

CHE2001 Research Methods in Chinese Studies

Fall 2009

Mon 1:30-3:15pm HYS303

Instructor: Ann Huss (ahuss@cuhk.edu.hk)

TA: Liang Yue, Clara (liangclara@hotmail.com)

“...a research report written for any audience is a conversation, imagined to be sure, but still a cooperative but rigorous inquiry into what should and should not be believed.”

Turabian, Kate L. 2003. “On the Spirit of Research.” In *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, eds. Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams and the University of Chicago Press Editorial Staff, 130. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Course Content

This course aims to introduce students to research methods in Chinese Studies. Key issues in the evolution of, and current trends in, Chinese Studies will be discussed. Students will be acquainted with a range of sources in Chinese history, film, linguistics, economics, political science, and anthropology. They will also be exposed to critical theories in the humanities and social sciences.

Required Reading

Lipson, Charles. 2005. *How To Write a BA Thesis: A Practical Guide from Your First Ideas to Your Finished Paper*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this course, successful students will be able to

- define a topic in Chinese Studies and conduct research into that topic using appropriate skills and resources;
- command a knowledge of major works of scholarship in Chinese Studies;
- for those with knowledge of the Chinese language: acquire Chinese language sources from libraries or internet databases;
- make constructive use of influential theoretical paradigms.

Learning activities

Lecture 2 hours/week (Mandatory)

Interactive tutorial as scheduled

Assessment

In groups: Review of/presentation on one weekly reading assignment 10%

Detailed notes on two reading assignments (student’s choice; read Ch. 3 of *How to Write a BA Thesis for guidance*) [[Due Friday Oct 30, 5pm](#)] 40%

Project/Thesis proposal with annotated bibliography and research plan [[Due Monday Dec 14, 5pm](#)] 50%

Students are expected to actively participate in class. The final version of all assignments should be submitted **twice**:

(1) to VeriGuide at: <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/veriguide> and

(2) in hard copy to my mailbox outside of the Centre for East Asian Studies, 7/F Hui Yeung Shing Building.

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/> . With each assignment, students will be required to submit a statement that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures.

Week 1: Sept 7

INTRODUCTION/DISCUSSION: On the Spirit of Research

Week 2: Sept 14

What Research Is and How Researchers Think about It

Reading:

Cohen, Paul A. 1988. The Post-Mao Reforms in Historical Perspective. *The Journal of Asian Studies* 47, no. 3 (Aug): 518-540.

Chow, Rey. 1998. On Chineseness as a Theoretical Problem. *boundary 2* 24, no.3 (Autumn): 1-24.

Week 3: Sept 21

Moving from a Topic to a Question to a Working Hypothesis

Reading:

Berry, Chris. 1998. If China Can Say No, Can China Make Movies? Or, Do Movies Make China? Rethinking National Cinema and National Agency. *boundary 2* 25, no.3 (Autumn): 129-150.

Week 4: Sept 28

Finding Useful Sources

Reading:

Potter, Pitman B. 2007. China and the International Legal System: Challenges of Participation. *The China Quarterly* 191: 699-715.

Week 5: Oct 5

Engaging Sources

Reading:

Wang Ning. 1997. The Mapping of Chinese Postmodernity. *boundary 2* 24, no.3 (Autumn): 19-40.

Week 6: Oct 12

Planning Your Argument

Reading:

Economy, Elizabeth C. 2007. The Great Leap Backward? The Costs of China's Environmental Crisis. *Foreign Affairs* 86, no.5 (Sept-Oct).

Week 7: Oct 19 **INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS: discussion of project topics**

Week 8: Oct 26 **NO CLASS: Chung Yeung Festival (重陽節)**

FRIDAY **OCT 30** **Essay due, 5pm [40%]**

Week 9: Nov 2

Presenting Evidence in Tables and Figures (Political Science/Political Economy)

Reading:

Li Lianjiang. 2004. Political Trust in Rural China. *Modern China* 30, no.2 (April): 228-258.

Li Wei and Dennis Tao Yang. 2005. The Great Leap Forward: Anatomy of a Central Planning Disaster. *Journal of Political Economy* 13, no.4: 840-877.

Week 10: Nov 9

Presenting Research in Alternative Forums (The Linguist)

Reading:

Wang, William S-Y. 1973. The Chinese Language. *Scientific American* (Feb): 53-62.

Week 11: Nov 16

The Anthropologist's Craft

Reading:

Bosco, Joseph. 2007. Young People's Ghost Stories in Hong Kong. *The Journal of Popular Culture* 40, no. 5: 785-807.

Kjellgren, Bjorn. 2006. The Significance of Benevolence and Wisdom: Reflections on Field Positionality. In *Doing Fieldwork in China*, eds. Maria Heimer and Stig Thøgersen. Copenhagen: NIAS.

Week 12: Nov 23

The Historian Revisited

Reading:

Cheung, Sui-wai. 2008. Construction of the Grand Canal and Improvement in Transportation in Late Imperial China. *Asian Social Science* 4, no.6: 11-22.

-----, 2008. Traditional Society in Tai Po, in *Traditions and Heritage in Tai Po*, eds. Liu Tik-sang,

Cheung Siu-woo, Wong Wing-ho, Susanna Siu Lai-kuen, 36-51. Hong Kong SAR: Working Group on Promotion of Local Community Economy in Tai Po; Agriculture, Fisheries, Commerce, Industries, Tourism and Recreation Affairs Committee; Tai Po District Council.

References recommended by Prof. Cheung Sui-wai

Charles O. Hucker. 1985. *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China*, Stanford, CA : Stanford University Press.

R. H. Mathews. 1931. *Mathews' Chinese-English Dictionary*, Shanghai: China Inland Mission and Presbyterian Mission Press.

E-tu Zen Sun. 1961. *Ch'ing Administrative Terms: A Translation of the Terminology of the Six Boards with Explanatory Notes*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Week 13: Nov 30 Discussion/Review