Synopsis:
Over the past fifty years, an imagined Tibetan community has emerged, bound together across huge expanses of geographical space despite linguistic challenges, vastly different political orientations, and religious frictions. Who participates in and creates this community? How has Tibetan culture become globalized?
The aim of this course is two-fold. Taking an historical approach, we will examine “traditional” Tibetan cultural forms. Then, we will explore current centers of cultural production as well as its various forms including film, art, music, fiction and poetry. By comparing historical and contemporary modes of cultural production, this course aims to identify the imagined community of modern Tibet which reaches beyond the borders of nation-states, and modes of linguistic and religious unification.

Course Objectives:
By the end of this course, you should:
1. know the characteristics of centers of Tibetan cultural production
2. become familiar with the complexities of modern Tibetan identity
3. be able to think critically about modern Tibetan culture

Block 1: “Traditional” Tibetan Culture

Week One-Two:
Introductions, understanding course goals.

Art and Literature from the Tibetan Empire & Introduction of Buddhism


Week Three:
Establishing New Traditions: Importing the Five Sciences & the Indian Kavya Tradition


**Graduate students:**

**Week Four:**
*Between Lhasa and Beijing: Cultural Exchange during the Ming & Qing dynasties*


**Graduate student session:** to be arranged.

**Block 2: “Traditional” Culture Today: Between Dharamsala and Hollywood**

**Week Five:**
*From de-facto Independence to Dharamsala as the Center of Modern “Traditional” Tibet*

Tibetan Government in Exile website on Culture: http://www.tibet.com

**Student assignment:** Print out or write down the main headings under the Tibetan culture category. Choose one of those headings, and be prepared to make a five minute presentation on that aspect of Tibetan culture according to the official Tibetan Government in Exile website.
Week Six:

**Tibetan Diaspora**


Excerpts from documentary *Tibet: Cry of the Snow Lion* (2002)

Week Seven:

**Orientalists and Tibet**


Week Eight:

**Western cinematic representations of Tibet**

In class viewing and analysis of *Seven Years in Tibet, Kundun*, & select early documentary films

**Mini-research assignment:** Work in small groups. Bring in the name of ten films about Tibet. Find out where they were produced and who produced them. Are they readily available for viewing?

**Graduate student session:** to be arranged.

**Week Nine:**
*Midterm Review & Midterm*

**Block 3: Lhasa—the Heart of Tradition or Modernity?**

**Week Ten:**
*Monasteries or Museums? Tourism & Lhasa Culture*

View website: www.mechak.org
Instructor’s materials on Tibetan nightclubs (*nang-ma*), Lhasa rock, Gesar today, *dram-snyan*, and the local art scene.

**Week Eleven**
*Lhasa, a New Chinese City?*

**Student assignment:** Go to the webpage of the Tibet Heritage Fund, click under THF works. Read about one of their projects and present it to the class.
http://www.tibetheritagefund.org/


**Week Twelve**
*Chinese Perceptions of Tibet*

In class analysis and showing of *Horse Thief* (*Dao ma zei*) 1986 and *Red River Valley* (*Hong he gu*) 1997.

**Block 4: Translating Culture: Amdo, Khams, & Beijing**

**Week Thirteen:**
*Modern Tibetan fiction in Chinese*


**Week Fourteen:**
*Amdo as a Center of Cultural Production*


**Week Fifteen**
Trip to Tibetan Cultural Center—meeting with Arjia Rinpoche (subject to change)
Writer’s Workshop

**Week Sixteen**
Final paper due