Course Description:

China has a 5000-year history, and a rich tapestry of geographic, climatological, and ethnic diversity. As a result, Chinese culture is exceptionally varied. Migration to the capital city has made Beijing a melting pot of both Chinese and western cultures. Walking the streets one will see traditional marketplaces coexisting with western chain restaurants, glass skyscrapers beside traditional Chinese architecture, and rickety bicycles sharing the streets with European sports cars. We will sample this culture through lectures on topics such as art, music, literature, business, innovation, language, politics, economics, history and nationalism. At the end of the course, students will complete a group oral presentation to the class on one of these or related topics.

Instructor: Karlis Rokpelnis

Prerequisites: None

Method of Presentation: The course will be a seminar course with occasional lectures and weekly field trips to important historical and cultural sites around Beijing.

Language of Presentation: English, with introduction of relevant Chinese terms

Learning Outcomes:
1) Identify the major geographic regions of China and their differences.
2) Understand social and politico-economic effects of the opening and reform era, including the effects of modernization and urbanization on the Chinese people.
3) Identify some important people in Chinese culture and politics, understand the impact of personal choice on social and economic development.
4) Discuss the position of modern China in the world economic, business, and social environment.
5) Explain their views on one of these topics in depth.

Required work and form of assessment:
1) In-class participation (30%). (all weeks)
2) Homework assignments (30%) (Weeks 1-3)
3) Final reflections (10%) (Week 4)
4) Group presentation (30%)

Week 1 Assignment:
First Impressions: Report on observations in daily life relating to material presented in class.

Week 2 Assignment:
Report on how economic reforms have affected specific groups of people (e.g., women, migrant workers).

Week 3 Assignment:
Changes in modern China: Report on effects of technology, urbanization, and increasing worldwide commerce on the culture and environment.

Final Reflections Assignment:
Report discussing how the student's views of China have been reinforced or modified as a result of 4 weeks in Beijing.

Final presentation:
A group oral report (approximately 2 students per group) on some aspect of Chinese culture, to be chosen in collaboration with the faculty.

Content:

Week 1

Day 1: Course Introduction: What is Modern China?


Day 2: Twentieth Century Turmoil: Imperialism, Revolution and Maoism

Recommended:

Day 3: Field trip to Beijing Urban Planning Museum, Tiananmen Square, Forbidden City, and Jingshan Park

Day 4: Chinese Political Organization: The Organic State;


Week 2

Day 5: 1978: Market Transition: Economic and Social Consequences of Reform

Day 6: Urbanization and Migrant Workers


Day 7: Being Ethnic in China: Ritual and other modes of production
Field Trip to China Ethnic Minority Cultural Park

Day 8: Women of the Country


Weekend field trip to “wild” Great Wall at Jinshanling and Simitai.
Stay overnight in an isolated rural village in Hebei Province.

Week 3

Day 9: Religion in Contemporary Chinese Society


Day 10: Field Trip to Confucian Temple, Imperial College and Lama Temple

Day 11: Media and Censorship

Susan Blum, "Why Does China Fear the Internet?" in China: In and Beyond the Headlines (2012)

**Day 12: Buying a home and Driving A Car : Globalization and Consumerism**
Field trip to 798 Art District

**Week 4**

**Day 13: Organizing for Change: Civil Society**

**Day 14: Pessoptimist Nation(alism) & the Future of China**
William A. Callahan, *Pessoptimist Nation*, pp. 31-59

**Day 15: Field trip to 圆明园 Yuanmingyuan (“Old Summer Palace”)**

Skim any two of the following articles
- **“Chinese Reactions to Auction of Stolen Bronze Relics”** ChinaSmack February 26, 2009.

**Day 16: Field trip to “Bird's Nest” Olympic Stadium and Water Cube**

**Day 17: Final Presentations**