China is one of the most fascinating nations in the world: long history, strong traditions and diverse cultures. She made great efforts to deal with domestic issues and international confrontation in order to survive in a rapidly modernizing world since the mid-19th century. The Chinese eagerly imported ideas from the West, and initiated comprehensive reforms in economic, governmental, educational, and military systems. They actively studied and adapted Western philosophy, technology, language, literature and arts to its citizens. Most importantly, the people struggled in this process, but managed to establish themselves as “Chinese” as we know today.

In this course we will learn about this eventful trajectory of modern China from a literary and cinematic perspective. We will focus on the canonic works that modern Chinese writers and filmmakers produced, and discuss issues such as nation-state building, national characters, war collaboration/resistance, social injustice, ideological struggle, gender equality, class oppression, traumatic memory, etc. Our approach will be interdisciplinary, but primarily historical and literary.

**Required Texts:**


Films will be screened in class.

**Course Assessment:**

Class Contribution: 15%

Come to every session of the class on time and sign in on attendance sheets. Come to class prepared. This means you need to do the reading, and generate ideas, questions and opinions.
Be active in exercises and discussions. Feel free to ask questions, to disagree with me or your classmates, and to express your own opinions. However, no matter how passionately you may disagree, please do so civilly.

Presentation: 15%
Starting in Week Three, each one of you will present on one assigned text. You need to 1) research the historical context and personal background of the text and its creator(s); 2) generalize your own understandings of the text in association with topics we cover in class; 3) prepare at least two discussion questions for your classmates. You will lead the discussions of your questions in class. Your presentation (in any form: power point, text, a/v, etc) should be about 10 minutes, and the discussion another 10. The presentations are scheduled one per week, usually on Fridays. You must finish your preparation, and send me your presentation materials and discussion questions for approval at least TWO DAYS PRIOR to your presentation.

Quiz: 30%
There will be a number of quizzes given, often WITHOUT notice, throughout the semester; the single lowest of these quiz grades will be dropped when I tabulate your course grade. These quizzes are designed to encourage careful reading of the assigned texts, good understanding of the lectures, and reconsideration of your positions on topics that are related to in-class and online discussion.

Final Paper: 40%
You will write one final paper (6-9 pages). It should focus on one manageable topic. It can respond either to a research question selected from among those I distribute in in-class discussion and quizzes, or one you develop after consultation with me.
I will gladly help you formulate research questions. However, please act early. Final paper consultation requested after April 15 will NOT be accepted.

The final paper is assumed to be thoughtful, informed responses to research questions. As informed responses I assume that you will consult appropriate secondary sources (scholarly books and journal articles) to develop a more nuanced grasp of your response to your question. Internet sources are RARELY sufficiently complex to be of much help; please avoid using such sources.

Revision is an important part of thoughtful writing. The paper must be polished: correct spelling, coherent grammar, clear argument, and logical reasoning. It should be double-spaced and in 12 point Time New Roman font. It must include footnotes and a bibliography. For further information on proper format, particularly on citing sources and other people’s ideas, refer to the East Asian Studies Style Guide posted at http://www.albany.edu/eas/writing%20papers%20in%20east%20asian%20studies.pdf

I will NOT read your draft.

The final paper will be submitted by email.
**Grading Scale:**

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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-93</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>92-90</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>89-87</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>66-63</td>
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<td>D-</td>
<td>62-60</td>
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BELOW 60 = FAILURE

**Blackboard:**
The syllabus and other information are posted at Blackboard. Through the semester, we will use Blackboard to post announcements, questions and issues, comments, etc. You should use “My Grades” as the best indicator of your performance in the class.

**Classroom Decorum:**
You must conform to the following ground rules:
1. Arrive on time.
2. Refrain from leaving the room once class has begun, except in unavoidable emergencies.
3. Remove earphones and ear buds from your ears.
4. You may NOT use cell phones during class.
5. Do NOT consult social media (including text messages and e-mail) during class.
6. No electronic device is permitted in class unless the device is used for taking notes.

**Schedule:**

**WEEK 1**
1/21: Course introduction.

**WEEK 2**
1/26: Reading and Discussion: “Introduction” to *Dairy of a Madman and Other Stories*
1/28: Reading and Discussion: Lu Xun’s “Dairy of a Madman”

**WEEK 3**
2/2: Film screening and Discussion: *The Goddess*
2/4: Reading and Discussion: Lu Xun’s “New Year’s Sacrifice” and “Medicine”

**WEEK 4**
2/9: Reading and Discussion: Lu Xun’s “Ah Q-The Real Story” Chapters 1-5
2/11: Reading and Discussion: Lu Xun’s “Ah Q-The Real Story” Chapters 6-9
   Student Presentation #1

**WEEK 5**
2/16: Film screening: *The Yellow Earth*
2/18: Discussion of *The Yellow Earth*
   Student Presentation #2
WEEK 6
2/23: Reading and Discussion: Ding Ling’s “Miss Sophia’s Diary”
2/25: Reading and Discussion: Ding Ling’s “Net of Law”
   Student Presentation #3

WEEK 7
3/2: Reading and Discussion: Ding Ling’s “When I was in Xia Village” and “Thoughts on March 8”
3/4: Reading and Discussion: Eileen Chang’s “Sealed Off”
   Student Presentation #4

WEEK 8
3/9: Film screening: Lust, Caution
3/11: Film screening and Discussion: Lust, Caution

WEEK 9
Spring Break

WEEK 10
3/23: Film screening: Spring in a Small Town
3/25: Film screening and Discussion: Spring in a Small Town

WEEK 11
3/30: Reading and Discussion: Wang Anyi’s The Song of Everlasting Sorrow
4/1: Reading and Discussion: Wang Anyi’s The Song of Everlasting Sorrow
   Student Presentation #5

WEEK 12
4/6: Reading and Discussion: Wang Anyi’s The Song of Everlasting Sorrow
4/8: Film screening: Farewell My Concubine
   Student Presentation #6

WEEK 13
4/13: Film screening and Discussion: Farewell My Concubine
4/15: Reading and Discussion: Mo Yan’s The Garlic Ballads (Chapters 1-3)
   Student Presentation #7

WEEK 14
4/20: Reading and Discussion: Mo Yan’s The Garlic Ballads (Chapters 4-8)
4/22: Reading and Discussion: Mo Yan’s The Garlic Ballads (Chapters 9-12)
   Student Presentation #8
WEEK 15
4/27: Film screening: *A Touch of Sin*
4/29: Film screening and Discussion: *A Touch of Sin*

WEEK 16
5/4: Modern China in conclusion
5/6: Final Paper Representation

Final Paper Due: May 12th (Tuesday) at 5:30pm.