Course description
This course introduces students to issues revolving around gender in the vast and culturally diverse region of Asia. Gender is one of the basic principles of social life, and it takes different forms in different Asian cultures, interacting with local histories, traditions, and social systems such as politics, economics, and religion. In an era of globalization and transnational mobility, the concepts, roles and relations of gender in Asia are rapidly changing. While there seems to be convergence of values and practices in the region, there are also evidently processes of reversion and localization simultaneously. This course examines the changes and continuities in the region using a cross-cultural perspective, with a focus on gender in the family and work. In the process we examine how gender interplays with modernity and development, as well as consumerism, ethnicity, and class. Students are expected to read before class and participate actively in the lecture and tutorial discussions.

Course objectives
After the course, students will:
1) develop a critical understanding of gender issues in different Asian societies from an anthropological perspective;
2) gain reflexivity regarding their own culture and society in relation to gender ideology and practice.

Course assessment
Class participation: 20%
Midterm assignment: 30% (due March 7, 2019)
Term paper: 50% (due May 2, 2019)

1. Class participation:
Attendance is mandatory. It is university policy that attendance alone does not carry marks. Students should complete assigned readings before each class and take an active part in class discussion. Turn off your mobile devices during the lecture.

There will be 5 tutorials (4 marks each). Marking is based on how well you prepare and how much you contribute to the discussion. Attendance alone does not carry points. Discussion leaders receive bonus points.

2. Midterm assignment (3 pages):
Interview a person of Asian (but non-Chinese) descent. Based on the interview data, write a short piece to discuss how the person’s gender affects their experience in Hong Kong. Include factors that are considered important in the interviewee’s experience. Use double-spacing and 12-point font. Attach a list of references cited at the end. Submit first to VeriGuide and print out the receipt. Attach it to the hard copy of your assignment and submit in class on the due date. No late submissions will be accepted.
3. Final Paper (10 pages):
Write a critique of one aspect of gender in Asia, incorporating field data in Hong Kong and course readings. Use double-spacing and 12-point font. Attach a list of references cited at the end. Submit first to VeriGuide and print out the receipt. Attach it to the hard copy of your paper and submit to the Anthropology Department Office (NAH407) during office hours. Late submissions will not be accepted.

The paper will be graded according to: 1) organization (structure, format, and citation), 2) clarity and significance of theme, 3) logical development of arguments, application of academic works and class materials, and 4) use of supporting evidence and depth of ethnographic data.

Note that the University adopts a policy of zero tolerance on plagiarism. Using someone else’s ideas or words without citing the source is plagiarism. (This includes material from the Internet without citing the website, and my lecture). It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the CUHK academic honesty policy at http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/.

Course schedule
* = required reading

Week 1 Jan 10 Introduction: Gender, family, and work in Asia

Module 1: East Asia
Week 2 Jan 17 China: Doing gender
*2) Siumi Maria Tam. 2005. We-women and They-women: Imagining mistresses across the Hong Kong-China border. In Rethinking and Recasting Citizenship: Social Exclusion and Marginality in Chinese Societies. May Tam, Ku Hok-bun, and Travis Kong, eds. Hong Kong: Centre for Social Policy Studies, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Week 3 Jan 24 Korea: Family politics
Week 4  Jan 31  Japan: Gendered work

Module 2: Southeast Asia
Week 6  Feb 14  Affluence and gendered livelihood in Southeast Asia

Week 7  Feb 21  Philippines: Gendered mobility

Week 8  Feb 28  Singapore: Getting married

Week 9  Mar 7  Thailand: Changing genders

Module 3: South Asia
Week 10  Mar 14  Gender and social development in South Asia

Week 11  Mar 21  India: Domesticity and religion

Week 14 Apr 11 Nepal: Gender identity in everyday life

Week 15 Apr 17 Conclusion: Power, modernity, and gender in Asia