ANT 2510/UGC 266U  Culture and Business

Fall 2009
Time: Wednesday 2:30 – 4:15 pm
Venue: NAH 115
Instructor: Dr. Danning Wang
Office: NAH 322
Email: danningwang@cuhk.edu.hk

Tutorial: Monday 1:30 – 2:15 pm
Venue: NAH 115 (English) / MMW 707 (Cantonese)
TA: Yang Yang
Office: NAH 324
Email: s0901528@ cuhk.edu.hk

Course Description:

Similar as many aspects in our lives, business behavior is now commonly acknowledged as culturally constructed. Even the most influential and popular business entity – the corporate company – was in fact the product of a political battle with profound political, social, and cultural implications. This course is designed to take historical, comparative, and ethnographic perspectives to reveal the social and cultural aspects of running business and the cultural logics of business practices. This course will also take a cross-cultural perspective to deconstruct the dominant economic rationality to compare business practices in various societies and historical periods.

Course Requirements:

Quiz 1 25%
Quiz 2 25%
Final Project 40%
Class Participation 10%

Choices for the Final Project:

1. Interview report: Interview a business practitioner in HK and finish an interview report that is at least 20 pages long. The informants can be foreign businessmen/businesswomen, street vendors, restaurant owners, sales people, or construction workers. The interview focus can be their cultural shocks in HK while running business, their surviving strategies, their family lives that is affected by their employment, and so on. The students should apply the knowledge that they learned in the class in designing the interview focus and analyzing the cultural significance.

2. Ethnography report: select one ethnography from the book list to finish a book report with the application of the knowledge learned in the class.
Course Schedule and Tutorial Topics:

1. Sept. 9  Introduction: Make a Living [no tutorial]
2. Sept. 16  Industrialization and its Impact to Local Life [no tutorial]
3. Sept. 23  Penny Capitalism
4. Sept. 30  Corporation: Economizing and Maximization
5. Oct. 7  Quiz 1 Consumption and Over-consumption
6. Oct. 14  Labor Relationship: Class and Gender
7. Oct. 21  Work Ethics, Worldviews, and Work Discipline
8. Oct. 28  Globalization
9. Nov. 4  Migration
10. Nov. 11 Economic Restructuring
11. Nov. 18 Quiz 2 State and Business
12. Nov. 25 Entrepreneurship
13. Dec. 2  Hand in Final Requirement

Reading List:

1. Sept. 9  Introduction: Make a Living [no tutorial]

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Documentary Movie: Roger and Me.


11. Nov. 18  Quiz 2 State and Business


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Booklist for Ethnography Report: