Political Science 314

Chinese Politics and Foreign Policy

Spring 2016
Tuesday and Thursday, 3:30-4:45 p.m., Mitchell 191

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Final exam: Thursday, May 19, 12:30-2:30 p.m.

Course Description
This course provides an 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 the Japanese invasion, to the CCP takeover in 1949. In the area of foreign relations, this period is often called China’s “century of humiliation.”

We then 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-, fourth-, and fifth-generation leaders, Jiang Zemin, 1995-2002, Hu Jintao, 2002-2012, and Xi Jinping, 2012-present. How did political institutions and government policies evolve through these successive periods? We will concentrate on three main policy areas: economic development policies; society, culture and civil liberties; and international and ethnic minority relations. This will include detailed coverage of watershed events, such as the CCP takeover of China’s state and society in the years after 1949; the Korean War of 1950-1953; the “Great Leap Forward” Famine of 1958-1962; the “Cultural Revolution” of 1966-1976; Deng Xiaoping’s market reforms, starting in 1979; and the Tiananmen Square Uprising of 1989.

There are a number of important factors that explain policy developments over time: the ideologies and preferences of China’s top leaders; CCP and state political institutions; the size and structural characteristics of China’s society and economy; the interests of important factions or interest groups, such as regional CCP leadership networks, 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 present and future economic performance; the prospects for democratization and improved human rights; conditions in restive regions such as Tibet, Xinjiang, and Hong Kong; China’s rise to superpower status, and its changing relations with the United States, Japan, India, Taiwan and other countries.
All along, we will be trying to assess how well general theories of comparative politics help to understand Chinese politics.

**Grades**

Grades will be based on class participation (8%), the best two of three quizzes (11% each), a seven-page research paper (30%), and one final exam (40%).

The research paper will analyze alternative explanations or causes for a watershed event in modern Chinese political history. Students may choose to write on China’s intervention in the Korean War; the Great Leap Forward; the Cultural Revolution; or the market reforms under Deng Xiaoping beginning in the late 1970s. Students will analyze and evaluate the following four types of explanations or causes: leadership ideology; leaders’ desire to maintain or increase their political power; internal influences, pressures, or threats; and foreign influences, pressures, or threats. Apart from the introduction and conclusion, papers should have the following two main sections: a theory section, which explains the logic of each explanation or cause, and discusses how it is expected to influence the watershed event; and an evidence section, in which each explanation or cause is evaluated by looking for historical evidence of whether it influenced the watershed event in the way predicted by the theory. For evidence, students may consult and cite the assigned course readings, as well as other sources. (I recommend article searches using the following academic search engines available on the UWM libraries website: Historical Abstracts; History Reference Center; or, usually most usefully, Worldwide Political Science Abstracts. Search by specifying both the watershed event and names or phrases related to explanations or causes.) In total, students should cite at least five sources that are either published books or academic (refereed) journal articles. Students must also summarize their research questions, theories, and evidence or findings using Powerpoint (5-8 slides—2 slides to cover research question and theories, and the remainder on evidence or findings). Depending on the number of students choosing each topic, students will either present their research in five-minute class presentations, or post their presentations on the course D2L site.

There will be no make-up quizzes, although (as mentioned) the lowest quiz grade will 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 completing and representing their work honestly, for citing sources appropriately, and for respecting others’ academic endeavors.

**Readings**

The following textbook is available from online booksellers and from UWM’s online bookstore <http://uwm.ecampus.com/>:

Other, shorter readings listed below are available on the course D2L site. 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.

Weeks 1-3 (1/26, 1/28, 2/2, 2/4, 2/9, 2/11): Introduction. Basic Facts about Chinese History and Modern China. The Imperial System and the Late Qing Dynasty. The Republic: The Nationalist Party and Its Challengers.

Quiz: 2/11.
Reading: Joseph, chapters 1-2; Fukuyama.
Recommended fiction: Buck; Lu.
Recommended movie: “The Last Emperor.”


Midterm: 3/10.
Suggested reading: Browse further in Chung and Halliday; Dikötter, chapter 28; Chang.
Recommended fiction: Link.
Recommended movie: “To Live.”

“Spring” Break: No class meetings (3/15, 3/17)

Reading: Joseph, chapter 4, pp. 174-188, 203-221; Beja; Zhao; Li.
Suggested reading: Bo; Zheng and Chen; Dotson.
Recommended fiction: Qiu (2000); Qiu (2010).


Quiz: 3/31.
Reading: Joseph, chapter 8; Yang (1997), chapters 17-18.
Suggested reading: Naughton.

Reading: Joseph, chapters 9-14.


Reading: Joseph, chapters 15-18; Horowitz and Yu; Horowitz and Tan; Garnaut.
Suggested reading: Chan.

Final Exam: Thursday, May 19, 12:30-2:30 p.m.
**Required and Suggested Readings Available on the Course D2L Site**


**Recommended Literature Available in Golda Meir Library**

Buck, Pearl S. (1958) *The Good Earth.* New York: Washington Square Press. (Published in many different editions, all fine.)


