HIS 355: Modern China
Dr. Jonathan Skaff

Group Assignment: China in Revolution: The Mao Years

Name: ____________________________  Name: ____________________________
Name: ____________________________  Name: ____________________________

Directions: Form groups of 4 students maximum. Working together, write a response to the question below based on the documentary China in Revolution: The Mao Years and textbook The Search for Modern China. Write on the back of this assignment or additional sheets of paper as may be necessary. This assignment counts toward your attendance/participation grade. A variation of this question may appear on the final exam. You have until 3 pm to finish writing the group essay. At that time, Alex Kriebel will lead a discussion based on today’s reading of Wild Swans, 191-255.

1. Compare and contrast the depiction of Mao Zedong as the leader of the People’s Republic of China in the documentary China in Revolution: The Mao Years and our textbook The Search for Modern China, pp. 460-69, 478-93, 505-23. Pay particular attention to similarities and differences in the documentary and textbook’s treatment of Mao’s authority over the Chinese people and Chinese Communist Party. In considering his authority, think about whether Mao is depicted as being as powerful as an emperor in the pre-1911 dynastic times or merely as an influential member of the collective communist party leadership.