Course Description
This course aims at exploring and re-examining the cultural criticisms made by three twentieth-century French thinkers—Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu and Jean Baudrillard—in relation to the theme of rethinking the im/possibility of social and political changes in contemporary West ever since the global revolutionary heydays of the 1960s. The objective of the course is to study with some depth the overall trajectory of their thoughts, their critical analysis of our contemporary ways of life as well as their ground of criticisms and responses. Apart from being the fact that the intellectual contributions of the three thinkers are greatly relevant to the process of globalization, the core reason why they are selected for careful re-evaluations here is because they have altogether outlined a profoundly new theoretical approach that organically blends social analysis with cultural critique to help re-conceptualize the very regulatory discipline, the differentiating structure, and the circulatory system both pertaining to and produced in the Western modern societies. But at the same time, the critical revisiting of the philosophical insights advanced by Foucault, Bourdieu and Baudrillard in this seminar shall also enable our students with the capacity and hope in constantly seeking transformative possibilities and emancipatory potentials within the realm of our everyday lives against the predominating cultural logic of late capitalism nowadays.

Medium of instruction: Cantonese

Expected Learning Outcomes
Knowledge outcomes are:
- to get students familiarized with the cultural thinking of Foucault, Bourdieu and Baudrillard
- to understand key concepts and contexts of their cultural criticism as well as to explore possible alternatives in relation to the predominating logic of late capitalism
- to read critically the cultural identity, taste and moral values as aspects of everyday life being dominated by different forms of power relations

Skill outcomes are:
- to identify independently the key issues in contemporary cultural theories
- to have confidence in reading and dealing with difficult original texts
- to be able to cross disciplinary boundaries in a more substantial manner

Attitude outcomes are:
- to integrate theory and practice
- to be open-minded
- to respect egalitarian and communal values

Learning Activities
1 Lecture and 1 Tutorial per week
Assessment Method
You are required to write an individual final term paper of 4000 words (in Chinese) or 3000 words (in English) in length [last date of paper submission: 25 April 2014]. A small group presentation for 45 minutes is also required. You must present a close reading of a required piece of text, including the overall structure, key ideas, relevant examples and implications. A superficial and impressionistic reading will not be accepted.

Attendance and Participation 10%
Group Presentation 20%
Final Term Paper 30%
Final Examination 40%

Essential Texts

Content and Schedule

**Jan 8**  
**Introduction: The Turn to Culture**  

**Foucault: Culture, Discourses and Social Institution**

**Jan 15**  
**Discursive Formations and Power/Knowledge**  

**Jan 22**  
**Body, Punishment and Spectacle**  

Film Clip: *The Last Emperor* (Bernardo Bertolucci dir., 1986)

**Jan 29**

**Panoptical Governance**


**Feb 12**

**Technologies of the Self**


**Feb 19**

**Critique of Foucault**


**Bourdieu: Culture, Fields and Social Structure**

**Feb 26**

**Social Status and Cultural Capital**

**Mar 5**

**The Logic of Distinction**

**Mar 12**

**The (Re)Production of Taste**

Film Clip: *Vulgaria* (Pang Ho-cheung dir., 2012)

**Mar 19**

**The Struggles for Classifications**


**Baudrillard: Culture, Significations and Social System**

**Mar 26**

**The End of Economic Production**


**Apr 2**

**Simulacra and the Mirror of Objects**


Film Clip: *Matrix* (The Wachowski Brothers dir., 1999)

**Apr 9**

**Political Economy of Signs**


**Apr 16**

**Conclusion: Virtual Reality and the Desert of the Real**


**Tutorial Readings**

**Jan 29**

Assignment of Presentation Articles

**Feb 12**

Rest Week

**Feb 19**


**Feb 26**


Honesty in Academic Work: A Guide for Students
The Chinese University of Hong Kong places very high importance on honesty in academic work submitted by students, and adopts a policy of zero tolerance on cheating and plagiarism. Any related offence will lead to disciplinary action including termination of studies at the University. All student assignments in undergraduate and postgraduate programmes should be submitted via VeriGuide with effect from September 2008: [https://veriguide2.cse.cuhk.edu.hk/cuhk/](https://veriguide2.cse.cuhk.edu.hk/cuhk/)

Although cases of cheating or plagiarism are rare at the University, everyone should make himself/herself familiar with the content of this website and thereby help avoid any practice that would not be acceptable.

Section 1 What is plagiarism
[http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p01.htm](http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p01.htm)

Section 2 Proper use of source material

Section 3 Citation styles
[http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p03.htm](http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p03.htm)

Section 4 Plagiarism and copyright violation

Section 5 CUHK regulations on honesty in academic work
[http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p05.htm](http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p05.htm)
Section 6 CUHK disciplinary guidelines and procedures
http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p06.htm

Section 7 Guide for teachers and departments
http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p07.htm

Section 8 Recommended material to be included in course outlines
http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p08.htm

Section 9 Electronic submission of assignments via VeriGuide
http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p09.htm

Section 10 Declaration to be included in assignments