

Government/East Asian Studies 297: Introduction to Chinese Politics

**Fall 2011
Monday, Wednesday 2:40-4:00
PAC 421**

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Office Hours: Wed. 1:00-2:30
Thurs. 11:00-12:00
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Overview

This is an upper-division course on Chinese Politics. You do not have to know anything about China, and some background in government would be helpful but is not necessary. The course is designed to give you a general understanding about the main features of contemporary Chinese politics and a more specialized understanding of a topic of your choice.

One of the core themes of the course is China as an (re)-emerging regional and global power. We will be paying particular attention to the tension between China's communist political system and an increasingly capitalist economy. We will spend considerable time examining the relationship between the Chinese state and its society as well as how China relates to other countries around the world.

While the focus of this course is China, an important theme will be international comparison. We will be investigating the dynamics of China's political institutions, but we will be doing so with an eye toward broader comparisons with other countries—those that are also developing countries, other Asian countries, and other large emerging market countries. Therefore, we will be asking questions like: "How is China different from other countries?" "How is China the similar?" "Is China becoming more or less like other countries?"

Objectives

There are five primary learning goals for this class:

- Understand how government and politics works in China
- Develop a comparative perspective when analyzing politics around the world
- Expand independent research skills
- Improve oral presentation skills
- Improve academic writing skills

Expectations

This is an upper-division seminar, so I expect a high level of student involvement in the course. The course will involve in-class discussions of the reading, a take home midterm, and an independent research paper with an oral presentation about that research. I expect each student to come to class prepared and to participate actively.

Grading

There are four types of assignments in this course on which your grade will be based: participation, quizzes, a take-home midterm exam, and a final research paper and presentation.

This is a writing intensive course, and we will be focusing on writing throughout the course and will put considerable emphasis on improving writing skills.

Participation:

In class participation is required and expected of all students. In addition to coming to class prepared and engaging in lively discussions related to the readings, each student will participate in one of four “China in the news” presentations. These will be short (5-7 minute) group presentations about a current event topic related to China. Performance on these presentations will be included in your overall participation grade.

Quizzes:

Five in-class quizzes will be given over the course of the semester, of which the top four will be included in your grade. No make-up quizzes will be given. The purpose of these quizzes is to make sure that you keep up with the reading and to help prepare you for the larger take-home assignments. There will also be opportunities to hand in write-ups of public events related to the course that will count as ½ a quiz.

Midterm Exam:

The midterm exam will cover the broad conceptual material in the first half of the course. It will be a 5-6 page take home exam. Grades will be reduced by 1/3 (e.g. from A- to B+) for every 24hrs or part thereof that the exam is late.

Research Paper

You will complete an independent research paper on the topic of your choice related to Chinese politics. The paper must be 18-20 pages long and use at least ten different academic sources (e.g., books, journal articles, primary sources. Non-academic sources such as newspaper articles, magazine articles, blogs, etc. can be used but do not count toward the ten). About a month before the paper is due you will hand in a thesis statement and a preliminary bibliography. Throughout the semester you will be meeting in “research groups” with peers conducting research on similar topics in order to discuss your progress, share resources, and circulate drafts. In the final week you will present your research to your peers in an academic conference format of themed panels. You will also conduct peer reviews of rough drafts of the paper before handing it in at the beginning of exam week.

I am **not tolerant** of cheating or plagiarism. See the Student Handbook’s section on the Honor System for an explanation of student responsibilities, the process involved in prosecuting an Honor System violation, and an essay on plagiarism. http://www.wesleyan.edu/studenthandbook/3_honorsystem.ctt. I take the Honor System very seriously and will take any violations to the Honor Board. I will give you all the tools you need to do well on all of your assignments throughout the semester, so there should be no need for unacceptable assistance. If you have questions about the appropriate way to use or cite a source, please do not hesitate to ask me **before** you hand in your paper.

Breakdown of grade:

The breakdown of the course grade is as follows:

| | |
|---|-----|
| Participation | |
| In class discussions, presentations, wiki | 10% |
| Quizzes | 10% |
| Take-home Midterm | 35% |
| Final Project | |
| Oral Presentation | 5% |
| Paper | 40% |

Grade Complaints:

Grade complaints will not be entertained until 24 hours after the exam/assignment is returned to you or more than two weeks after the exam/assignment has been returned. If you have a question concerning the grade you have received:

- 1) Wait 24 hours.
- 2) Write out an explanation of your question, including the reasons why you think your grade should be changed.
- 3) Submit your written complaint/question to me, and make an appointment to meet either during my office hours or at some other time.

Readings

All readings are available in the course Moodle. I recommend that you take the time to download all of the readings at once and put them in a folder on your computer. You don't want to have your ability to write papers dependent on fluky internet connections. Please **DO NOT PRINT** unless you absolutely have to. At last count the Wesleyan community was using three pounds of paper per person per week! Don't contribute to that wasteful statistic!

A Final Note

I hope that you will look to me as a resource. I **highly encourage** you to take advantage of my office hours to stop by and talk about issues raised in the course, or other questions you have. I am very open to feedback about the course, and would appreciate you sharing any thoughts you might have for improvement *earlier* rather than later in the semester. I am very excited about this course on Chinese politics, and I hope that we can all have an interesting and productive semester!

I reserve the right to change this syllabus without notice.

Reading Schedule

Section 1: Chinese Political History in a Nutshell

- What elements of China's imperial history persist in contemporary politics?
- What was the Cultural Revolution and why did it matter?
- How were Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping different? How were they the same?

Sept. 5 *Introduction—China's Place in the World*

Sept. 7 *The Legacy of China's History on Contemporary Politics*
Kenneth Lieberthal. *Governing China: From Revolution Through Reform*. Second Edition. (W.W. Norton, 2003) pp. 3-26, 59-77

Section 2: The Structure of Government

- What is the difference between the Communist Party and the Chinese government?
- What is the relationship between local governments and the government in Beijing?
- What are the mechanisms of control—how does the state control society?
- What are the mechanisms of accountability/change—how does society make itself heard?

Sept. 12 *The Communist Party*

Julia Strauss, "Morality, Coercion and State Building by Campaign in the Early PRC: Regime Consolidation and after, 1949-1956." *The China Quarterly*, no. 188 (2006): 891-912.

Joseph Fewsmith, "Elite Politics" in Merle Goldman and Roderick Macfarquhar, *The Paradox of China's Post-Mao Reforms* (Harvard 1999), pp. 47-75.

Sept. 14 *Elected/Selected Representatives—National People's Congress and Local Assemblies*

Murray Scot Tanner, "The National People's Congress," in Merle Goldman and Roderick Macfarquhar, *The Paradox of China's Post-Mao Reforms* (Harvard 1999), pp. 100-128.

Melanie Manion, "Chinese Democratization in Perspective: Electorates and Selectorates at the Township Level," *The China Quarterly* no. 163 (Sep. 2000), pp. 764-782.

China in the news #1

Sept. 15 Optional talk: EAST@4:30 From Conservationist to Artist

Sept. 19 *The Legal System*

Ian Johnson, *Wild Grass: Three Portraits of Change in Modern China*. New York: Pantheon Books. 2004. Pp. 11-86.

Turn in Paper Topic—The "Puzzle" You Want to Answer—and List 3 print sources.

Discussion of Zotero, Endnote and library resources

Section 3: Voices from Outside of the Center

- What is the relationship between party bosses in Beijing and those outside?
- How does reform happen?
- How “democratic” are these processes?

Sept. 21 *Political Activism*

Kevin O’Brien, “Rightful Resistance,” *World Politics*. 49:1 (1996), pp. 31-55.

Xi Chen, “Between Defiance and Obedience: Protest Opportunism in China,” pp. 252-281 in Perry and Goldman *Grassroots Political Reform* (Harvard UP, 2007).

Sept. 22 Optional talk: EAST@4:30 Evolution of Chinese Authoritarianism

Sept. 26 *Environmental Activism*

Peter Ho, “Embedded Activism and Political Change in a Semiauthoritarian Context” *China Information*. July (2007) 21: 187-209.

Andrew Mertha, *China’s Water Warriors* Ch. 1 and 4.

Sept 27 Mandatory Talk Russell House@4:30

Ma Jun, Environmental Challenges and China's Green Choice

Sept. 28 *Local Advocacy Groups; Interaction with global NGOs*

Lily Tsai, “The Struggle for Village Public Goods Provision: Informal Institutions of Accountability in Rural China,” pp. 117-148 in Perry and Goldman *Grassroots Political Reform* (Harvard UP, 2007).

Ralph Litzinger, “In Search of the Grassroots: Hydroelectric Politics in Northwest Yunnan” pp. 282-299 in Perry and Goldman, *Grassroots Political Reform in Contemporary China*, (2007).

Sept. 28 Optional talk: EAST@4:30; Anatomy of Financial Crisis Intervention

Oct. 3 *Minorities*

Uradyn Bulag. “Ethnic Resistance with Socialist Characteristics,” in Elizabeth Perry and Mark Selden, *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict and Resistance* (Routledge 2000); pp. 178-197.

Matthew Kapstein, “A Thorn in the Dragon’s Side: Tibetan Buddhist Culture in China,” ch. 7 in Morris Rossabi ed. *Governing China’s Multiethnic Frontiers* (University of Washington Press, 2005)

MIDTERM HANDED OUT

Oct. 5 *Media*

Zhou Youzhi. “Watchdogs on Party Leashes? Contexts and Limitations of Investigative Reporting in Post-Deng China, *Journalism Studies*, 1:4 (November 2000), pp. 577-597.

Johan Lagerkvist. “The Rise of Online Public Opinion in the People’s Republic of

China.” *China: An International Journal* 3:1 (Mar. 2005): 119-130.

China in the news #2

Section 4: Industrial and Financial Policy—Economic Growth

- What are the key components of China’s economic growth?
- What are some of the challenges?

Oct. 10 In Class Film—The Men Who Would Conquer China

***MIDTERM DUE October 10th at the beginning of class
AND to turnitin.com for time stamp***

Oct. 12 *State Owned Enterprises and Privatization*
Shu Y. Ma, “China’s Privatization: From Gradualism to Shock Therapy?” *Asian Survey* Vol. 48, Issue 2, pp. 199–214.

Oct. 17 *Industrial and Financial Policy*
Thomas Rawski, “Reforming China’s Economy: What have We Learned,” *The China Journal*, No. 41, January 1999, pp. 139-156.

China in the news #3

Section 5: Democracy Movement and Social Policy

- What is the relationship between the Chinese state and its society?
- How are citizens involved in China’s politics?
- How are citizen roles changing?

Oct. 19 *Human Rights—Guest Speaker—Prof. Angle (Philosophy)*
Stephen Angle and Marina Svensson eds. *The Chinese Human Rights Reader* (2001)
pp. 333-343.
Elizabeth Perry, “Chinese Conceptions of Rights: From Mencius to Mao – and Now”
Perspectives on Politics (2008) 6: 37-50.

Oct. 24 **October Break—No class!**

Oct. 26 *Democracy Movement*
Elizabeth Perry, “Casting a Chinese ‘Democracy’ Movement: Legacies of Social Fragmentation” in Perry *Challenging the Mandate of Heaven: Social Protest and State Power in China*. 2002. pp. 309-331.
“Arab Spring, Chinese Winter” *The Atlantic* Sept. 2011.

China in the news #4

Oct. 31 *One Child Policy*
Tyrene White, “Domination, resistance and accommodation in China’s one-child

campaign,” in Perry and Selden, *Chinese Society* (Routledge, 2000).

In class debate about the one-child policy.

Section 6: Foreign Policy

- What are the core elements of China’s Foreign Policy?
- How does China relate to other great powers?
- How does China relate to Asian neighbors?
- How does nationalism affect China’s international relations?

Nov. 2 *Nationalism*

Suisheng Zhao, “Chinese Nationalism and Its International Orientations,” *Political Science Quarterly*; Spring 2000; 115; pp. 1-33.

Nov. 7 *Foreign Investment*

Mary Elizabeth Gallagher, “Reform and Openness”: Why China's Economic Reforms Have Delayed Democracy,” *World Politics*, Vol. 54, No. 3. (Apr., 2002), pp. 338-372.

Nov. 9 *Foreign Aid—China in Africa*

(the pro-side) Danna Harman, “China boosts African economies, offering a ‘second opportunity,’” *Christian Science Monitor*, June 25, 2007; available

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2007/0625/p12s01-woaf.html>

(the con-side) Peter Brookes, “Into Africa: China’s Grab for Influence and Oil,” Heritage Lecture #1006 (February 9, 2007) available

<http://www.heritage.org/research/africa/HL1006.CFM>

THESIS STATEMENT, OUTLINE, AND BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

Nov. 14 *Taiwan*

Chien-min Chao, “Will Economic Integration between Mainland China and Taiwan Lead to a Congenial Political Culture?” *Asian Survey* 43:2 (2003), 280-304.

Nov. 16 *Chinese Diaspora*

Amy Chua. *World on Fire: How Exporting Free Market Democracy Breeds Ethnic Hatred and Global Instability*. (Anchor, 2003); pp. 19-48.

China in the news #5

Nov. 21 *Security Policy*

Denny Roy, “The “China Threat” Issue: Major Arguments,” *Asian Survey*, Vol. 36, No. 8 (Aug., 1996), pp. 758-771.

In class debate on the China threat.

Nov. 23 **THANKSGIVING BREAK—NO CLASS** Eat Much, Sleep Much, Be Merry

Section 6: Student Presentations and Wrapping Up

Nov. 28 *Presentations*

Nov. 30 *Presentations*

Dec. 5 *Presentations*

Dec. 7 *Wrapping up*

Rough Draft posted to wesfiles by noon on Dec 6—Peer Reviews in Class

Final Paper Due: Midnight Dec. 15

Turnitin.com before midnight Dec. 15; hard copy to me (PAC 221) by noon on Dec. 16.