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 have two weeks (Week 14 & 17) discussing 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 reading notes, 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:

- A coursepack of readings (available at Professional Image, 2633 South King St., ph: 973-6599). 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 by e-mail by **11:59pm, Monday, 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):

   **February 23:** Short initial proposal (1-2 pages) due in class.
   **April 6:** A full rough first draft of the research proposal/paper due.
   **May 4:** The final draft due.

**Week 1: January 12: Introduction**

No required reading. Get acquainted.

**Week 2: January 19: State of the Field**


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

Week 3: January 26: Rural Society


Discussant (s):

Week 4: February 2: Urban Society


Week 5: February 9: Family, Household, and Population


Week 6: February 16: Gender and Sexuality


Week 7: February 23: Work and Labor

RESEARCH PROPOSAL/PAPER SHORT INITIAL PROPOSAL (1-2 pages) DUE IN CLASS


Discussant (s):

**Week 8: March 2: Religion**


Discussant (s):

**Week 9: March 9: Ethnicity and Diversity**


Discussant(s):

Week 10: March 16: Environmental Issues


Discussant(s):

Week 11: March 23: Spring Break-NO CLASS

Week 12: March 30: Civil Society, Human Rights, and Dissident Movements


Discussant(s):
**Week 13: April 6: Popular Culture**

**FULL ROUGH FIRST DRAFT OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL PAPER DUE IN CLASS**


**Discussant (s):**

**Week 14: April 13: History and Memory**


**Discussant (s):**
Week 15: April 20: Market Transition Debate, Social Stratification, Inequality, and Education


Discussant (s):

Week 16: April 27: Debate on Guanxi


Discussant (s):

Week 17: May 4: New Sociological Studies of the Cultural Revolution

RESEARCH PROPOSAL/PAPER FINAL DRAFT DUE IN CLASS

*Yang, Guobing. 2007. "'A Portrait of Martyr Jiang Qing': The Chinese Cultural Revolution on
the Internet." Pp. 287-316 in Re-envisioning the Chinese Revolution: The Politics and
Poetics of Collective Memories in Reform China, edited by Ching Kwan Lee and

Discussant (s):

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**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.”

[ E7.208 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.”