SOSC 571: Social Stratification in China

Monday 6:30-9:20PM
Fall 2012
Rm 4483, Lift 25-26 (24)
Academic Building

INSTRUCTOR: WU Xiaogang
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OFFICE HOURS: 1:00-3:00PM

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COURSE DESCRIPTION
This is a graduate seminar for reading and discussing scholarly works on inequality and stratification in China, with a focus on changes in the post-Mao era. Students will be led to read a set of the English-language publications in refereed journals and book chapters in the field. These publications are by and large based on statistical analyses of survey and non-survey data in addressing questions of theoretical significance to the analysis of China’s class transformation, socio-economic inequalities, mobility patterns, and among others during the reform era.

Students with no prior backgrounds in theories and social statistics (as complicated as multiple regression) would find these publications difficult to understand and thus are advised to wait to enroll in this seminar in a later year. Students are expected to read assigned readings prior to the class in which these readings are discussed. Grading is based on participation in class discussion (20%), oral presentation of assigned reading materials to the class (20%), and a term paper (60%). There will be no exam given.

FORMAT AND REQUIREMENT
The class will meet once a week. The instructor will give a brief introduction on the context and background information, followed by the discussion of relevant literature. As a part of class preparation, starting from Week 2, a group of students will alternate to read core and supplementary readings and write a précis. A précis is a summary that contains the essential details about theory, method, and findings. It is NOT a critique. For a 20 page article/chapter, a 2 page, single-spaced summary usually suffices. This group of students (3-4 people) will serve as discussion leaders. The responsibilities of the team include: (1) to write the précis for the week; (2) to prepare a brief oral introduction of the readings for the purposes of initiating the class discussion; and (3) to prepare a set of questions that will guide class discussion.

For the most part it is NOT the responsibility of the team to lecture to the class. Rather, the team’s responsibility is to keep the discussion going and to make sure that the key aspects of the readings are covered. Conversely, students who are not discussion leaders in a given week have the same responsibility as the leaders to read the core readings and be prepared for the discussion.
They are expected to write a short note (no more than one page) to summarize the central argument/findings of what he/she has read for the required core readings during the week, and to comment briefly on them. Moreover, each week students are expected to raise at least one question (methodological or substantive) that he/she regards as important and wants to be discussed in class.

A term paper is required of those taking the seminar for credit. Topics are open as long as they are relevant to the content of the course. Coverage of new reading materials, critical comments, theoretical/substantive insights, and writing effectiveness are the four criteria for receiving a high grade (A). When writing this paper, each student must keep in mind the scenario that he/she has a plan to conduct an empirical study about that topic. Of course, you are welcome to move beyond to write an empirical paper if you are equipped with skills in quantitative data analysis.

Procedure: (1) Begin thinking of what topic to write on for this term paper in the first week of the class; (2) Meet with the instructor to discuss a chosen topic; (3) In the first week of November (Nov 7) turn in a detailed outline of the term paper for feedbacks from the instructor; (4) Present the outline or drafted paper in class; (5) Turn in a final version at the end of the class.

**GRADING POLICY**
- Attendance and participation: 20%
- Weekly reading notes: 20%
- Term paper: 60%.

**TEXTBOOKS AND READINGS**
No textbook will be used. Reading materials are to be distributed in class, on internet, or downloadable from the course homepage.

Although this is English ONLY class, some Chinese reading materials may be included.

**COURSE HOMEPAGE AND READING MATERIALS**
We will post announcement, lecture notes, and some related readings on the course homepage created for this course. You may use your ITSC username and password to log in (http://lmes2.ust.hk) and find the course syllabus, reading materials.

**Abbreviation of Refereed Journals**
- AJS American Journal of Sociology
- ARS Annual Review of Sociology
- ASR American Sociological Review
- SF Social Forces
- EDCC Economic Development and Cultural Change
- RSSM Research in Social Stratification and Mobility
- SE Sociology of Education
- SSR Social Science Research
- DM Demography
- CQ China Quarterly
- CSR Chinese Sociological Review

**Books from which Chapters are Drawn:**
DATA SOURCES FOR STUDYING INEQUALITY AND STRATIFICATION
   http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/access/index.html
2. Life History and Social Changes in Contemporary China, 1996. [national sample]
   http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/issr/da/lhsccs/chinaweb.html
   http://www.chinagss.org/
   http://www.epc.unc.edu/projects/china
5. The State and Life Chances Survey, 1994 [selected cities]
   http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/access/index.html

SEVEN RULES FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH
1. There should be the possibility of surprise in social research
2. Look for differences that make a difference, and report them
3. Build reality checks into your Research
4. Replicate where possible
5. Compare like with like
6. Use panel to study individual change and repeated cross-section data to study social change
7. Let method be the servant, not the master.

---- Glenn Firebaugh
TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

Topics

Week 1 (Sept 10): Introduction: Inequality, Stratification and Mobility in China


边燕杰、吴晓刚、李路路（主编）2008 “导言：述评与展望”《社会分层与流动：海外中国研究的新进展》中国人民大学出版社

Week 2 (Sept 17): Occupations, and Classes, and Socioeconomic Status

Reading:


Lin Thung-hong and Xiaogang Wu. “Beyond the Market Transition: Changing Institutional Structure and Class Inequality in Contemporary China.” (manuscript)

Week 3 (Sept 24): Institutional Foundation of Social Stratification: The State (Politics) vs. the Market


**Week 4 (Oct 1) Public Holiday, No Meeting**

**Week 5 (Oct 8): Trends in Income Inequality and Returns to Human Capital and Political Capital**

Reading:


**Week 6 (Oct 15): Structure of Inequality: *Hukou* and *Danwei* in China**


**Supplementary**


**Week 7 (Oct 22): The Processes of Elite Recruitment**


**Optional**


**Week 8 (Oct 29): Educational Inequality and Stratification**


**Week 9 (Nov 5): Gender and Ethnic Inequality**

Mathews, Rebecca and Victor Nee 2002. “Gender Inequality and Economic Growth in Rural China” *SSR* 29: 606-632


Shu, Xiaoling. 2005, “Market Transition and Gender Segregation in Urban China.” *Social Science Quarterly* 86.

Ye, Hua and Xiaogang Wu. “Fertility Decline and Educational Gender Inequality in China.” Manuscript under review.


Wu, Xiaogang and Xi Song “Ethnic Stratification in China: Evidence from Xinjiang Uyghur
Autonomous Region” (working paper)

**Week 10 (Nov 12): Intra-generational and Intergenerational Mobility**


**Week 11 (Nov 19): Forced and Spontaneous Migration and Social Stratification Consequences**


**Week 12 (Nov 26): Consequences: Subjective Dimension of Social Stratification**


Wu, Xiaogang. 2009. “Income Inequality and Distributive Justice: A Comparative Analysis of Mainland China and Hong Kong.” CQ 200 (December)


Week 13 (Dec 3): Paper presentation