This course asks three questions: What was old Tibet? Is Tibet part of China? What's going on there now? Each of these questions has its own methods of study, which I will briefly introduce below.

**What was old Tibet?** In this section we look at Tibetan culture before the reappearance of the Chinese in 1950 and the eventual incorporation of Tibet into the People's Republic of China. We'll examine traditions as they were expressed in social, political and religious forms. Above all, religious, for it is a truism—which we must examine in this course—that everything Tibetan is touched by Buddhism. Our objective here is less a mastery of the chronological development of institutions than a familiarity with the web of connections, assumptions, and social practices that characterized the old society. We will spend about half the semester with these issues, not only for their intrinsic interest but because most Tibetans still live partially in "old Tibet," and we cannot grasp current events without becoming temporary inhabitants of that realm.

**Is Tibet part of China?** This is the issue that has most riled anyone concerned with Tibet in the last hundred years. Chinese fundamentalists claim Tibet has been a part of China ever since the thirteenth century. Tibetan nationalists claim that Tibet has never been part of China. We will examine this history, from the seventeenth century onward, to see what narratives best fit the historical processes we discern in it. For this section of the course we will adapt the language of international relations, testing how well concepts such as "nation-state," which derive from the experience of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe, explain matters in Central Asia.

**What's going on now?** We'll look at Tibet since 1950, in an attempt to understand the contradictions of the Chinese presence. In each section of the course we will read first-person accounts, secondary material by western scholars, and period documents. Because the Tibetan environment (physical & religious) is so profoundly different from our own, we will also watch a video every Monday night at 7:00 p.m. in Searles 315; these will help us visualize such novel landscapes. Though this is a history course, it obviously has a large component of religion. All this will require us to develop a wide range of sensitivities.
Attendance is required at all class meetings and video showings, and more than two absences will adversely affect your grade. This is not because I'm going to be saying priceless things, but because the course is oriented to discussion and viewing. It's simply not possible to reproduce that experience in any other medium. I'll be asking you to do a lot of writing, both in and out of class. Most of these will be short papers--no term papers and also no mid-terms in this class. Some of the assignments are indicated on the syllabus, but others will be developed as we go. Because this writing constitutes part of your preparation for class, it will be important to do it by the due date, and late papers will not be accepted except for medical reasons. I expect that it will take you between three and four hours per class meeting to complete these diverse tasks.

Instead of a written final exam, we will have individual oral exams in my office. Together as a class we'll develop the questions to be discussed there, so you will be able to prepare effectively. I'll also ask you to suggest a grade for yourself on class participation, broadly defined to include in-class contributions, effort and so on. We will need to establish a set of criteria on class participation that we all find acceptable. I'll ask you to bring a short self-evaluation statement with you to the oral exam.

I will not put grades on your written work, though I will make extensive comments. However, if you're concerned about your grade at any point in the course, please come see me. I will also offer everyone the chance for a mid-term grade check--I'll require this of first-year students in the course. Be sure to save all your written work, because I will ask you to turn it in to me with your final paper at the semester's end. The final grade will be determined on the basis of short papers (65%), final exam (15%), and class participation (20%). My office is at 38 College Street. Office hours are Tuesday and Wednesday, 9:30 to 11:00, and by appointment. My phone is -3524, and my e-mail address is <kidder>.

The following books should be available for purchase in the basement of Moore Hall:

- Siebenschuh and Tashi Tsering, The Struggle for Modern Tibet
- Tom Grunfeld, The Making of Modern Tibet
- Heinrich Harrer, Seven Years in Tibet
- Lobsang Lhalungpa, Life of Milarepa
- Walpola Rahula, What the Buddha Taught
- R. A. Stein, Tibetan Civilization
- Chögyam Trungpa, Journey Without Goal