

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Subject Description Form

Please read the notes at the end of the table carefully before completing the form.

Subject Code	APSS1BN17M														
Subject Title	Contemporary Chinese Society and Popular Culture														
Credit Value	3														
Level	1														
GUR Requirements Intended to Fulfill	<p>This subject intends to fulfill the following requirement(s) :</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy Lifestyle <input type="checkbox"/> AI and Data Analytics (AIDA) <input type="checkbox"/> Innovation and Entrepreneurship (IE) <input type="checkbox"/> Languages and Communication Requirement (LCR) <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) <input type="checkbox"/> Service-Learning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cluster-Area Requirement (CAR) <input type="checkbox"/> Human Nature, Relations and Development [CAR A] <input type="checkbox"/> Science, Technology and Environment [CAR D] <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese History and Culture [CAR M] <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultures, Organizations, Societies and Globalization [CAR N] <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> China-Study Requirement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes or <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Writing and Reading Requirements <input type="checkbox"/> English or <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese </p>														
Pre-requisite / Co-requisite/ Exclusion	APSS students are not allowed to take this subject Subject exclusion: APSS1B17 / APSS1B17M / APSS1BN17														
Assessment Methods	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Assessment components</th><th>Individual Assessment</th><th>Group Assessment</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. Attendance and participation</td><td>20%</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>2. Quiz</td><td>30%</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>3. Essay</td><td>50%</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The grade is calculated according to the percentage assigned The completion of all assignments is required for passing the subject 			Assessment components	Individual Assessment	Group Assessment	1. Attendance and participation	20%		2. Quiz	30%		3. Essay	50%	
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1. Attendance and participation	20%														
2. Quiz	30%														
3. Essay	50%														

Objectives	<p>Since the reform in 1978, the People's Republic of China has seen a growth of popular culture and successive waves of digital transformation. Although in recent years control of the Party-State has gradually increased, new forms of socio-cultural expressions continued to emerge with frequent Chinese interactions with the world (e.g., music, cinema, TV shows, popular novels, lifestyle magazines, and the Internet). A key aspect of socio-economic advancement has been the expansion of citizen engagement in public affairs. Meanwhile, the state, family, university and other institutions continue to shape people's worldviews and behavior. After completing this course, students will gain a deeper understanding of various forms of Chinese cultures, and discuss the wider impact of the evolving contemporary Chinese society.</p>
Intended Learning Outcomes <i>(Note 1)</i>	<p>Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) outline the emergence and rapid development of popular culture in the PRC since 1978; (b) explain the socio-cultural embedding of different forms of popular culture in Greater China region; (c) critically analyze some of the changes in Chinese society caused by the rise of new forms of popular culture; (d) evaluate the significant role of popular culture in transforming socio-political spheres in Greater China; (e) assess claims made about popular culture phenomena in the media.
Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus <i>(Note 2)</i>	<p>Background Context</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. China since 1978 <p>Selected Core Themes (The following list is for indicative purposes, with varying depth in discussions.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Chinese popular music; 3. Cinema, its directors, stories, and stars in Greater China; 4. The emergence of superstars and fandom in Greater China; 5. Popular TV shows: reality shows, stars, celebrities and social changes; 6. The new face of literature and novels; 7. The changing advertising and imagination in China; 8. The Internet as entertainment, subversive space, and trendsetter; 9. Mobile phones, Weibo, WeChat and other social media in Greater China; 10. Changing consumption culture and emerging lifestyle: food, shopping, tourism and fashion 11. Gender, sexuality and new expressions of self; 12. Growing up in Greater China: Outlooks of young people <p>Concluding Session</p>
Teaching/Learning Methodology <i>(Note 3)</i>	<p>This course will be delivered by lectures. The lectures will introduce the major themes in a broad form and employ examples and case studies to provide students with a better understanding of cultural changes in society in Greater China as they are today. The methodology is through a combination of various teaching methods such as the screening of audio-visual materials, the discussion of newspaper clippings and academic articles and observation. An environment will be created that makes students aware of and leads them to examine their preconceived notions of life in the People's Republic of China and in the Greater China</p>

	region. In addition, students are strongly encouraged to engage in discussions and participate in various activities to realize the learning outcomes.						
Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes (Note 4)	Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)				
			a	b	c	d	e
	1. Attendance and participation	20%	√	√	√	√	√
	2. Quiz	30%	√	√	√	√	√
	3. Essay	50%	√	√	√	√	√
	Total	100 %					
	<p>Students are required to attend lectures and participate in discussions. This is to increase interactions and sharing of insights (through polls, Q&A, and break-out groups).</p> <p>A quiz serves to consolidate students’ learning by revising course readings. Students will have a better understanding of the key concepts.</p> <p>An essay is a 1,500-word analytical piece of individual writing based on the suggested references.</p>						
Student Study Effort Expected	Class contact:						
	▪ Lecture					39 Hrs.	
	Other student study effort:						
	▪ Self-study					45 Hrs.	
	▪ Assignment					26 Hrs.	
	Total student study effort					110 Hrs.	
Reading List and References	Background textbooks underpinning the course design (*journal articles and book chapters will be assigned in the course*)						
	<p>Chan, Jenny, Mark Selden and Ngai Pun. 2020. <i>Dying for an iPhone: Apple, Foxconn and the Lives of China’s Workers</i>. Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books and London: Pluto Press.</p> <p>Danesi, Marcel. 2023. <i>Popular Culture: Introductory Perspectives</i>. 5th Edition. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.</p> <p>Diamond, Larry and Marc F. Plattner, eds. 2012. <i>Liberation Technology: Social Media and the Struggle for Democracy</i>. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.</p>						

	<p>Fang, Fang. [2020] 2022. <i>Wuhan Diary: Dispatches from a Quarantined City</i>. Translated by Michael Berry. New York: HarperVia.</p> <p>Franceschini, Ivan and Christian Sorace, eds. 2022. <i>Proletarian China: A Century of Chinese Labour</i>. New York: Verso.</p> <p>Gilmartin, Christina K., Gail Hershatter, Lisa Rofel and Tyrene White, eds. 1994. <i>Engendering China: Women, Culture, and the State</i>. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.</p> <p>Greenhalgh, Susan. 2008. <i>Just One Child: Science and Policy in Deng's China</i>. Berkeley: University of California Press.</p> <p>Han, Rongbin. 2018. <i>Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience</i>. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.</p> <p>Hillenbrand, Margaret. 2020. <i>Negative Exposures: Knowing What Not to Know in Contemporary China</i>. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.</p> <p>Hsu, Becky Yang, ed. 2025. <i>The Extraordinary in the Mundane: Family and Forms of Community in China</i>. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.</p> <p>Latham, Kevin, ed. 2020. <i>Routledge Handbook of Chinese Culture and Society</i>. London: Routledge.</p> <p>McGregor, Richard. 2011. <i>The Party: The Secret World of China's Communist Rulers</i>. New York: Harper Perennial.</p> <p>Ollier-Malaterre, Ariane. 2024. <i>Living with Digital Surveillance in China: Citizens' Narratives on Technology, Privacy, and Governance</i>. Abington, Oxon: Routledge.</p> <p>Pieke, Frank. 2016. <i>Knowing China: A Twenty-First Century Guide</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.</p> <p>Roberts, Margaret E. 2018. <i>Censored: Distraction and Diversion Inside China's Great Firewall</i>. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.</p> <p>Saich, Tony. 2021. <i>From Rebel to Ruler: One Hundred Years of the Chinese Communist Party</i>. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.</p> <p>Shirk, Susan L., ed. 2011. <i>Changing Media, Changing China</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Sorace, Christian, Ivan Franceschini and Nicholas Loubere, eds. 2019. <i>Afterlives of Chinese Communism: Political Concepts from Mao to Xi</i>. Canberra: ANU Press.</p> <p>Wielander, Gerda and Derek Hird, eds. 2018. <i>Chinese Discourses on Happiness</i>. Hong Kong: HKU Press.</p> <p>Willis, Paul 2020. <i>Being Modern in China</i>. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.</p> <p>Yang, Guobin. 2022. <i>The Wuhan Lockdown</i>. New York: Columbia University Press.</p> <p>Yang, Guobin and Wei Wang, eds. 2021. <i>Engaging Social Media in China: Platforms, Publics, and Production</i>. Michigan: Michigan State University Press.</p>
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Note 1: Intended Learning Outcomes

Intended learning outcomes should state what students should be able to do or attain upon completion of the subject. Subject outcomes are expected to contribute to the attainment of the overall programme outcomes.

Note 2: Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus

The syllabus should adequately address the intended learning outcomes. At the same time over-crowding of the syllabus should be avoided.

Note 3: Teaching/Learning Methodology

This section should include a brief description of the teaching and learning methods to be employed to facilitate learning, and a justification of how the methods are aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the subject.

Note 4: Assessment Method

This section should include the assessment method(s) to be used and its relative weighting, and indicate which of the subject intended learning outcomes that each method purports to assess. It should also provide a brief explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes.