Class Hours: Monday, 1:30-3:20

Course Description: Can the recent past of the People’s Republic of China be studied as history? This graduate seminar is an introduction to recent scholarship on the People’s Republic of China, primarily focusing on the Mao era. In their readings students will consider scholarship in the social sciences, examine the questions that are currently being asked (and what sources are available to ask them), and evaluate historical work published in the last ten years.

Course Structure: Readings will be assigned both chronologically and thematically. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss all of the assigned reading, as well as to lead discussion (by providing discussion questions) four times in the semester (pending enrollment). Students are encouraged to read as writers, to analyze the scaffolding as well as the argument of the work, and to use the readings to think about the shape of their own future research. Students will write two book reviews and one final historiographical review essay OR one short essay plus prospectus/syllabus.

Course Readings: The books for this course are on reserve at the university library. Other course readings will be posted to the course website.

Course Requirements and Grading:

Discussion leading (including four sets of discussion questions) 20%
Discussion participation 20%
Book reviews (two) 20%
Review essay (Or shorter essay plus prospectus/syllabus) 40%

• Discussion Leading/Questions: There will be assigned readings for each class session, and students are expected to come to class having done the readings and ready to participate in class discussion. For each class discussion, two students will be assigned to lead discussion, and will be required to email ten discussion questions (typically five on each reading) to the instructor by 9:00 a.m. on the day of the discussion (Monday). At least one question should be about sources. Based on course enrollment, students will submit questions up to four times per semester.

• Discussion Participation: will be assessed on the basis of regular attendance and engagement with class discussion.

• Book Reviews: Students will choose two books from the course assignments and write short (750-word) books reviews, to be shared with other participants in the seminar. If students choose, they may wish to coordinate their book reviews with the weeks they will be leading discussion. If students wish to review books not on the list of course assignments, they should clear their choices with the instructor.

• Review Essay: Students will write one historiographical essay on a topic of their choosing, using the assigned readings to build a list, or creating an independent list of
their own. Students may opt for an alternate assignment, which will include one shorter review essay AND either a primary source prospectus or an undergraduate syllabus on post-1949 history.

Week 1: Introduction (Friday, September 4)
- Strauss, Julia, “In Search of PRC History.”
- Weigelin-Schwiedrzik, Susanne, “In Search of a Master Narrative for 20th Century Chinese History.”
- Above readings posted to ClassesV2

Week 2: Dilemmas of Victory (Monday, September 14)

Week 3: Making the People (Monday, September 21)
- CHOOSE: One book review on one of the three books. Be ready to discuss the review in class and explain why it is/isn’t useful as a review.

Week 4: City and Countryside (Monday, September 28)
- READ: The Gender of Memory roundtable discussion: https://networks.h-net.org/node/3544/discussions/27977/roundtable-discussion-gail-hershatters-gender-memory-prc-history. Be ready to discuss: Which review was the most comprehensive? Which review spoke best to your own interests and concerns?

Week 5: Science and Knowledge (Monday, October 5)

**Week 6: Famine (Political Scientists) (Monday, October 12)**


**Week 7: Famine (Historians) (Monday, October 19)**


**Week 8: Mao Cult (Monday, October 26)**


**Week 9: Cultural Revolution and the Problem of the Faction (Sociologists) (Monday, November 2)**


**Film Screening:** Xu Xing, *Summary of Crimes* (Tuesday, November 3) Details TBD

**Week 10: Cultural Revolution and the Problem of Class (Sociologist/Anthropologist) (Monday, November 9)**


**Week 11: Cultural Revolution and Culture (Monday, November 16)**
• Mittler, Barbara. *A Continuous Revolution: Making Sense of Cultural Revolution Culture*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013. Read the Introduction, the Conclusion (posted on ClassesV2), and at least ONE chapter.

**Week 12: Cultural Revolution and Violence (Monday, November 30)**
• **BRAINSTORM**: Choose either the Famine or the Cultural Revolution, and brainstorm the outline for a review essay using ONLY the books we have read.

**Week 13: The Mao Era and the World (Monday, December 7)**

**Week 14: Reckoning, Remembering (Monday, December 14)**
• READ “The Mao Era in Retrospect” in Walder, Andrew G., *China Under Mao: A Revolution Derailed*. Harvard University Press, 2015 (posted on Classes V2). RE-READ and BRING IN: at least one other chapter from a book we have read that also examines the Mao era in retrospect. Possible examples might be Hershatter, “Narrator,” or Wu Yiching, “Coping with Crisis” or “From Revolution to Reform.”

**Review essay DUE Monday, December 21**
• Students may write one long historiographical paper (15-20 pages) OR
• Students may write one shorter review essay on several works(8-10 pages) AND either:
  ○ A primary source prospectus
  ○ An undergraduate syllabus on post-1949 history
• Guidelines will be distributed and students will choose their topic in consultation with the instructor