

History of Gender in China

History of Gender in China
Spring 2023, MWF 14:00-14:50 am

HIST 427 (CRN48075)
Burkhardt Building 102

Instructor: Dr. Shiau-Yun Chen (Dept. of History & Dept. of WGAA)
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Ways to see Professor Chen:

- Office Hours: Wednesday, 3:00-3:50 pm or by appointment
- If the above time does not work for you, email your available times to make an appointment.

Course Description

This course surveys aspects of the gender system and gender practices throughout Chinese history and how ideas of gender and sexuality were shaped by their specific historical, social, and cultural contexts. Over the semester, we will go through five Units. The first Unit provides a scholarship overview and debates on gender and sexuality in Chinese history; Unit II to Unit VI goes through four perspectives to define gender and sexuality in different periods, including family, economics, law, and nationalism. Throughout this discussion, this course shows the ways in which gender and sexuality have been varied and culturally and socially constructed over time. Monday lectures provide the historical framework for further discussions on primary sources on Wednesdays and secondary sources on Fridays.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to

- differentiate the differences among sex, gender, and sexuality and how they were defined in different social and historical contexts.
- be familiar with significant historical transitions in Chinese history.
- decentralize the image of sex and gender that is modeled by European-centered experience.
- ask critical and engaging questions regarding primary and secondary sources.
- recognize the ways in which discourses are always mediated and framed.
- evaluate pieces of information that scholars use to support their arguments and cite

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Workload and Expectations

This is a three-credit hour course, delivered over 15 weeks. Students are expected to spend quality time online and in-class working collectively with their classmates and instructor. You will need to log in to Canvas and read assigned readings through Perusall regularly, keep track of assignments and deadlines, and inform the professor immediately if you have questions or issues that you need help resolving.

Weekly assignments and class activities are designed to support a collaborative learning environment. For this reason, you are expected to listen actively and participate in group and whole-class discussions. If you consistently sit apart, decline to join class activities or small-group discussions, or do not contribute at least once during each Unit's in-class discussion, you will receive a **0% participation grade for that Unit**.

This is not an online course. Regular attendance at class lectures and discussions is essential to your learning experience. If your attendance rate falls below **60%** during the period from January 19 through the end of the regular instructional weeks, you will receive a grade of **F** for the course.

Please note that attendance during the **Final Project Unit** will be tracked separately and will count toward your **final project grade**, not your semester attendance rate.

Evaluation

Please be aware that the pedagogical philosophy behind the course design **emphasizes the importance of constant practice instead of last-minute effort**. Your grade is based on the weekly effort you put into this class. Every week, spend quality time studying course readings and participating in lectures and discussions.

This is an in-person class. Class attendance is necessary. You will receive a grade of FN if you never attend a course, of FS if you stop attending the class, and of **F if the semester attendance rate is less than 60%**.

You are expected to follow directions, meet deadlines, and especially to talk to professors about concerns over grades before the grades have been posted!

Grades will be based on points you earn from class attendance and participation, and each assignment you complete.

- Attendance and Class Participation (15%)
- Weekly Reading Annotation by Using Perusall (30%)
- Secondary Reading Discussion (Groups) 15 % (5% *3)
- Primary Source or Secondary Source Annotation 10% (5%*2)

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- Discussion Leader (5%)
- Semester Project (25%)

Attendance and Class Participation (15%)

- Students are required to attend Monday, Wednesday, and Friday classes every week. Students are expected to finish the weekly assigned readings before attending Wednesday and Friday discussions, review their notes before the class, and actively participate in class discussions.
- Weekly assignments and class activities are designed to create a collective and group learning experience. Therefore, you are expected to listen attentively and contribute to the dialogue during in-class small-group discussions. Consistently sitting aside, refusing to join small-group activities, **or** failing to contribute at least once **to** the class discussions will result in a **0% attendance and participation grade for that Unit**.
- This is an in-person course; attendance at lectures and participation in discussions are integral to the learning experience. Attendance will be recorded from January 19 through April 12. Students whose semester attendance rate falls below 60% will receive a failing grade (F). Attendance during the Final Project Unit will be tracked separately and will count only toward the Final Project grade.
- While attendance and participation are essential, there is room for flexibility. Students can miss **four** classes without penalty. Use them for mild symptoms of discomfort or personal affairs. If you need to miss more than four classes, such an extensive absence will be accepted without penalty only in the event of extraordinary and documented circumstances. See university policy for such events.
(https://www.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/vice-provost/student-services/attendance-policies#accordion_medicalissuesandillness)

Weekly Reading Annotation by Using Perusall (30%)

- **Perusall Engagement is due each week before 11:59 pm on the Tuesday and Thursday** of the assigned week (where the week is defined as Monday – Sunday).
 - Note: In general, the secondary source reading is due by the end of Tuesday, and the primary source reading is due by the end of Thursday

Secondary Reading Discussion (Groups) 15% (5% *3), 1/28, 2/25, 3/20, 4/8

On **January 28, February 25, March 20, and April 8**, the class will divide into three groups to discuss the week's assigned reading. Each group will take on a specific role:

- **Group 1:** Summarize the reading
- **Group 2:** Critique the reading
- **Group 3:** Defend the reading

Each student will participate in each role once during the semester.

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Grades for group discussions will be based on:

1. The written note submitted to Canvas, and
2. The effectiveness with which each group fulfills its assigned role.

Discussion Leadership (DL) (5%)

Each week, two class members will serve as discussion leaders to lead a discussion on the assigned primary sources. The discussion leaders have two tasks on Friday.

- **The first is to stimulate thought by distributing several questions to the other class members.** The purpose of these questions is to stimulate a thought-provoking discussion that engages the main issues presented in the primary source.
- **The second responsibility of the discussion leader is to begin the class discussion with a brief presentation** (five to ten minutes long) that (1) summarizes the primary source and (2) explains how their questions address the significance of the reading according to its historical context. After the presentation, the discussion leaders lead the class discussion for 20 minutes.
- The discussion leaders should send their questions and notes to the instructor before the class discussion.
- **As soon as possible**, everyone should sign up on the Canvas Discussion Board page to be DL for one week. The maximum number of each week's DL is two.

Reading Annotations (10%)

- Primary Source Annotation

After the class discussion, use ChatGPT (or another AI tool) to produce a 350–500 word annotation of the assigned primary source, summarizing its content, identifying its historical context and audience, and explaining its significance. Then, evaluate the AI's work by noting at least two strengths and two weaknesses, and rewrite the annotation to improve its accuracy, depth, and insight. Submit three components together: the AI's original annotation, your revised version (350–500 words for individuals or at least 500 words for groups of up to three), and a 200–300 word explanation of why your revision is stronger and how you improved it.

- Secondary Source Annotation

Choose one scholarly article or book chapter from our assigned readings. Use ChatGPT (or another AI text generator) to create a ~350-word annotation of the work. Then evaluate the AI's output by identifying at least two strengths and two weaknesses, and rewrite the annotation to improve on the original. Your final submission should include: (a) the AI-generated annotation; (b) your rewritten annotation; and (c) a 200–300 word analysis explaining why your version is stronger. You may work individually or in a

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group of up to three students. All work must cite the original source and note the AI tool used.

- Each student must submit one annotation—either a primary source or a secondary source—for each of the four units in the semester, within one week after the end of each unit. Over the course of the semester, you must complete at least one primary source annotation and one secondary source annotation, for a minimum of three annotations in total.

Semester Project: 25 %

- This is your chance to reflect on lectures and class discussions. By writing a historical-analysis essay, a creative-writing essay, or creating a historical project, you demonstrate what you have learned about topics/ideas/concepts of Modern Japan over the semester. Your discussion board posts will be your own documents to use when preparing your semester project.
- The semester project includes four portions: (a) class presentation (b) participating in all your classmates' project presentations (c) giving constructive comments/questions/suggestions to at least 3 different projects your classmates presented (d) submitting your project along with a reflection form.
- The semester project includes four portions: (a) class presentation (b) participate in all of your classmates' project presentations (c) give constructive comments/questions/suggestions to at least 3 different projects your classmates presented (d) submit your project along with a reflection form.
 - (a), (b) and (c) will be arranged in the class time between 4/17 – 4/30.
 - (d) is due by 11:59 pm, May 5th.
- Late submission of (d) will result in a reduction of one third of the letter grade each day (or part of the day) the assignment is late. The submission won't be accepted after the end of May 8th.

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Each assignment will be presented with clearly defined expectations based on course objectives. Your work will be evaluated on how well you have met those expectations, not on a curve. You are expected to follow directions, meet deadlines, and especially to talk to professors about concerns over grades well before the grades have posted! Final grades will be based on the following scale (NOTE: I do not “round up”).

Letter Grade	Range
A	100% - 94%
A-	<94% - 90%
B+	<90% - 87%
B	<87% - 84%
B-	<84% - 80%
C+	<80% - 77%
C	<77% - 74%
C-	<74% - 70%
D+	<70% - 67%
D	<67% - 64%
D-	<64% - 61%
F	<61% - 0%

All classroom behavior should be characterized by civility, attentiveness, and respect. All coursework should be performed with integrity. Written assignments should structure the development of your own ideas and writing skills. You must cite your sources when you refer to or quote others' ideas, even if you arrived at similar ideas on your own. Violation of the **Academic Ethics Policy and Plagiarism Policy** (see University Policies below) will result in an F and will be reported to the dean, possibly resulting in further penalties.

AI Use Policy

The use of Generative AI tools, including ChatGPT, is encouraged/permitted in this course for students who wish to use them. You may choose to use AI tools to help brainstorm assignments or projects or to revise existing work you have written. [Indicate your expectations regarding use of applications with AI built-in features]. However, you must cite any AI-generated material that informed your work. Using an AI tool to generate content without proper attribution constitutes a violation of **Ball State University's Student Academic Ethics Policy**.

Note: No more than 25% of an assignment should be created with AI.

How to cite AI: <https://style.mla.org/citing-generative-ai/>

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UNIVERSITY POLICIES

University Statement

We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse.

Disability Statement

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor of record as soon as possible. Ball State's [Disability Services Office](#) coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu.

Freedom of Expression

In this course, we are committed to fostering a learning environment that values intellectual diversity, encourages free expression, and promotes open inquiry. As members of the Ball State Community, we treat each person in the Ball State community with civility, courtesy, compassion, and dignity and respect and learn from differences in people, ideas, and opinions. Please review Ball State University's [Statement on Freedom of Expression](#), the resources on Ball State's [Freedom of Expression webpage](#), and [Ball State's Beneficence Pledge](#).

Title IX

Ball State University is committed to providing a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual harassment—including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, please know that you are not alone. The University offers support services and resources. For more information or to report an incident, please visit [bsu.edu/titleix](https://www.bsu.edu/titleix) or contact the Title IX Coordinator at 765-285-1545 or at titleix@bsu.edu.

As your instructor, I am a mandatory reporter under the Title IX policy and required to report any information I receive about possible sexual harassment. This includes information shared in class discussions, assignments, or private conversations.

What happens after I report? The Title IX Coordinator will email the person who experienced sexual harassment (complainant) and invite them to schedule a meeting. If the complainant **chooses** to meet with the Title IX Coordinator,

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- Title IX Coordinator will offer supportive measures (e.g., counseling, extensions on deadlines, course-related adjustments, changes to work or class schedules, and/or referrals to campus offices), review the policy, and discuss options to move forward.
- If a complaint is filed by the complainant or the University, an investigation will begin following University policy.

University Grade Appeal Policy

If you believe you received a final course grade that does not reflect your performance due to fairness or a procedural issue, you have the right to file an appeal within 5 school days after final grades are posted by the Office of the Registrar. Review the [University Grade Appeal Policy and Process](#).

Student Academic Ethics Policy

Honesty, trust, and personal responsibility are fundamental attributes of the university community. Academic dishonesty and other forms of academic misconduct threaten the foundation of an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and will not be tolerated. To maintain its credibility and reputation, and to equitably assign evaluations of scholastic and creative performance, Ball State University is committed to maintaining a climate that upholds and values the highest standards of academic integrity. Visit the VPAA's [academic integrity website](#) (Students tab) for resources on understanding academic integrity, citing sources properly, and avoiding inadvertent academic dishonesty. To learn about BSU's academic integrity expectations and students' rights, please read the University [Student Academic Ethics Policy](#).

Academic integrity violations include giving or receiving an unfair academic advantage (cheating), presenting someone else's ideas or work as your own (plagiarism), and falsifying academic records. Unless otherwise indicated, you must work independently by yourself. Check with me if you are unsure whether something constitutes academic dishonesty. Examples of academic integrity violations include but are not limited to:

- Using resources not authorized by the faculty member (including devices, AI tools, hidden notes, and open books)
- Using commercial study websites to find answers to graded assignments (Chegg, Course Hero, StudyPool, OneClass, etc.).
- Without the instructor's written permission, giving away, buying, or selling graded assignments class notes, exams, study guides, or other course materials to other students or to third-party vendors (Course Hero, Chegg, 24HourAnswers, etc.).
- Working with another person on any assignment other than authorized group projects.

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- Sharing or allowing others to access your files, whether done with permission or not.
- Reusing your own work from another semester, course, or section.
- Sharing answers with others during exams (passing notes, texting, whispering, gesturing)
- Discussing exam questions and answers with students who have not taken the exam.
- Soliciting others to complete work for you.

Resources on Campus

Student Services

- [Counseling Center](#)
- [Career Center](#)
- [The Basic Needs Hub](#)

Academic Resources

- [Writing Center](#)
- [Learning Center](#)
- [The Speaking Center](#)

Communication and Etiquette

Canvas: Assignments and other information will be posted on Canvas. If you were not automatically enrolled on the site through pre-registration, contact an instructor to enroll you. All the writing assignments should be submitted through Canvas.

Email: You will receive course announcements by email through Canvas and therefore through your Ball State email account. Be sure to check your BSU email regularly.

When you post to a Canvas Discussion Board, submit an assignment, or send an email to the professor you should make sure it represents your professionalism. Be mindful not to use language that could be considered offensive. Edit your writing so that it stays on topic, is free from grammatical or typographic errors, and clearly conveys your intended message succinctly.

When you send an email to the professor, you must use your BSU email account and include the course number, a subject heading, greeting, courteous message, and complete signature. You should refer to professors according to their professional title (Dr. or Prof. Chen, for example, not Ms. or Mrs.). Emails that are overly informal may be overlooked.

I check my emails twice during the workday at 11:30 am and 3:30 pm. You can expect to receive a response to an email within 48 hours, longer if you send your email during the weekend. I encourage **reading the syllabus or Canvas information page first** before emailing the professor.

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Course Readings

All the readings are available electronically through Canvas.

Course Schedule

Please note that the schedule and the assigned readings are tentative and are subject to change based on students' course discussions.

Unit I Methodology

Week 1 Jan 5 – Jan 9 Syllabus, Introduction

Week 2 Jan 12 – Jan 16 Gender as An Analytical Tool

Assigned Reading

By Wed (SS)

- Dorothy Ko, "Gender," in *A Concise Companion to History*, 1st edition, ed. Ulinka Rublack (Oxford University Press, 2012), 203-225.

By Fri (PS)

- Li Yu, "A Male Mencius's Mother Raises Her Son Properly By Moving House Three Times," in *Silent Operas*, Patrick Hanan, trans., (Hong Kong: ResearchCentre for Translation, Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1990), 99-134.

Week 3 Jan 19 – Jan 25 Writing Sexuality

Note: No class on Jan 19, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration

Assigned Reading

By Fri (SS)

- Howard Chiang, "Introduction: Writing the History of Sexuality in China," in *Sexuality in China: Histories of Power and Pleasure*, ed. Howard Chiang (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018), 3-15.

Unit II: Family and Marriage

Week 4 Jan 26 – Feb 1 Ideal Gendered Roles

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Assigned Reading

By Wed (SS)

- Elisabetta Colla, “When the Emperor Is a Woman: The Case of Wu Zetian 武則天 (624–705), the ‘Emulator of Heaven,’” in *A Companion to Global Queenship*, ed. Elena Woodacre (ARC Humanities Press, 2018), 13-26.

By Fri (PS)

- Yao, Ping. “Document 1.1 The Life Course of an Elite Man; 1.2 “The Life Course of an Elite Woman; 1.3 A Zhou Dynasty Son’s Tribute to His Mother; 1.4 A Qing Dynasty Family Precept.” In *Women, Gender, and Sexuality in China*, 1st edition (London ; New York: Routledge, 2021), 18-25.

Week 5 Feb 2 – Feb 8 Marriage as Economic Activity

By Wed (SS)

- Debby Chin-Yen Huang and Paul R. Goldin, “Polygyny and Its Discontents: A Key to Understanding Traditional Chinese Society” in *Sexuality in China: Histories of Power and Pleasure*, ed. Howard Chiang (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018), 16-33.

By Fri (PS)

- Yao, Ping. “Document 2.2 Song Dynasty Ghost Story about a Concubine; 2.3 Polyandry during the Qing Dynasty; 2.4 Divorce during the Tang Dynasty.” In *Women, Gender, and Sexuality in China*, 1st edition., 49–52.

Week 6 Feb 9 – Feb 15 Politics of Intimacy

By Wed (SS) TBA

- Catherine Ladds, “Private Lives, Public Reputations: The off-Duty World of the Customs Staff,” in *Empire Careers: Working for the Chinese Customs Service, 1854–1949* (Manchester University Press, 2017), 127-165

By Fri (PS) TBA

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- Diary of Robert Hart,
<https://cdm15979.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15979coll3>
Assigned Content: TBA

• Unit III: Economic

Week 7 Feb 16 – Feb 22 Womanly Virtue: Weaving

By Wed (SS)

- Bray, Francesca. “Women’s Work and Women’s Place.” In *Technology, Gender and History in Imperial China: Great Transformations Reconsidered*, 1st edition. (London ; New York: Routledge, 2013), 93-120.

By Fri (PS)

- Patricia Buckley Ebrey ed. and trans “Women and the Problems They Create,” in *Chinese Civilization: A Sourcebook*, 164 -168.
- Patricia Buckley Ebrey ed. and trans “What the Weaver Said,” in *Chinese Civilization: A Sourcebook*, 221-222.

Week 8 Feb 23 – March 1

By Wed (SS)

- Kenneth Pomeranz, “Women’s Work, Family, and Economic Development in Europe and East Asia: Long-Term Trajectories and Contemporary Comparisons,” in *The Resurgence of East Asia : 500, 150 and 50 Year Perspectives*, ed. Giovanni Arrighi et al. (Routledge, 2003).

Note: Feb 27, Review Section

March 1—March 8 Spring Break

Unit IV The Sense of Self

Week 10 March 9– March 15 Fashion and Beauty, TBA

Note: The class on **March 13** is **canceled**. The instructor will be attending an academic conference.

Week 11 March 16 – March 22 The Cult of Chastity

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Note: The class on **March 16** is **canceled**. The instructor will be attending an academic conference.

- Janet Theiss, “Female Suicide, Subjectivity and the State in Eighteenth-Century China,” *Gender & History* 16 (2004): 513–37, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0953-5233.2004.00354.x>.

Week 12 March 23—March 29 Female Writer TBA

Unit V: Nationalism

Week 13 March 30 – April 5 19th century Feminism

- Lydia H. Liu et al., eds., *The Birth of Chinese Feminism* (Columbia University Press, 2013).

Week 14 April 6 – April 12 Queer Discourse

By Fri (SS)

- Shana Ye, “A Reparative Return to ‘Queer Socialism’: Male Same-Sex Desire in the Cultural Revolution,” in *Sexuality in China: Histories of Power and Pleasure*, ed. Howard Chiang (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018), 142–62.

Semester Project: Share and Feedback

Week 15 April 13 – April 19 Final Project Workshop

Week 16 April 20 – April 26 Presentation

Week 17 April 27 Presentation

May 2 Final Project Submission