CHES5124 Housing and Urban Governance in Contemporary China

2020-21, Term 1, Mondays 6:30pm – 9:15pm  
(Online Teaching via Zoom)

Instructor: Dr. Jackson Yeh (jacksonyeh@cuhk.edu.hk)  
Teaching Assistant: TBA

Course Description
This course looks at the transformation of housing and urban governance in contemporary China. The class will first introduce various perspectives to understand the role and importance of housing in general. It will then acquaint students with some basic skills on policy analysis and evaluation. The following lectures will look at the Chinese context and investigate the structural change of housing system and its impacts on the Chinese society. Subsequently the course covers a number of current housing policy issues in mainland China, such as development of affordable housing, real estate fever, protection of private property, as well as housing management. Particular attention is paid to the interplay between changes in the housing sector and broader socio-political developments in contemporary China.

Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:
1) understand the historical process of housing privatization in China since 1979;
2) grasp how transformations in the housing sector have triggered other changes in urban livelihood;
3) critically analyse current housing and urban governance issues in China.

Learning Activities
Online lectures and tutorials will be held every week. During the tutorials, students will form small groups and engage in group presentation. Online attendance of lectures and tutorials is required.

Assessment (More details will be provided in class)

I. Online class participation (10%)

II. Online group presentation (30%)

Each group should choose a housing-related issue that may happen in an urban neighborhood in mainland China and do an online presentation of around 30 minutes to the class. The assessment of your performance will be based on (1) the quality of your PowerPoint (10%); (2) the individual presentation skill (15%); and finally (3) the performance in the Q & A session (5%).

III. Online Mid-Term Test (20%): MCQ (20%) (Lecture 9, 2 November)

IV. Final Individual Essay (40%)

Students are encouraged to write up a Final Individual Essay based on the work they have done in the group presentation. The Final Individual Essay should follow the basic requirements of an academic essay and contain about 3,000 words in English (excluding footnotes and reference list). Students are also suggested to consult the instructor if they encounter any problems. The deadline for submission is December 4 (Friday) at/before 5pm and no late submission is allowed.

The Final Individual Essay will be evaluated on the basis of: 1) Content (40%): coherence and precision of the argument; 2) Organization (40%): structure and clarity of writing; and finally, 3) References (20%): relevance of evidence gathered to support this assignment. Please note that lecture notes and Wikipedia are not suitable as sources for academic writing (although they may serve as a starting point for your
research). You should resort to original academic references (journal articles, book chapters, and so on both in English and Chinese), and reliable official statistics.

**Course Schedule**

References marked with * are required readings.

**Lecture 1 (7 September): Introduction**

Major references for this course:


**Lecture 2 (14 September): The Role and Significance of Housing**


(No tutorial)

**Lecture 3 (21 September): Basics of Policy Analysis and Evaluation**


(Tutorial: Group Division and Discussion)

**Lecture 4 (28 September): Institutional and Organizational Arrangements of Housing and Urban Governance in China**


**Lecture 5 (5 October): Housing Reform and Urbanization**


Lecture 6 (12 October): The Causes and Implications of the Chinese “Real Estate Fever”


(Tutorial: Group Presentation 1)

Lecture 7 (19 October): The Development of Affordable Housing


(Tutorial: Group Presentation 2)

Lecture 8 (26 October): The Redevelopment of Villages in the City


(Tutorial: Group Presentation 3)

Lecture 9 (2 November): Online Mid-Term Test

Lecture 10 (9 November): Chinese Homeowners’ Activism


Lecture 11 (16 November): Public Housing and New Town Development in Hong Kong


Policies on Public Housing can be found at:


Lecture 12 (23 November): Hong Kong Housing Policy and Practice


Wong, Yue Chim Richard. 2015. Hong Kong Land for Hong Kong People: Fixing the Failures of Our Housing Policy. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press. (Chapter 9 “On Public Housing Policy and Social Justice”)

Lecture 13 (30 November): Conclusion and Online Consultation

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 signed declaration that they are aware of the policies, regulations and procedures.

Important Reminders

This course uses the CUHK eLearning system, which can be found at https://blackboard.cuhk.edu.hk . Students are expected to check the eLearning system and CUHK email regularly.