What was life like in Japan's Heian era (794-1185)? Our understanding of Heian government and society has been greatly increased by study of the state and provincial society. Along with compilations of historical materials and writings, courtier journals and excavated materials such as wooden and lacquered documents as well as various sorts of individual records known as komonjo are important. In particular the multi-volume compilation known as Heian ibun has been extensively used as a source of historical materials for research. However, when we carefully examine its documents one by one, we find that the very nature of a printed edition has its limits. And since each of these records is extracted from larger collections and organized chronologically, we generally do not know the history of the preservation of each document. In this talk I will read and analyze examples from Heian ibun while providing some pointers for your study of these documents.

3:30 in the Doheny East Asian Library Seminar Room at USC

For further information, see the website of the Project for Premodern Japan Studies
http://dornsife.usc.edu/ppjs/
Japan’s classical state was based on the systems of Tang Chinese law and governance known as *ritsuryō*, and it put in place various governmental structures and groups of officials to operate them. Then subsequently, in response to changes in Japanese society from the mid-ninth century, the classical state based on the eighth-century Taihō Code transformed itself, reorganizing its structure, mechanisms, and bureaucracy. In thinking about Heian aristocratic society and courtier diaries, first I want to explore the concept of “the Heian aristocracy” and the encompassing structure of the classical state. Second I want to examine the utility and limitations of courtier journals as historical sources. Third I want to consider research on courtier journals as media for the collection and presentation of historical information.

3:30 in the Doheny East Asian Library Seminar Room at USC

For further information see the website of the Project for Premodern Japan Studies
http://dornsife.usc.edu/ppjs/