Course Description:

This seminar has three major goals: (1) to familiarize students with the evolution and the current state of the study of contemporary Chinese society by discussing some important substantive topics (e.g., rural society, urban society, family, household, and population, gender and sexuality, work and labor) (mastering of substantive topics); (2) to consider how research on contemporary Chinese society both draws from and informs sociological and other theories (mastering of theory); (3) to prepare a research proposal on a subject of the student’s choosing (mastering of methods and research design). Although the substantive topics we deal with in this seminar are drawn from Chinese society, it is my hope that this seminar will help students acquire necessary knowledge and skills to embark on a theoretically-informed and methodologically-sound research on any society of interest to students.

Notes:

- Although the formal title of this seminar is Modern Chinese Society, I have decided to focus our readings and discussions on contemporary Chinese society in the era of Reform and Opening (1978-present). We do discuss some historical issues, but we will not survey the entire history of modern Chinese society.
- Students should be aware that this is an extremely reading and discussion-intensive course. Seminar participants are expected to be prepared for every class.
- In addition to the three major goals above, whenever appropriate, we will discuss miscellaneous technical “know-how” of doing academic research (on China). E.g., how to arrange interview appointments, what recording devices to use, effective collection of visual data, use of EndNote software for organizing references, etc. What to discuss each semester largely depends on the needs and interests of the students taking the course.
- Where possible, I have arranged the readings so the chapters from Doing Fieldwork in China are read together with substantive research articles written by the authors of the chapters in the Doing Fieldwork volume. In other cases, I have included articles from other authors.
- Although each reading is assigned to a weekly topic (e.g., “Urban Society,” “Gender and Sexuality”), many, if not all, of the readings are relevant to a number of substantive topics. So, when you do the readings, try to bring in what you’ve learned in other weeks to organically connect multiple topic areas to discuss the week’s readings.
- Because I understand students come from diverse disciplinary background, I do not expect all students to have graduate-level knowledge on sociological theory and methods. I will provide “mini-lectures” on sociology (and other topics) whenever necessary so every student has an equal opportunity to learn from and enjoy this seminar!
Required Texts:

- Readings available at Laulima. Marked with * in the reading list.
- Readings available at UH Library Electronic Resources (students obtain themselves). Marked with ® in the reading list.

Course Requirements:

1) Active participation in seminar discussions.
   Remember the aphorism: “Even to have expressed a false thought boldly and clearly is already to have gained a great deal.” (Ludwig Wittgenstein). So, don’t be shy and speak up!
2) Weekly electronic reading notes.
   Every week you will submit reading notes (approx. 1-2 pages) to the class electronically (using Laulima; details TBA) by 11:59 pm, Wednesday, on the eve of the class. The reading notes should be a reaction/critical engagement rather than a simple summary of the readings assigned for the week (so you don’t necessarily need to refer to every one of the assigned readings). You might focus on the questions you want to ask in the class, or point to gaps and conflicts in one or more readings. The purpose of these reading notes is to stimulate class discussion.
3) Being a discussant for two class sessions.
   A discussant will be responsible for leading at least a brief discussion around the points raised in his/her weekly electronic reading notes.
4) A Research proposal.
   A research proposal on a topic of student’s own choosing in consultation with the instructor (approx. 20 double-spaced pages; 30 pages max.) With the instructor’s approval, students may substitute a completed research paper for the research proposal. The following schedule will be in effect (tentative):

   **September 27**: Short initial proposal (1-2 pages) due at Laulima by 11:59 pm.
   **November 29**: A full rough first draft of the research proposal/paper due at Laulima by 11:59 pm.
   **December 13**: The final draft due at Laulima by 11:59 pm.

Week 1: August 23: Introduction
No required reading. Get acquainted.

Week 2: August 30: State of the Field

edited by Maria Heimer and Stig Thøgersen. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.


Discussant (s): No assigned discussant. Discuss together.

Week 3: September 6: Rural Society


Discussant (s):

Week 4: September 13: Urban Society


@Zhang, Li. 2006. “Contesting Spatial Modernity in Late-Socialist China.” *Current Anthropology* Vol. 47, No. 3:461-484.

**Discussant (s):**

**Week 5: September 20: Family, Household, and Population**


**Discussant (s):**

**Week 6: September 27: Gender and Sexuality**

**RESEARCH PROPOSAL/PAPER SHORT INITIAL PROPOSAL (1-2 pages) DUE AT LAULIMA BY 11:59 PM.**


**Discussant (s):**

**Week 7: October 4: Work and Labor**


*Blecher, Marc J. 2006. "Hegemony and Workers' Politics in China." Pp. 405-427 in *China's*


Discussant(s):

Week 8: October 11: Religion


Discussant(s):

Week 9: October 18: Ethnicity and Diversity


@Hansen, Mette Halskov. 1999. "The Call of Mao or Money?: Han Chinese Settlers on China's Southwestern Borders." The China Quarterly 158, June:394-413.


Discussant (s):

Week 10: October 25: Instructor Out of Town: NO CLASS

Week 11: November 1: Instructor Out of Town: NO CLASS

Week 12: November 8: Environmental Issues


Discussant (s):

Week 13: November 15: Civil Society, Human Rights, and Dissident Movements


Discussant (s):

Week 14: November 22: Popular Culture

Wei, Bu. 2006. "Looking for 'the Insider's Perspective': Human Trafficking in Sichuan." Pp. 209-


Discussant (s):

Week 15: November 29: Thanks Giving Day-NO CLASS

FULL ROUGH FIRST DRAFT OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL/PAPER DUE AT LAULIMA BY 11:59 PM.

Week 16: December 6: Market Transition Debate, Social Stratification, Inequality, and Education


Discussant (s):

December 13

RESEARCH PROPOSAL/PAPER FINAL DRAFT DUE AT LAULIMA BY 11:59 PM.
Further Topics and Readings

Debate on Guanxi


Discussant (s):

History and Memory


New Sociological Studies of the Cultural Revolution


Academic Honesty: “Acts of dishonesty, including but not limited to the following:

a. Cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty.
b. Furnishing false information to any UH official, faculty member, or office.
c. Forgery, alteration, or misuse of any UH document, record, or form of identification.

The term ‘cheating’ includes, but is not limited to: (1) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; (2) use of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; (3) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a member of the UH faculty, staff or student (4) engaging in any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion.

The term ‘plagiarism’ includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.”

[K7.208 UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEMWIDE STUDENT CONDUCT CODE, July 2009]

Kokua Statement: “Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability is invited to contact me privately. I would be happy to work with you, and the KOKUA Program (Office for Students with Disabilities) to ensure reasonable accommodations in my course. KOKUA can be reached at (808) 956-7511 or (808) 956-7612 (voice/text) in room 013 of the Queen Lili‘uokalani Center for Student Services.”

eCAFE: “The Department of Sociology is committed to a continual improvement of the quality of its course offerings. To allow for this to occur, your help, as the consumers of these courses is needed. You are there and only you can tell us about your educational experience in your classes. Towards the end of the semester, you will be informed that the eCAFE system is available to you to complete your course evaluation. We encourage you to login to http://www.hawaii.edu/ecafe/ to submit your evaluations.”