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TITLE: An Australian sociologist in a Chinese university: some reflections on lessons learned and questions raised

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This paper describes my experience teaching sociology in a mainland Chinese university. The aims of the paper are twofold. First I describe a postgraduate course titled 'The Sociology of Urban Life' and discuss how student reactions and discussions to course material can raise valid and pertinent questions about the universalizing tendencies of our discipline. Second, I describe a large undergraduate course and outline my approach to using a photography-based exercise in order to attempt to counteract Western-centrism. This pedagogical technique both allowed the students to interpret sociological theory within their own lifeworlds and allow me to gain some insight into how sociological theory may or may not fit within a Chinese context. This paper concludes with a discussion about how such questions about the applicability of sociological theory in non-Western classrooms should be addressed within increasingly multi-cultural Australian university courses.