Political Science 314  
Chinese Politics and Foreign Policy  
Times and Location to Be Announced

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Final Exam: To be announced

Course Description
This course provides students with a broad introduction to China’s politics in the modern period. We will focus on top leaders, political institutions, and policies under Chinese Communist Party (CCP) rule.

We begin by reviewing the historical background, from the late Qing Dynasty, through Nationalist Party rule, civil wars and Japanese invasion, to the CCP takeover in 1949. The CCP views the international relations of the period, between the first Opium War (1840) and the CCP takeover, as the “century of humiliation.”

We then turn to analyze the main stages in the history of CCP rule: the Mao Zedong period, 1949-1976; the Deng Xiaoping period, 1977-1994; and the rule of the so-called third- and fourth-generation leaders, Jiang Zemin, 1995-2003, and Hu Jintao, 2003-2012. How did political institutions and government policies evolve through these successive periods? We will focus on three main policy areas: economic development policies; society, culture and civil liberties; and international and ethnic minority relations.

There are a number of important factors that explain policy developments over time: the preferences of China’s top leaders; CCP political institutions; the interests of important factions or interest groups, such as the regional CCP organizations, the People’s Liberation Army (PLA), large state enterprises, and more recently, public opinion as well as private or “quasi-private” businesses; and the international environment, including relations with great powers such as the United States and the Soviet Union, regional developments in East Asia, and trends in the international economy. Our goal is to assess the interaction and the relative importance of these factors in determining policy developments over time.

We will also discuss important current issues, such as China’s rise to superpower status, its relations with neighboring countries and the United States, and the prospects for democratization and improved human rights. We will ask how general theories of comparative politics help to understand Chinese politics, and how China is likely to influence politics and policies in other countries.
Grades
Grades will be based on class participation (8.4%), the best two of three quizzes (8.3% each), one midterm exam (25%), and one final exam (50%). Interested students can choose to write a seven-page research paper on a topic agreed upon with the instructor. In that case, the research paper counts for 25% and the final exam 25% of the grade. There will be no make-up quizzes, although one quiz may be dropped. No make-up exams can be given without a medical excuse. Class participation grades will be based on attendance and a scheduled oral class presentation, and will benefit from day-to-day participation in class discussion. To check your understanding of the material and your preparations for the exams, you should see me or the teaching assistant in office hours at least once before the midterm and once before the final. If you will need accommodations in order to meet any of the requirements of this course, please contact me as soon as possible. Students are responsible for honestly completing and representing their work, for appropriately citing sources, and for respecting others’ academic endeavors.

Readings
The following textbook is available in the bookstore:
Other, shorter readings listed below are on electronic reserve in Golda Meir Library. References are listed in full at the end of the syllabus.

Course Schedule
The following schedule is subject to modification. Try to finish each day’s reading before class.

Quiz: 9/20.
Reading: Joseph, chapters 1-2; Fukuyama.

Weeks 4-7 (9/27, 10/2, 10/4, 10/9, 10/11, 10/16, 10/18): Mao’s Ideology and the Maoist Political System. The Korean War. The Great Leap Forward. The Cultural Revolution.
Midterm: 10/18.
Reading: Joseph, chapter 3, pp. 129-150, 165-177, 192-197; Chung and Halliday, chapters 39-40, 47-49.
Suggested reading: Browse further in Chung and Halliday.

Weeks 8-9 (10/23, 10/25, 10/30, 11/1): The Post-Mao Political System.
Quiz: 11/1.
Reading: Joseph, chapter 4, pp. 150-162, 177-190; Bo; Zheng and Chen; Li.

Reading: Joseph, chapter 7; Yang, chapters 17-18; Naughton.

Readings on E-Reserve in the Library