

## SYLLABUS

---

LIT 3312.001

**Modern Chinese Fiction and Society**

Tu/Th 2:30-3:45pm Room AH1.204

---

**Professor:**

**Dr. Ming Dong Gu**

Office: JO4.130

Office Phone: 883-2760

Email: mdgu@utdallas.edu

Office Hours:

Tu/Th 11:30-12:30 or by appointment

---

### Course Description

Of all literary forms and genres in modern Chinese literature, fiction most faithfully reflects the gigantic changes of society and most profoundly explores the inner logic of cultural development in modern China. This course is an introduction to modern Chinese culture and society through fictional works and other sources of Chinese tradition. By focusing on selected stories and novellas by some of the most creative writers of modern China against the background of Chinese intellectual thought, the course intends to achieve multiple objectives, which include but are not restricted to the following: 1) to acquaint students with major phases of modern Chinese literature and masterpieces of representative writers; 2) to provide an in-depth glimpse into the development of modern Chinese society; 3) to understand the close relationship between literature and social changes; 4) to train students to read thoughtfully and critically so as to develop necessary skills for the study of literature; and 5) to introduce basics of narrative theory and concepts of literary criticism. Part of the focus will be on the impact of Western culture and literature upon the making of modern Chinese literature and society. Course teaching will be conducted in an interdisciplinary approach of literary, cultural, semiotic, and psychoanalytic studies. All readings are in English. No prior knowledge of Chinese language, literature, and culture is required.

---

### Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Students will read a considerable number of stories and novellas in relation to a variety of historical, theoretical, and critical works. Through the course, students are required not only to learn basic facts about Chinese literature and culture but also to develop skills to think critically, read thoughtfully, and write critical analysis and scholarly essays effectively. Their mastery of the course content will be assessed through quizzes, short papers, and an examination.

---

### Required Textbooks and Materials

- 1) Selected Stories of Lu Hsun by Lu Hsun, translated by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang (New York: Norton, 1977).
- 2) The Columbia Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature, edited by Joseph S.M. Lau and Howard Goldblatt, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).
- 3) Sources of Chinese Tradition, vol 2, edited by Wm. T De Bary and Richard Lufrano, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).
- 4) A few handouts.

### Suggested Course Materials (on reserve):

1. C. T. Hsia, A History of Modern Chinese Fiction, second edition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971)

2. William Lyell, *Lu Hsun's Vision of Reality* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).
  3. Ming Dong Gu, "A Chinese Oedipus in Exile," *Literature and Psychology*, 23. 1 and 2 (1993): 1-25.
  4. \_\_\_\_\_. "The Filial Piety Complex: Variations of the Oedipus Theme in Chinese Literature and Culture," *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, vol. 75, no. 1 (2006): 163-195.
  5. \_\_\_\_\_. "Lu Xun, Jameson, and Multiple Polysemia," *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature* 28, No. 4 (2001): 434-457.
- 

### Course Activities and Grading

The course will be conducted through a mixture of lectures, instructor-led discussions, and student-led discussions. Regular attendance and participation in the classroom activities are required of all students. Students are expected to read the assigned materials before coming to class, take 6 brief in-class quizzes (6-10 minutes) which cover the reading assignments, hand in a mid-term paper, and take a final exam. The grading is based on the following:

1. A summary of a story (with word limit)	5%
2. 6 brief in-class quizzes	30%
3. One mid-term paper:	25%
4. One final exam	25%
5. One presentation	5%
6. Attendance and Participation	10%
Total: 100%	

**Note:** Three absences without documented reasons will lower the final grade.

### Assignments & Academic Calendar

**Week 1**    1/12    Introduction: "Social Revolution and Literary Revolution"

**1/14 Handout**, "The Literary Revolution," from C. T. Hsia, *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction*, pp. 5-27.

**Sources:** **Sources:** "Popular Values and Beliefs": Part One: Ensemble Performance", pp. 74-91;

#### Week 2

1/19    **Sources:** "Popular Values and Beliefs": Opera: "Mulian rescues His Mother," pp. 92-104; Village Opera: "Guo Ju Buries His Son," pp. 105-117; "Prose, pp. 124-126; Chantefable: "The Precious Scroll on the Lord of the Stove," pp. 126-133; Written Texts: "Scriptures," pp. 133-138; "Tracts": "Selections from the Twenty-four Exemplars of Filial Piety," pp. 138-141

1/21 **Sources:** "Western Intrusion Into China," pp. 198-212; "Moderate Reform and the Self-strengthening Movement," pp. 233-249; "Radical Reform at the End of the Qing," pp. 250-273; "Conservative Reactions," pp. 273-275

**Week 3** 1/26    **Sources:** "Tan Sitong," pp. 280-287; "Liang Qichao," 287-302; "Zhang Binglin's Revolutionary Nationalism," pp. 308-309; "The Nationalist Revolution," pp. 314-330

1/28 **Sources:** “Advocate of Script Reform,” 302-307; “The New Cultural Movement,” pp. 351-394

**Week 4** 2/2 Fiction, 1918-1949 Lu Hsun: “Preface to Call to Arms,” “A Madman’s Diary,” “Medicine,” “Kung I-chi,” “Tomorrow,”

2/4 Lu Hsun: “An Incident,” “Storm in a Teacup,” “My Old Home,” “Village Opera,” “The True Story of Ah Q,”

**Week 5:** 2/9 Lu Hsun: “New Year’s Sacrifice,” “In the Wine Shop,” “A Happy Family,” “Soap,”

2/11 Lu Hsun: “The Misanthrope,” “Regret for the Past,” “Divorce,”

**Week 6** 2/16 Lu Hsun: “The Flight to the Moon,” “Forging the Sword,”

2/19 **Anthology:** Ye Shaojun, “A Posthumous Son,” Yu Dafu, “Sinking”  
**Summary due**

**Week 7** 2/23 **Sources:** “Chiang Kai-shek: Nationalism and Traditionalism,” pp. 337-347; “The Communist Revolution,” pp. 396-416; “Chinese Communist Praxis, pp. 426-449

2/25 **Anthology:** Mao Dun, “Spring Silkworms,” Lao She, “An Old and Established Name,” Shen Congwen, “Xiaoxiao,” Lin Shuhua, “The Night of Midautumn Festival”

**Week 8** 3/2 **Anthology:** Lai He, “The Steelyard,” Ba Jin, “Dog,” Shi Zhicun, “One Evening in the Rainy Season,” Zhang Tianyi, “Midautumn Festival,”

**Week 9** 3/9 **Anthology:** Ding Ling, “When I Was in Xia Village,” Wu Zuxiang, “Young Master Gets His Tonic,” Xiao Hong, “Hands,” Zhang Ailing, “Sealed Off,” Wu Zhuoliu, “The Doctor’s Mother”

**Mid-term Paper due**

3/11 **Sources:** The Mao Regime, pp. 450-482

**Week 10** 3/15-3/20 -- **Spring Break**

**Week 11** 3/23 **Anthology:** Wang Ruowang, “A Visit to His Excellency: A Five-Minute Movie,” Chen Yingzhen, “My Kid Brother Kangxiang,”

3/25 Fiction, 1949-1976 **Anthology:** Bai Xianyong, “Winter Nights,” Huang Chunming, “The Fish,” Hua Tong, “Yan’an Seeds,”

**Week 12** 3/30 **Sources:** “Deng’s Modernization and Its Critics,” pp. 483-526

4/1 Wang Zhenhe, “An Oxcart for a Dowry,” Li Ang, “Curvaceous Dolls,”

**Week 13** 4/6 Fiction since 1976 **Anthology:** Liu Yichang, “Wrong Number,” Wang Zengqi, “A Tail,” “Small-hands Chen,” Wang Meng, “Tales of New Cathay,” Chen Ruoxi, “The Tunnel,”

4/8 **Anthology:** Xi Xi, “A Woman Like Me,” Yuan Qiongqiong, “Tales of Taipei,” Li Rui, “Electing a Thief,” Can Xue, “Hut on the Mountain,”

**Week 14** 4/13 **Anthology:** Gao Xingjian, “The Accident,” Han Shaogong, “The Leader’s Demise,” Chen Cun, “A Story,” Liu Heng, “Dogshit Food,” Mo Yan, “Iron Child,”

4/15 **Anthology:** Zhu Tianwen, “Fin de Siecle Splendor,” Zhang Dachun, “Lucky Worries About His Country,” Zheng Qingwen, “Redeeming a Painting,” Tie Ning, “Octday,” Yu Hua, “On the Road at Eighteen,”

**Week 15** **Anthology:** Su Tong, “Escape,” Qiu Miaojin, “Letters from Montmarte,” Wang Anyi, “Granny,” Alai, “Fish!” Chun Sue, “Born at the Wrong Time,”

4/22 **Sources:** “Reopening the Debate on Chinese Tradition,” pp. 545-581

**Week 16** 4/27 Poetry, 1918-1949 **Anthology:** Xu Zhimu, “Second Farewell to Cambridge,” “Love’s Inspiration,” “Chance”; Wen Yiduo, “Dead Water,” “One Sentence,” “Prayer”; Li Jinfa “Woman Abandoned,” “Never to Return”; Feng Zhi, “Sonnet 2,” “Sonnet 4,” “Sonnet 27”; Dai Wangshu, “Rainy Alley,” “Written on a Prison Wall,” “With My Injured Hand”

Poetry since 1976 **Anthology:** Zhang Cuo, “Autumn Meditation,” “A Willow Leaf Double Saber,” Huang Guobin, “A Night Prayer,” “When You Are Naked, You Have Everything,” Luo Qing, “Six Ways of Eating Watermelons,” Bei Dao, “Declaration,” “Resume,” “Another Legend,” Shu Ting, “When You Walk Past My Window,” “A Roadside Encounter,” “Assembly Line,” Wang Xiaolong, “When We Finally Turn Fifth,” “Surgery Ward,” Yang Lian, “To a Nine-Year-Old Girl Killed in the Massacre,” “The Dead in Exile,” Gu Cheng, “An Ending,” “Curriculum Vitae,” Anonymous, “Mad Woman”

**4/29 Final Exam**

---

### **Course Policies**

A student cannot pass this class without attending each session and completing all of the required work. Absences are excused ONLY with appropriate documentation from a doctor or other health professional, by an authorized UTD official for school events, or by official policy as disclosed below.

This course will be conducted according to strict codes of academic honesty. All cases of plagiarism will be investigated and the deliberate instances reported to the Dean of Students. Penalties for deliberate cheating may include failing the assignment in question, failing the course, or suspension and expulsion from the University. Students are expected to know the University’s policies and procedures on such matters, as well as those governing student services, conduct, and obligations.

**All cell phones, game devices, and other electronic equipment MUST be turned off during class.**

---

**Note: With regard to the university’s policies on Student Conduct & Discipline, Academic Integrity, Email Use, Withdrawal from Class, Student Grievance Procedure, Incomplete Grade Policy, Disability Services, Religious Holy Days, etc. please see the e-version of the syllabus on WebCT.**

*These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.*