2014

234-01 Chinese Politics

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I. **Course Description:**

China has over 1.3 billion people, 56 ethnic groups, a gigantic economy, and the world’s largest standing army. However, China is intrinsically important not only because of these facts, but also due to the theoretical puzzles it posed to students of political science: What lead to the collapse of the socialist command economy and what policies should we recommend in the transition away from this system? How does a rapidly growing developing country such as China cope with the trade-off between equity and growth in the context of rapid economic and social changes? Will economic growth necessarily bring about democratization? Under what conditions is democracy desirable and feasible? This course is designed to give you an overview of the development trajectory of China and guide you to gradually develop critical thinking skills. Specifically, we will focus on China’s historical and cultural legacy, politics of the reform era, and current political and social issues.

II. **Course Objectives:**

- Obtain a basic knowledge of contemporary Chinese politics
- Obtain an understanding of key issues in Political Science
- Enhance critical thinking skills
- Develop research skills
- Improve written and oral communication skills

III. **Textbooks:**


*Supplementary readings are available on BlackBoard.

IV. **Important Dates:**

- January 31 (Friday): Sign up for class discussions
- February 28 (Friday): Midterm Exam
- May 9 (Friday): Final Exam @ 2pm
V. **Tests and Writing Assignments:**

Your grade is comprised of four parts—class participation, a midterm exam, two critical reviews, and a final exam.

- **Class Participation (20%)** — Participation is an integral part of this course. Students are expected to attend class and be prepared to discuss assigned readings, questions raised in lectures, and current events. Grading criteria include the ability to answer questions asked in class about assigned readings and the ability to ask and answer questions in ways that raise the level of discussion and help other students to learn. I encourage you to contact me after class with any questions, concerns, and ideas about this course. Throughout the semester, you are allowed to have one unexcused absence. Any additional absence, if unexcused by me, will downgrade your final course grade by half a letter grade, e.g., from A to A-.

  During the second half of the semester, each student is going to serve as the discussion leader of two classes of their choice. The discussion leader is expected to present the assigned readings and prepare three questions for discussion, as well as turning in a critical review based on the assigned readings.

- **Midterm Exam (30%)** — The midterm exam is comprised of identification and essay questions.

- **Two Critical Reviews (20%)** — Students are required to write two critical reviews based on the assigned readings for the two classes they have chosen. Students will receive a handout on how to write a critical review when they sign up for class discussions.

- **Final Exam (30%)** — The Final exam is comprised of two essay questions.
VI. Course Schedule and Readings:

PART 1: HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL LEGACY

Week 1. Introduction
Wednesday 1/15. Introduction to the Course
- Why are we interested in Chinese politics?
Friday 1/17. A Snapshot into Chinese Politics

Week 2. Confucianism and Chinese Imperial History
Wednesday 1/12.
- Movie Clips from The Last Emperor (Directed by Bernardo Bertolucci, 1987).
Friday 1/24
- R. Keith Schoppa, “From Empire to People’s Republic.” Politics in China (pp.37-48).

Week 3. The Republican Revolution and the May Fourth Movement
Wednesday 1/29.
- R. Keith Schoppa, “From Empire to People’s Republic.” Politics in China (pp.48-62).
- Lu Xun, “Preface to A Call to Arms”.
Friday 1/31.
- Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party.
- Arif Dirlik, The Origins of Chinese Communism (pp.156-190).

Week 4. Mao Zedong, Maoism, and the Great Leap Forward
Wednesday 2/5.
- Frederick C. Teiwes. “Mao Zedong in Power.” Politics in China (pp. 63-74).
- Mao Zedong, Quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong. (Skim)
Friday 2/7.
- Frederick C. Teiwes. “Mao Zedong in Power.” Politics in China (pp.74-83).
- Li Zhisui. The private life of Chairman Mao: The memoirs of Mao’s personal physician (pp. 114-136).
- Movie Clips from the Blue Kite (Directed by Tian Zhuangzhuang 1993).

Week 5. The Cultural Revolution
Wednesday 2/12.
- Frederick C. Teiwes. “Mao Zedong in Power.” Politics in China (pp. 83-102)
Friday 2/14.
- Movie Clips from Farewell My Concubine (Directed by Chen Kaige, 1993).
PART 2: POLITICS OF THE REFORM ERA

**Week 6. Deng’s China**
Wednesday 2/19. Deng Xiaoping & “Reform and Opening”
- Bruce Gilley, “Deng Xiaoping and His Successors (1976 to the present).” *Politics in China* (pp. 103-114).
- “Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party.” CCP. 1981. (Skim)
Friday 2/21. Tiananmen
- “The Tiananmen Papers,” *Foreign Affairs* 80.1 (Jan/Feb 2001). (Skim)

**Week 7. Midterm Exam**
Wednesday 2/26.
- Movie *To Live* (Directed by Zhang Yimou, 1994)
Friday 2/28.
Midterm Exam

**Week 8. Spring Break**
Wednesday 3/5 & Friday 3/7.
No Class

**Week 9. Economic Reform**
Wednesday 3/12. The Emergence of a “Socialist Market Economy”
- Bruce Gilley, “Deng Xiaoping and His Successors (1976 to the present).” *Politics in China* (pp. 114-125).
- Wang Xin, “Divergent Identities, Convergent Interests: The Rising Middle-income Stratum in China and its Civic Awareness.” *Journal of Contemporary China* (2008), 17 (54) (pp.53-69).
Friday 3/14. The “Drive for Economic Modernization” and the Role of the Government
- David Zweig, “China’s Political Economy.” *Politics in China* (pp. 192-221).

**Week 10.**
Wednesday 3/19. Ideology
Friday 3/21. Structure of the Party-state
PART 3: CURRENT POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES

Week 11.
Wednesday 3/26. The Survival Strategy of the CCP

Friday 3/28. Protest and Resistance

Week 12.
Wednesday 4/2. Political Liberalization in China
- Andrew Mertha, “Society in the State: China’s nondemocratic Political Liberalization.” Gries and Rosen eds. *Chinese Politics* (pp. 69-84)

Friday 4/4.
- Movie *Please Vote for Me* (Directed by Weijun Chen, 2008)

Week 13.
Wednesday 4/9. Rural China

Friday 4/11. Urbanization, Internal Migration, and the Rural-Urban Cleavage
- Dorothy Solinger, “A Question of Confidence: State Legitimacy and the New Urban Poor.” Gries and Rosen eds. *Chinese Politics* (pp. 243-257)
- Movie Clips from: *Beijing Bicycle* (condition of migrant workers in Beijing).

Week 14.
Wednesday 4/16. China’s Minorities

Friday 4/18. Easter Holiday
No Class

Week 15.
Wednesday 4/23. Public Health
Friday 4/25. Environment
- Katherine Morton, “Policy Case Study: The Environment.” Politics in China (pp. 278-287).
- Judith Shapiro, “The Political Roots of China’s Environmental Degradation.” Gries and Rosen, eds. State and Society in 21st-Century China: Crisis, Contention, and Legitimation (pp. 50-67)

**Week 16**
Wednesday 4/30.
**Authoritarian Resilience**
- Mingxin Pei, “How Will China Democratize?” Journal of Democracy Vol. 18, No. 3 (pp. 53-7).

Friday 5/2. Chinese Foreign Policy and Sino-US Relations
- Sujian Guo, Chinese Politics and Government, chapters 17&18 (pp. 279-300).

**Week 17**
Friday 5/9.
Final Exam: 2:00-3:50pm