Urbanization in China Syllabus

**HOUSECS 59.11: Urbanization in China**

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Faculty Sponsor: Ralph Litzinger (rlitz@duke.edu), Department of Cultural Anthropology

Spring 2015

Meeting Time: Monday 7-8:30 PM

Location: Few FF 101

**Course Overview**

Over the last two decades the People’s Republic of China has gone through what might be the most magnificent and dramatic urbanization process human history has ever witnessed. In 2012, 712 million, or 52.6% of China’s total population, resided in cities; in 1990, that number was a mere 26.4%. Urbanization of this scale and pace will define China’s future and have profound implications for the rest of the world, as another 200 million people are projected to move from China’s rural countryside into cities in the next fifteen years. Understanding urbanization in China will be crucial not only for grasping key facets of contemporary Chinese society, but also for comprehending the world we live in.

This course explores the forces driving urbanization in China by tracking the myriad ways in which urbanization has been unfolding and assessing the consequences urbanization has for economic development, political dynamics, social structures, cultural production, and the daily lives of China’s citizens. The course seeks to provide a comprehensive, systematic account of this process and encourages students to appreciate the nuances and complexities of urbanization’s multi-faceted nature.

The course is organized into four sections centered around distinct yet interrelated themes: an introduction and overview; division and interaction between rural and urban China; urbanization as dynamic, uneven and contested processes; and consequences of urbanization. Each section is composed of several classes with topics that contribute diverse and complementary perspectives to the understanding of the theme.

The course is formatted as a seminar. Based on the weekly readings assigned, students are expected to engage in active discussion and debate to critically explore and analyze the issues being covered.

**Objectives**

The objectives of this course are two-fold: first, help students develop a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of urbanization in China and second, empower students with analytical insights that can be utilized to understand other large-scale social phenomena. In order to do this, our approach will be interdisciplinary, from a perspective that includes, but goes beyond, mainstream academic and media coverage. Materials for the class include readings from media outlets like *The New York Times,* documentaries from western and Chinese filmmakers, policy reports, academic papers and books, novels, and short stories.

**Required Texts**

All required texts, as listed in the course schedule, will be made available by the instructors. Readings and papers are due before class on the day indicated on the course schedule.

**Course Requirements**

A grade of satisfactory in this course requires completion of all of the following:

1. Attendance of at least 11 (out of 14) classes throughout the semester;
2. Completion of assigned readings and active participation in class discussion;
3. Completion of 6 writing assignments. A 250-word short synthesis paper is assigned each week and due before class on the day indicated on the course schedule. In each paper, students are expected to critically engage with the assigned reading materials to answer the question in the prompt. Papers are graded as either “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory.” **Each student should complete six satisfactory short synthesis papers throughout the semester.**

**Course Schedule**

*Theme 1: Introduction and Overview*

**Week 1, January 7, 2015**

**China’s cities: Past, present and future**

Description:

This session gives an overview of what China’s cities were like in the pre-reform Communist China (from 1949 to the Cultural Revolution), how they fared in early years of the “Reform and Opening,” how they grew since the 1990s, their current scales and landscapes, and their anticipated expansion in the future. Students will get a sense of the context and magnitude of the issues covered by the course: why urbanization in China is important for both the Chinese society and the globe.

**Ralph Litzinger (faculty sponsor) attending**

Readings (approx. 15 pages):

1. *China’s Great Uprooting: Moving 250 Million Into Cities.* Johnson, Ian. The New York Times. 2013. Read Parts 1, 2, and 4

Part 1: [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/16/world/asia/chinas-great-uprooting-moving-250-million-into-cities.html?pagewanted=all&\_r=0](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2013%2F06%2F16%2Fworld%2Fasia%2Fchinas-great-uprooting-moving-250-million-into-cities.html%3Fpagewanted%3Dall%26_r%3D0&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNGAVWh3FXhPiT-1IpG0G_08q2v1ew)

Part 2: [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/14/world/asia/pitfalls-abound-in-chinas-push-from-farm-to-city.html](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2013%2F07%2F14%2Fworld%2Fasia%2Fpitfalls-abound-in-chinas-push-from-farm-to-city.html&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNGZTYjMM0UHiouvRtPF3p2APkW9vA)

Part 4: [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/10/world/asia/new-china-cities-shoddy-homes-broken-hope.html](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2013%2F11%2F10%2Fworld%2Fasia%2Fnew-china-cities-shoddy-homes-broken-hope.html&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNFUfjeJ1A6F2sbWg8MalH-sG6_4FA)

Short synthesis: Not assigned.

**Week 2, January 12, 2015**

**Urbanization as a “natural phenomenon” and/or a state-led project: Inquiring rationales and dynamics**

Description:

This session addresses the central question why China has been urbanizing so rapidly since the 1990s. Two important facets will be examined: urbanization as a “natural product” of economic development and industrialization, and urbanization as deliberately facilitated by the state. Special attention will be given to the state’s ambitious urbanization plan released in early 2014 and the benefits thegovernment *believes* urbanization will bring.

Readings (approx. 55 pages):

1. *The Transition of China’s Urban Development: From Plan-Controlled to Market-Led*. Jieming Zhu (1999). Chapter 1. Pp. 1-12.
2. *China’s Urban Transition*. John Friedman (2005). Chapter 3. Pp. 35-56.
3. Urbanization, China’s New Driving Force. Yifan Ding (2013). [http://www.chinausfocus.com/finance-economy/urbanization-new-driving-force-of-chinas-development/](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.chinausfocus.com%2Ffinance-economy%2Furbanization-new-driving-force-of-chinas-development%2F&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNEDGzEqJKnlqfY0xxomzUZKpH1iqw)
4. *China's Leaders Push Urbanization as Engine for Growth*. Wall Street Journal. Dec 15, 2013. [http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304202204579259221407331500](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fonline.wsj.com%2Fnews%2Farticles%2FSB10001424052702304202204579259221407331500&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNEKhBiH6jNHtq9I1lf2qrgZWQpO3w)
5. *China unveils landmark urbanization plan.* Xinhua News Agency. March 16, 2014. [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-03/16/c\_133190495.htm](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fnews.xinhuanet.com%2Fenglish%2Fchina%2F2014-03%2F16%2Fc_133190495.htm&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNF5t1DejOfF_acCKOYuoLWCKUoGsQ)
6. Transcript. Press conference on new urbanization plan. March 19. 2014. [http://china.org.cn/china/2014-03/19/content\_31836248.htm](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fchina.org.cn%2Fchina%2F2014-03%2F19%2Fcontent_31836248.htm&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNEh8iAfa8rUzGxQeU0fr1lKc2_-ow)

Short synthesis: In what ways do you think state-led urbanization will be different than previous processes of “natural” urbanization?

**Week 3, January 19, 2015**

**Martin Luther King Jr. Day**

*Theme 2: Division and Interaction between Rural and Urban China*

**Week 4, January 26, 2015**

**The** *Hukou***system**

Description:

This session examines the *Hukou* system, one of the most important legal institutions in the life of Chinese people, and how it caused the divide between rural and urban China. How has it made China’s pathway to urbanization so peculiar in the past? What obstacles does it pose for urbanization in the future? Possibilities of *Hukou* reforms will also be explored.

Readings (approx. 52 pages):

1. *Contesting Citizenship in Urban China: Peasant Migrants, the State, and the Logic of the Market*. Solinger, Dorothy J. (1999). Chapter 2: Pp. 27-55.
2. *Beijing Comes up with Yet Another Cunning Plan to Get Rid of Migrant Workers*. China Labour Bulletin (2014) <[http://www.clb.org.hk/en/blogs/geoff/beijing-comes-yet-another-cunning-plan-get-rid-migrant-workers](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.clb.org.hk%2Fen%2Fblogs%2Fgeoff%2Fbeijing-comes-yet-another-cunning-plan-get-rid-migrant-workers&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNHTR_3LMUFPbLG9L1iY2jmAxKaXyw)>.
3. *China Moves to Ease Home-Registration Rules in Urbanization Push.* The New York Times. July 30, 2014. [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/31/world/asia/with-urbanization-as-goal-china-moves-to-change-registration-rules.html](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2014%2F07%2F31%2Fworld%2Fasia%2Fwith-urbanization-as-goal-china-moves-to-change-registration-rules.html&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNEUviEI9L4dtZFXChgZ3sxL3e_CNw)
4. *Living On the Edge: Household Registration Reform and Peri-urban Precarity in China.* Smith, Nick. 2014. Journal of Urban Affairs 36(1): 369-383.

Short synthesis: How is the *hukou* system integrated into China’s social, legal, and economic institutions?

**Week 5, February 2, 2015**

**The rural/urban divide and the great internal migration**

Description:

This session focuses on the most prominent demographic force behind China’s past urbanization: migrant workers moving back and forth between rural homes and urban workplaces against the background of the rural/urban divide. How are they doing economically? Are they able/willing to settle in cities? What implications does the “great internal migration” have for both rural and urban regions?

Readings (77 pages):

1. *One Country, Two Societies: Rural-Urban Inequality in Contemporary China. (2010).* Preface (Pp. 1-28).
2. *The Global Financial Crisis and Migrant Workers in China: ‘There is No Future as a Labourer; Returning to the Village has No Meaning.’* Kam Wing Chan (2010). International Journal of Urban and Regional Research 34(3). Pp. 659-677.[http://faculty.washington.edu/kwchan/Chan\_Migrants\_IJURR2010.pdf](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Ffaculty.washington.edu%2Fkwchan%2FChan_Migrants_IJURR2010.pdf&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNEVZnkxtTaGMOPzvZpKV5D9U_TJpQ)
3. *Flexible Work, Flexible Household: Labor Migration and Rural Families in China.* Cinday Fan (2009). in Lisa Keister (ed.) *Work and Organizations in China After Thirty Years of Transition* (Research in the Sociology of Work, Volume 19). Pp. 377-408.

Short synthesis:  How have migrant workers shaped and in turn been influenced by China’s economic development since the “Opening and Reform”?

**Week 6, February 9, 2015**

**Migrant labor**

Description:

This week we’ll watch the award-winning documentary, *Last Train Home* (85 min). This film unpacks one family’s story from among the great internal migration examined last week and helps students better understand the nuanced implications of this issue.

Readings (15 pages):

1. *Migrant Workers and Their Children*. China Labour Bulletin (2013).[http://www.clb.org.hk/en/content/migrant-workers-and-their-children](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.clb.org.hk%2Fen%2Fcontent%2Fmigrant-workers-and-their-children&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNFATOCoBn04Q8ijFkLZ9tUEIFAPJg)

Short synthesis: How has the seesaw migration changed migrant family relationships?

**Week 7, February 16, 2015**

**The Foxconn phenomenon: Factory life and labor activism**

Description:

Based on the film watched last week, this session further scrutinizes the working conditions in “typical” labor-intensive factories, the material and mental well-being of workers in these factories, and how workers organize and mobilize themselves to collectively advance their interests. At the end of the class, we will preview a few songs and/or pieces of art made by migrants.

**Ralph Litzinger (faculty sponsor) attending**

Readings (approx. 53 pages):

1. *Foxconn Suicides: “Workers feel quite lonely.”* BBC News. May 28, 2010. [http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10182824](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.bbc.co.uk%2Fnews%2F10182824&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNFwK5zQeqMHU5SgUf0bzc6ISS4w2g)
2. *Do Chinese Factory Workers Dream of iPads?* The New Yorker. March 26, 2012. [http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/do-chinese-factory-workers-dream-of-ipa](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.newyorker.com%2Fnews%2Fnews-desk%2Fdo-chinese-factory-workers-dream-of-ipads&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNF_ngav4Yk9BY4wp2_bu8ybchVYGQ)
3. *The Labor Question in China: Apple and Beyond.* Ralph Litzinger (2013). *South Atlantic Quarterly* 112(1): 172-178.
4. *The Spatial Politics of Labor in China: Life, Labor and a New Generation of Migrant Workers*. Ngai Pan and Jenny Chan (2013). *South Atlantic Quarterly* 112(1): 179-190.
5. *Chinese Society : Change, Conflict and Resistance*. (2010). Chapter 2 : Pathways of Labor Activism. Pp. 57-79.
6. *China’s workers are turning from analogue slaves to digital rebels.* The Guardian. September 14, 2014. [http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/sep/14/china-analogue-slaves-digital-rebellion](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.theguardian.com%2Fcommentisfree%2F2014%2Fsep%2F14%2Fchina-analogue-slaves-digital-rebellion&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNHm4JwMqedb0rgR_vEECE3yohk8YA)

Short synthesis: How might we reconcile the contrasting images of migrant workers as “victims” and “activists”?

*Theme 3: Urbanization as Dynamic, Uneven and Contested Processes*

**Week 8, February 23, 2015**

**Urban inequality, housing bubbles, and social welfare provision**

Description:

Rapid urbanization poses great challenges for the government to increase welfare spending so as to meet demands of urban residents and to reduce urban poverty. This session surveys inequality across different classes of urban residents and their living conditions. Special attention is given to the bubbles in housing markets. We’ll also examine the government’s efforts, or the lack of them, to provide social welfare for expanding urban populations.

Readings (approx. 61 pages):

1. *Emergence of Urban Poverty and Inequality in China: Evidence from Household Survey.* Cheng Fang et al (2002). *China Economic Review* 13(4): Pp. 430-443.
2. *Housing Inequality, Residential Differentiation, and Socio-Spatial Stratification: Chinese Cities in the Early 21st Century.* Youqin Huang and Siming Li (2014) in Youqin Huang and Siming Li (eds) *Housing Inequality in Chinese Cities*. Pp. 3-17.
3. *Price pressure on the home front.* China Daily. January 4, 2010. [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/business/2010-01/04/content\_9258489.htm](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.chinadaily.com.cn%2Fbusiness%2F2010-01%2F04%2Fcontent_9258489.htm&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNEca7zmj66sR0dyTaJKw7YyJ_OFNw)
4. *In China, fear of a real estate bubble*. Washington Post. January 11, 2014.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/01/10/AR2010011002767.html](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.washingtonpost.com%2Fwp-dyn%2Fcontent%2Farticle%2F2010%2F01%2F10%2FAR2010011002767.html&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNERt0iWLF48IpaaDX8KawfcuDCZyg)

1. *China Home Prices Fall in Most Cities on Weak Demand.* Bloomberg. August 18, 2014.

[http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-08-17/china-home-prices-decline-in-majority-of-cities-on-weak-demand.html](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.bloomberg.com%2Fnews%2F2014-08-17%2Fchina-home-prices-decline-in-majority-of-cities-on-weak-demand.html&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNEg9NpD-zQxJU_tOSjzR1y0BbIJnQ)

1. *The Politics of Social Welfare Reform in Urban China: Social Welfare Preferences and Reform Policies.* Xian Huang (2013). *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 18: Pp. 61-85.

Short synthesis: Who gained and who lost in China’s drive for urbanization?

**Week 9, March 2, 2015**

**Land politics and land finance**

Description:

This session looks into the processes of land appropriation for the purpose of urban development, focusing on the legal-institutional framework within which such processes unfold, contestation between those who reside on the land and those who try to appropriate it, and the government’s fiscal incentive to push for land appropriation. Class discussion will focus on how the “benefits” and revenues of land appropriation are, or should be, spread out among urban and rural residents. Are the processes of land appropriation more ethically nuanced than at first glance? (Hint: yes)

Readings (approx. 52 pages):

1. *China's Urban Billion: The Story behind the Biggest Migration in Human History*.Miller, Tom (2012). Chapter 3: Farm versus Factory: The Battle over Land, Pp. 63-87.
2. *Picking Death Over Eviction.* The New York Times. September 9, 2013. Johnson, Ian. [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/09/world/asia/as-chinese-farmers-fight-for-homes-suicide-is-ultimate-protest.html](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2013%2F09%2F09%2Fworld%2Fasia%2Fas-chinese-farmers-fight-for-homes-suicide-is-ultimate-protest.html&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNFRozGfHJ4bvpmtor_T6knyzhMR-g)
3. *Local “Land Finance” in China’s Urban Expansion: Challenges and Solutions.* Guangzhong Cao et al (2008). *China and World Economy* 16(2): Pp. 19-30.
4. *Research Reviews on “Chinese Land Finance.”* Juanjuan Yang (2012). *Advances in Applied Economics and Finance* 3(4): 630-632.
5. Ordos: The biggest ghost town in China. BBC News. March 17, 2012.

[http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-17390729](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.bbc.com%2Fnews%2Fmagazine-17390729&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNHuQY_Q6R_dxNksAwyFkNyx6btnKQ)

1. *How Will Chinese City Governments Break Their “Land Addiction”?* Tea Leaf Nation. December 13, 2012.

[http://www.tealeafnation.com/2012/12/how-will-chinese-city-governments-break-their-land-addiction/](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.tealeafnation.com%2F2012%2F12%2Fhow-will-chinese-city-governments-break-their-land-addiction%2F&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNFy2sNCaVWNQu0RkSy1bC3jTGPs5g)

Short synthesis: How have China’s tax reforms and unique land-use system determined China’s land appropriation dynamics?

**Week 10, March 9, 2015**

**Spring Break**

**Week 11, March 16, 2015**

**Regional inequality in urbanization: east and west, metropolises and small towns**

Description:

This session discusses spatially and temporally uneven pathways towards urbanization across China, especially disparities between eastern coastal regions and inland regions, metropolises and small towns. Spatial interrelation of urbanization in different regions is highlighted: How does urbanization in coastal regions facilitate or deter urbanization inland? How does the growth of megacities affect, either positively or negatively, small towns nearby?

Readings (approx. 62 pages):

1. *Urbanization in Western China*. Maimaitiming et al (2013). *Chinese Journal of Population Resource and Environment* 11(1): Pp. 79-86.
2. *Sustainable Urbanization in Western China*. Xiangzheng Deng and Xuemei Bai (2014). *Environment* 56(3): 13-24.
3. *Go West, Young Han*. The Economist. Decemebr 21, 2000. [http://www.economist.com/node/457567](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.economist.com%2Fnode%2F457567&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNHpBcAR0jpJA5qzT-ipRzYWNdu2aA)
4. *The Tibetan Plateau: The Plight of Ecologicla Migrants*. China Dialogue. February 10, 2008. [https://www.chinadialogue.net/article/2445-The-Tibetan-Plateau-the-plight-of-ecological-migrants](https://www.google.com/url?q=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.chinadialogue.net%2Farticle%2F2445-The-Tibetan-Plateau-the-plight-of-ecological-migrants&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNGpKRu3XSsfj5JHB3RGAX-hcoF1PQ)
5. *Special Report: China bets future on inland cities*. Reuters. August 3, 2010. [http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/08/03/us-china-urbanisation-idUSTRE6721D320100803](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.reuters.com%2Farticle%2F2010%2F08%2F03%2Fus-china-urbanisation-idUSTRE6721D320100803&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNGHxOQ_rxfNXLmWfHLiAJNgjMm2nw)
6. *Central region: Manufacturing base starts to move inland from the coast.* Financial Times. October 27, 2010. [http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/e1112ae0-dfc8-11df-bed9-00144feabdc0.html#axzz3E6cx5saY](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ft.com%2Fintl%2Fcms%2Fs%2F0%2Fe1112ae0-dfc8-11df-bed9-00144feabdc0.html%23axzz3E6cx5saY&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNGu1oga2nLgYOxn5EslJtw6AHEtHA)
7. *Gift-Bearing Officials Try to Lure Chinese Factories Inland*. The New York Times. August 27, 2014. [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/28/business/bearing-gifts-local-officials-push-for-chinese-factories-to-move-inland.html](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2014%2F08%2F28%2Fbusiness%2Fbearing-gifts-local-officials-push-for-chinese-factories-to-move-inland.html&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNGNG1fUXiYaEdIg2AQb_mWZen305w)
8. *Urbanization from Below: The Growth of Towns in Jiangsu, China*. Laurence Ma and Ming Fan (1994). *Urban Studies* 31(10): 1625-1645.
9. *Hebei Hopes to Turn Cities into Satellites by Pushing Them into Beijing's Orbit.* Caixin. April 15, 2014. [http://english.caixin.com/2014-04-15/100665617.html](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fenglish.caixin.com%2F2014-04-15%2F100665617.html&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNEVdnPIkk2rD4lChqKQJoZ21OzD7Q)

Short synthesis: What do you think are the causes and consequences of this urbanization inland and westward?

**Week 12, March 23, 2015**

**Contemporary urban life: spaces, sub-cultures and life-styles**

Description:

This session gives students a glimpse of contemporary urban life in China: how spaces in cities are interpreted and reinterpreted by different social groups and transformed into habitats of different sub-cultures, how art and alternative cultures blossom in cities, and how those cultural currents impact people’s lifestyles and perspectives.

Readings (approx. 57 pages + the documentary):

1. *Gay and Lesbian Subculture in Urban China*. Loretta Wing Wah Ho (2010). Chapter 2 (part of it): Pp. 37-47.
2. *China’s New Creative Clusters.* Keane, Michael (2011). Chapter 5. Pp. 98-117.
3. Bishan Project: Restarting the Rural Reconstruction Movement.  ([http://www.alternativearchive.com/ouning/article.asp?id=897](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.alternativearchive.com%2Founing%2Farticle.asp%3Fid%3D897&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNEW16YUm1ESvq0_mrF0h_-AeeUxKw)).
4. *Urban China*. Xuefei Ren (2013). Chapter 6: Cultural Economy. Pp. 170-190.
5. Documentary: *Kapital Creation* (2014)

Short synthesis: How has urbanization affected forms of self-expression and the conditions in which people make and experience culture?

*Theme 4: Consequences of Urbanization*

**Week 13, March 30, 2015**

**The “urban problem”: environmental issues examined**

Description:

China’s cities are notorious worldwide for their air pollution and a host of other environmental problems. This session investigates how urbanization transforms the environment both inside and outside cities and the reactions of citizens, activists, scientists, and government officials to these environmental issues. What has been done to address China’s environmental problems as cities expand? How have environmental problems stimulated civic engagement?

**Ralph Litzinger (faculty sponsor) attending**

Readings (approx. 54 pages):

1. *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict and Resistance*. Elizabeth Perry and Mark Selden eds (2010). Chapter 8: Environmental Protests in Rural China. Pp. 197-214.
2. “The Great Frack Forward.” Mother Jones multimedia project. Please read and watch all videos and text. [http://www.motherjones.com/environment/2014/09/china-us-fracking-shale-gas#steamrolled](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.motherjones.com%2Fenvironment%2F2014%2F09%2Fchina-us-fracking-shale-gas%23steamrolled&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNFa8RB4fA1YbhhvdQUpMK-t0f1k-Q)
3. *Environmental Activism in China*. Lei Xie (2009). Chapter 4: Environmental Activism in Beijing. Pp. 86-105.
4. *Beijing’s Olympic Quest: Turn Smoggy Sky Blue*. The New York Times. December 29, 2007. [http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/29/world/asia/29china.html](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2007%2F12%2F29%2Fworld%2Fasia%2F29china.html&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNG7iMGO_o3_JWkkS7XtwLe8ZosGGQ)

Short synthesis: How have environmental problems stimulated civic engagement?

**Week 14, April 6, 2015**

**Economic consequences of urbanization: consumption and (de-)industrialization**

Description:

One alleged benefit of urbanization is that it will reorient the Chinese economy towards domestic consumption and thus bring more sustained economic growth. This session critically analyzes this statement by looking at the ways urbanization affects consumption behaviors. We will also explore what urbanization means for industrial development.

Readings (approx. 55 pages):

1. *2012 Annual Chinese Consumer Report.* McKinsey & Company. Pp. 1-25.
2. *Why Do the Chinese Save So Much*. Forbes. February 2, 2010. [http://www.forbes.com/2010/02/02/china-saving-marriage-markets-economy-trade.html](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.forbes.com%2F2010%2F02%2F02%2Fchina-saving-marriage-markets-economy-trade.html&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNFXaHQSJsGKrBZPVwgeuJ3yYzYjGA)
3. *Why China Needs to Spend More on Welfare.* CNN. March 5, 2013. [http://www.cnn.com/2013/03/05/opinion/china-economy-gan/](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.cnn.com%2F2013%2F03%2F05%2Fopinion%2Fchina-economy-gan%2F&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNFROZJHXw_-VLWwx5LuwHo7QzlN4g)
4. *The Economic Impact of Special Economic Zones: Evidence from Chinese Municipalities*. Jin Wang (2013). *Journal of Development Economics* 101: 133-147.
5. *City Close to Becoming Major Financial Hub*. Shanghai Daily. March 18, 2014. [http://www.shanghaidaily.com/chengdu/City-close-to-becoming-major-financial-hub/shdaily.shtml](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.shanghaidaily.com%2Fchengdu%2FCity-close-to-becoming-major-financial-hub%2Fshdaily.shtml&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNGMdbIslnBOFfSjtFMV8tehCRtF-g)
6. *Beijing’s Neighbors Resist Transfer of Its Polluting Industries.* The New York Times. April 9, 2014. [http://sinosphere.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/04/09/beijings-neighbors-resist-transfer-of-its-polluting-industries/](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fsinosphere.blogs.nytimes.com%2F2014%2F04%2F09%2Fbeijings-neighbors-resist-transfer-of-its-polluting-industries%2F&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNFixKETfMl6S-GBksEhNs9qgR8hnw)

Short synthesis: What is the Chinese government’s rationale behind stimulating consumption through urbanization, and what does the government need to do to make it work (or can such a plan work at all)?

**Week 15, April 13, 2015**

**Political consequences of urbanization: will urbanization bring democracy?**

Description:

Correlated with a burgeoning urban middle class and new opportunities for the development of civil society, urbanization is perceived by many as conducive to democratization. This session assesses to what extent urbanization transforms political life in China by examining the political attitudes of the urban middle class, political formations, the activities of civil society organizations, and episodes of collective political action by urban residents.

Readings (57 pages):

1. *A Middle Class without Democracy: Economic Growth and the Prospects for Democratization in China*. Jie Chen (2013). Chapter 3: Pp. 93-129.
2. *Not Against the State, Just Protecting Residents’ Interests: An Urban Movement in a Shanghai Neighborhood.* Jiangang Zhu and Peter Ho (2008) in Peter Ho and Richard Edmonds (eds) *China's Embedded Activism*. Pp. 151-170.

Short synthesis: How might we reconcile both political apathy and political activism displayed among China’s urban middle class?

**Week 16, April 20, 2015**

**Cultural consequences of urbanization: Between the traditional and the modern**

Description:

This session concludes the semester by approaching the very big question at the center of our course: how does urbanization reshape Chinese culture? To what degree are traditional cultural meanings and practices lost in the process of urbanization and how might “modern” culture be created (and what does that look like)? How should urbanizing China balance the traditional and the modern? Is this a false dichotomy?

Readings (approx. 155 pages):

1. *In China, ‘Once the Villages Are Gone, the Culture Is Gone.’* The New York Times. February 2, 2014.[http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/02/world/asia/once-the-villages-are-gone-the-culture-is-gone.html?ref=asia](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2014%2F02%2F02%2Fworld%2Fasia%2Fonce-the-villages-are-gone-the-culture-is-gone.html%3Fref%3Dasia&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNHkv5bzYXxRgasO8zss-r2NBHSwwQ)
2. (Optional) Short Story: Dark Alley (黑弄堂) by Wang Anyi (王安忆). Download for free at: [http://paper-republic.org/pubs/pathlight/summer-2012/](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fpaper-republic.org%2Fpubs%2Fpathlight%2Fsummer-2012%2F&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNEiF8V00_od46ap_hD8unsifQb_Wg)
3. Novel: *Running Through Beijing* (approx. 150 pages). Zechen Xu (2013). Two Lines Press.

Short synthesis: How do you think urbanization have changed culture and daily life?