieldwork, you will conduct at least one follow-up interview (1-2 hours) with a person involved with your chosen food establishment (e.g. a customer, worker, manager, owner, etc.) The interview should give you an opportunity to investigate issues and address questions you uncovered during your observation session. You should develop a sense of this individual's identity and relationship with the food establishment. We will discuss fieldwork and interview strategies in class.

Your mini-ethnography will be evaluated as follows:

An excerpt of your Field Notes (from your observation session and/or interview) is due at the beginning of class on February 14 (worth 20% of the mini-ethnography grade). Your notes should be revised from the initial raw format, with details fleshed out and written in prose format. While I don't expect you to have completed all of your fieldwork by this date, you should turn in at least 3 revised pages of field notes.

A Rough Draft of your mini-ethnography is due at the beginning of class on February 28 (worth 20%). Your draft should articulate a main thesis, provide an analysis of your empirical field observations, and incorporate relevant course readings. Please bring two anonymous copies to class (one for the instructor, one for your peer reviewer).

Each of you will be assigned the rough draft of another student to review critically. The Peer Review will be double blind, meaning that neither the identity of the reviewer nor the author will be revealed. You will be provided a manuscript review form to help guide your analysis. Your review is due at the beginning of class on March 7 (worth 20%).

The Final Version of your mini-ethnography is due at the beginning of class on March 21 (worth 40%). Grading will take into consideration how you have addressed and integrated feedback on the preceding writing assignments. The final paper should be 8–10 double-spaced pages long.
Research Paper (worth 30% of overall grade)

The second major writing assignment for this course is to produce a research paper based on a topic of your choosing. Each of the following writing assignments represents a component of the research process and the cumulative end-product of the assignments will be a carefully structured and well-argued research paper.

1. **Topic Statement** ~ due March 28 by email to the instructor (2–3 pages; worth 10% of project grade). For this initial assignment, you will identify an aspect of Chinese popular culture and/or consumption that you wish to explore in greater depth. Write a brief essay that includes a clear statement of the issue to be investigated and a justification for why you think the topic is worthy of investigation.

2. **Literature Review** ~ due April 11 at the beginning of class (3–4 pages + annotated bibliography; worth 20% of project grade). For this assignment, you will review the literature on your chosen topic. Summarize what is already known about the topic and highlight those perspectives that you feel are helpful with respect to your own research. Your discussion should draw on at least two of the readings from the syllabus as well as relevant outside sources. Attach a brief annotated bibliography of scholarly books or papers (minimum of 3 outside sources) that contain important background information on your chosen topic. Each entry of the annotated bibliography should consist of a proper citation and 2-3 sentences describing the work and its relationship to your research topic.

3. **Paper Abstract** ~ an initial version is due April 18 at the beginning of class (500 words, worth 15% of project grade). Your abstract should be approximately 500 words and consist of a paper title and a summary of your paper's main ideas (including your thesis, purpose, scope, and conclusions). You should also identify 3–5 key words that best describe your topic. We will workshop the initial abstracts in class on April 17. A revised version is due by email to the instructor no later than April 22 so that it can be printed in the conference program for our final class session.

4. **Presentation** ~ Each student will prepare a 5-minute multimedia presentation to be given during the Class Conference on April 25 (worth 15% of project grade). The presentation should summarize the key arguments, data, and conclusions of your research paper.

5. **Final Paper** ~ a hard copy is due Thursday, May 2 by 4 p.m. in the instructor's mailbox in the anthropology department's main office in McMillan 112 (worth 40% of project grade). This final assignment brings together all previous components in the form of a logically structured, accurately referenced, and coherently argued term paper. Grading will take into consideration how you have addressed and integrated feedback on the preceding writing assignments. The paper should be 8–10 pages long. Your in-text citations and bibliography should be formatted according to the American Anthropological Association style guide (http://www.aaanet.org/publications/style_guide.pdf).
Late Policy: Because the success of this writing-intensive course depends on prompt and mutual feedback at specific stages in the writing process, the Mini-Ethnography Rough Draft and Peer Review, as well as the Research Paper Abstract and Presentation, must be completed on time in order to receive credit. For the other assignments, each day late without a pre-approved extension will result in the reduction of your assignment grade by 1/3 of a letter.

Academic Integrity: Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Undergraduate Student Academic Integrity Policy. The university's policy is available on the internet at http://www.wustl.edu/policies/undergraduate-academic-integrity.html. This includes explicit guidelines on avoiding plagiarism. Plagiarism is the use of someone else's work, words, or ideas without attribution. In all of your assignments, including your response posts and paper drafts, you must always make clear where you have borrowed from others by identifying the original source and extent of your use of another's work. This obligation holds whether the sources are published or unpublished and whether they are in print or on the internet. Plagiarism or other breaches of academic integrity will be reported to the academic integrity officer of the College of Arts and Sciences and can result in a failing grade for the course.

This syllabus is subject to change. It is your responsibility to check Ares regularly for the most updated version.
SCHEDULE OF DISCUSSION TOPICS AND READINGS

Week 1 (Jan 17): Introduction


Week 2 (Jan 24): Popular Culture and Consumption with Chinese Characteristics


Week 3 (Jan 31): Revolutionizing Food Culture

- Field Trip: Corner 17 [Delmar Loop Chinese restaurant]

Week 4 (Feb 7): Fast Food Nation

MINI-ETHNOGRAPHY: Field Notes due at the beginning of class on Feb 13.

Week 5 (Feb 14): Contemporary Chinese Art

Field Trip: Wǒmen (我们): Contemporary Chinese Art Exhibition
Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, Washington University
http://www.kemperartmuseum.wustl.edu/exhibitions/women
*** Meet at the museum entrance (corner of Skinker & Forsyth) at 2:30 p.m. ***


Conduct background research on one of the following artists featured in the exhibition: Cao Fei, Chen Ke, Chen Man, Cui Xiuwen, Xing Danwen, Xiao Lu, Yin Xiuzhen

Supplementary readings:

- "Inside Out: New Chinese Art: Chronologies (PRC, Taiwan, and Hong Kong)." http://sites.asiasociety.org/arts/insideout/chronologies.html

Week 6 (Feb 21): Chinese Sports Culture

Everyone read the following 3 articles:


Choose at least one of the following case studies to read:

MINI-ETHNOGRAPHY: Rough Draft due at the beginning of class on Feb 28.
Please submit 2 anonymous hard copies (one for the instructor, one for your peer reviewer).

Week 7 (Feb 28): Fashioning Gender Identities

MINI-ETHNOGRAPHY: Peer Review due at the beginning of class on March 7.

Week 8 (Mar 7): Internet Culture, E-Sweatshops, and the Great Firewall [~40 pp]

March 11-15: Spring Break – No Classes

MINI-ETHNOGRAPHY: Final Version due at the beginning of class on March 21.

Week 9 (Mar 21): Consuming Health [71 pp]


**RESEARCH PAPER: Topic Statement due via email to the instructor by March 28.**

**Week 10 (Mar 28): Youth Culture and Coming of Age in China**


**Week 11 (Apr 4): Karaoke Bar Hostesses and the Entertainment Industry [~120 pp]**


**RESEARCH PAPER: Literature Review due at the beginning of class on April 11.**

**Week 12 (Apr 11): China in Africa and Africans in China**

Everyone read the following 3 articles:


Choose at least one of the following case studies to read:


RESEARCH PAPER: Abstract due at the beginning of class on April 18 (please bring 3 hard copies to class for critique). Revised abstract due by email to instructor by April 23.

Week 13 (Apr 18): Piracy, Shanzhai, and Counterfeit Culture

- Abstract Workshop in class


SPECIAL EVENT: "China's Women in Interdisciplinary Context: Literature, Anthropology, History, and Art History"

- Thursday, April 18 at 6 p.m. at the Kemper Art Museum's Steinberg Auditorium http://www.kemperartmuseum.wustl.edu/events/panel-discussions/8075

Week 14 (Apr 25): Class Conference

- Student Presentations

RESEARCH PAPER: Final Paper due on Thursday, May 2 by 4:00 p.m. Turn in a hard copy to the instructor's mailbox in the anthropology department main office in McMillan 112.