Title: Tibet: History, Culture and Politics  
Course Code: HST3270  
No. of Credits/Term: 3  
Mode of Tuition: Sectional  
Class Contact Hours: 3 hours per week  
Category in Major Prog.: Elective  
Prerequisites: None  
Co-requisites: None  
Exclusion: None  
Exemption Requirement(s): None  

Brief Course Description  
This course explores Tibet as a cultural, geographical, and political unit and will cover the major periods of Tibetan history from the seventh century to the present. Students will have the opportunity to read Tibetan classics in English translation, works on Tibet written by Western scholars, as well as texts representing the opposing perspectives of the Chinese government and Tibetan nationalists.  

Aims  
To provide an in-depth survey of the historical experience, cultural achievements, and social and political perspectives of a very unique and influential human group.  

Indicative Content  
1. Geography and Prehistory  
2. Tibet as an Empire (7th-13th centuries)  
3. Interpretations of the Mongol-Tibet Relations  
4. Tibet and Ming China  
5. Tibet, Qing China and the West  
6. Tibet, Republican China and the West  
7. Tibetan Buddhism: Teachings and Schools  
8. Tibetan Teachings on Living and Dying  
9. Traditional Tibetan Society: Heaven or Hell?  
10. 1950: Liberation or Invasion?  
11. Revolt in 1959  
12. Cultural Revolution and the Reform Era  
13. Western Perceptions of Tibet  
14. Tibetan Nationalism in Global Perspective  

Learning Outcomes  
Students completing this course are expected to:  
1. acquire a basic knowledge of the specific terms, places, historical figures, periods, institutions, and concepts in Tibetan history;  
2. acquire an understanding of the main themes, problems, debates, methods and types of sources relating to Tibetan history;  
3. demonstrate the ability to think creatively, critically, independently and analytically, about the political and academic disputes over Tibet;  
4. be able to discuss the major elements and important features of the Tibetan culture;  
5. be able to analyze and synthesize an eclectic range of primary and secondary sources;  
6. demonstrate the capacity for research using a wide range of media and effective communication skills, both orally and in writing.
Measurement of Learning Outcomes

1. Quizzes will be used to assess L.O. 1 to 4: There will be two to three quizzes. Each quiz will consist of two sections. Section one will include eight to ten short questions designed to test students’ understanding of factual knowledge and basic themes, problems, concepts, and methods of Tibetan history. Section two will ask the students to write an essay discussing one of the two topics provided. This will test students’ ability to think creatively, critically, independently and think analytically, about the political and academic disputes over Tibet, and to discuss the major elements and important features of the Tibetan culture;

2. Student will be assigned book chapters or articles to read for each class. A list of questions will be provided for each reading assignment. All important reading assignments will be discussed in class. In addition, every week each student needs to write a one-page essay (double space) analysing the readings (topics will be provided). These will assess L.O. 1, 2, 3, 4 and also part of 5 & 6;

3. Research paper will assess L.O. 1-6: Each student will be required to write a research paper of twelve of fifteen pages (excluding endnotes and bibliography) analysing a topic related to Tibetan history. They will be encouraged to use both primary and secondary sources. The instructor will provide a list of topics for the students to choose, but students will also be encouraged to propose their own topics. This will directly assess L.O. 3, 5, and 6 and indirectly assess L.O. 1, 2 and 4.

Assessment

Two to Three Quizzes: 40%
Weekly essays: 15%
Research Paper: 30%
Attendance and class participation: 15%

Essential Readings


Supplementary Readings

11. Geshe Wangyal, *The Door of Liberation: Essential Teachings of the Tibetan Buddhist*
Tradition, 2002