Overview: This is an interdisciplinary graduate seminar designed to introduce and inspire innovative research on the society and culture of socialist and postsocialist China, through a combination of secondary source readings and independent research.

Course Description: PRC cultural studies is an interdisciplinary field that acknowledges the interconnections between political economy, aesthetics, representational systems, and material practices of everyday life in the study of socialist and postsocialist China. This field seeks to challenge conventional interpretations of Chinese culture and society after 1949 that have been shaped and informed by a variety of factors, including Cold War Orientalism, developments in the PRC intellectual field during and after the Mao era, disciplinary divisions within academia, and the history of U.S. area studies. In this course, we will examine new scholarship that draws on the methodological resources of cultural studies and its related fields (history, anthropology, literary, visual and performance studies, gender and ethnicity studies, etc.) to offer critical alternatives to entrenched ways of thinking and conducting research on the People’s Republic of China. Approaches that challenge the 1949 divide and introduce transnational and comparative methods for China studies will be considered. Engagement with primary source material will be an important component of this course. The final project will require students to carry out an original reading of a body of primary sources of the student’s choosing (this could be in any language or medium), engaging explicitly in conversation with methodological issues introduced in the course readings and discussions.

Enrollment Requirements: This course is limited to UM graduate students. Advanced undergraduates or students from other institutions may enroll only if spaces are available and with the written permission of the instructor. There is no language requirement for this course. All required readings will be in English.

Assignments/Grading:

- Attendance and participation: 15%
- In-class presentations (3 total: 2 on books, 1 on own project): 15%
- Reading responses (10 total: due in class, see schedule): 30%
- Primary source assignments (prep for own project: see schedule): 10%
- Final research paper draft (10 pp: due last week of classes): 10%
- Final research paper final version (20 pp: due on final exam date): 20%
Note: Detailed requirements, expectations, and grading criteria for all assignments will be provided in a complete syllabus on the first day of class. Students will have an opportunity to ask for clarification and follow-up explanations at this time and will receive regular feedback on all assignments throughout the semester.

Readings
Most of the required readings are available electronically as ebooks through the UM Library. Those that are not will be placed on reserve in hard copy in the Hatcher Graduate Library. PDFs will also be made available when possible. Students are encouraged to purchase 4-5 of the books most closely related to their own research interests from among those from which we will be reading selections during the course. Each student will give presentations on 2 books of their own choosing during the course of the semester.

SCHEDULE

Week 1: Introduction to the course

Week 2: Cultural studies as a method and discipline
  - Assignment due: Reading response #1

Week 3: The PRC in global context
  - Assignment due: Reading response #2 + book presentations (3)

Week 4: Creating a revolutionary discourse
  - Charles A. Laughlin “Writing the actual” in Ban Wang, ed. Words And Their


❖ Assignment due: Reading response #3 + book presentations (1-2)

Week 5: Materiality, practice, and everyday life


❖ Assignment due: Reading response #3 + book presentations (3)

Week 6: Gendering revolutionary poetics


❖ Assignment due: Reading response #4 + book presentations (3)

Week 7: Primary source exploration and research

- Workshop in the library

❖ Assignments due:
  - (due by midnight Friday prior to class) Research Assignment #1 – List of 50 primary source collections related to the PRC accessible through UM library, select one to explore during class, prepare/request and begin reviewing before class
  - (due by midnight on day after class) Research Assignment #2 – Reflection on one collection explored prior to and during workshop

Week 8: Rethinking the Cultural Revolution


❖ Assignment due: Reading response #5 + book presentations (3)

Week 9: Ethnicity, class, and place
• Thomas S. Mullaney “Ethnicity as Language” in Coming to Terms With the Nation: Ethnic Classification In Modern China. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011.

❖ Assignment due: Reading response #6 + book presentations (3)

Week 10: Research projects
• Research Workshop and Discussion based on research

❖ Assignments due:
  o (due by midnight on Sunday before class) Research assignment #3 – Short paper on one source or set of sources
  o (due in class in hard copy) Assignment due: Research Assignment #4 – Project Proposal with Partial Bibliography
  o In-class presentation on research in progress

Week 11: Modes of reading the PRC on screen

❖ Assignment due: Reading response #7 + book presentations (3)

Week 12: Culturing the subaltern in post-Mao China


 Assignment due: Reading response #8 + book presentations (3)

Week 13: Conceptualizing the post-Mao imagination


 Assignment due: Reading response #9 + book presentations (3)

Week 14: Transnational and comparative provocations


 Assignment due: Reading response #10 + book presentations (3)

Week 15: Final Project Drafts

 Assignment due in class in hard copy: Research assignment #6: Final Paper Draft (10 pp)

**Final Research Papers (20 pp) due via electronic submission during the final week of exam period.**