Course Title: Contemporary Chinese Novels and Society

Course Description:
This course surveys contemporary Chinese fictions from the 1980s to the present in terms of historical background, ideological content, artistic development and achievement, as well as foreign influences. It aims at familiarizing students with modern Chinese history and culture through reading some of the major Chinese writers, such as Su Tong, Yu Hua, Wang Shuo, Mo yan, Wang Anyi, Wang Xiaobo, etc.

Grading
1. Readings and Class Participation (30%)
   - Readings
   - Keep regular journal of your reactions to readings as basis for class discussion
   - Class participation, discussion, and presentation.

2. Final Paper (40%)
Your final paper, a close reading and interpretation of one or more contemporary Chinese writers’ works, should be 6-10 pages in length. Due

3. Final Exam (30%)
Will consist of short answer questions which will focus on the time of writing (cultural-historical background wherein certain texts were produced) and the time the writing is about (i.e. cultural-historical significance of the texts), the literary characteristics of specific works, how specific works are representative of literary trends (e.g. root-seeking literature; new historical novel; neo-realism) etc. You might, for example, be asked to explain how certain texts are ironic, satirical, or parodic; how certain texts exemplify postmodern ways of writing (i.e. metafictional skills, time-space compression, subversion of grand narrative, etc.).

Required readings:

---------. Raise the Red Lantern, a film adapted after Su Tong’s Wives and Concubines, dir. Zhang Yimou.


---------. In the Heat of the Sun, a film adapted after Wang Shuo’s Wild Beast, dir. Jiang Wen.

Wang Xiaobo. The Golden Age.


**Suggested references:**


**Course Schedule**

**Week 1:**

**Week 2:**
Week 3:

Week 4:

Week 5:

Week 6:

Week 7:
Reading: Wang Xiaobo, *The Golden Age*.

Week 8:
Reading: Wang Anyi, *The Song of Everlasting Sorrow*

Week 9:

Week 10:

Week 11:
Reading: Jiang Rong, *Wolf Totem*, 2004 (excerpts, photocopied packet)

Week 12
Final exam.