

**Political Science 373**  
**Government and Politics of the People's Republic of China**  
**State University of New York at Albany**  
**Fall 2015**

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MWF 9:20-10:15  
PH 123  
Office Hours: MW 8:20-9:20  
Humanities 16

***Course Description***

This course introduces students to the government and politics of the People's Republic of China, emphasizing events in the period since the Chinese Communist Party established its regime in 1949. It begins with a brief overview of China's political history before 1949 in order to establish the necessary foundation for understanding the significance of subsequent events. The second part of the course is designed to enable students to analyze the ways in which the Communist Party set out to transform China after the revolution, the consequences of these efforts, and the debates provoked within the elite and among the population. Next, the course focuses on contemporary China. Specifically, the students are expected to understand and evaluate how China has defined and confronted the challenges of political and economic development, social transformation, and international relations. Finally, the students should be able to assess the prospect of the CCP regime in China in light of its impressive achievements, painful failures, as well as current challenges. The objective of this course is to provide students with a broad survey of Chinese politics grounded in specific historical contexts. No previous knowledge of China's history, culture, or language is required nor will such knowledge be assumed. This course fulfills the General Education requirement of "International Perspectives."

***Course Requirements***

There will be an in-class midterm exam and a take-home final essay exam, which is due on Wednesday, December 9 in class. The take-home essay exam is not a research paper and students need only draw on the readings and lectures for this course. In-class participation, including attendance and the in-class debate, will count for 30% of the grade, the midterm 30%, and the take-home essay exam 40%. It is mandatory that all class members complete the assigned readings prior to the lectures.

***Readings***

Lucien Bianco, *Origins of the Chinese Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1971)

**[Required]**

William A. Joseph, *Politics in China: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014)

**[Required]**

Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2012)

**[Recommended]**

The above books are available at the University Bookstore. The rest of the readings are available on Blackboard.

## **PART I: THE CHINESE REVOLUTION**

### August 26: Introduction

- Course Syllabus

### August 28: Historical Background

- A. The Decline of Imperial China
- B. The Pre-Revolutionary Era

- Lucien Bianco, *Origins of the Chinese Revolution*, 1-52
- Joseph, *Politics in China*, 3-53

### August 31-September 1: The Communist Revolution

- A. Early Struggles and the Sino-Japanese War
- B. The Civil War and the Eventual Success

- Lucien Bianco, *Origins of the Chinese Revolution*, 53-208
- Joseph, *Politics in China*, 53-71

### September 4: CLASS CANCELLED – Professor out of town for conference

## **PART II: THE MAOIST ERA**

### September 9-11: Early Political and Economic Transformation (1949-1965)

- A. Consolidation
- B. Great Leap Forward

- Joseph, *Politics in China*, 72-96

### September 16-18: The Cultural Revolution (1966-1976)

- A. The Cultural Revolution
- B. Stalemate and Succession

- Joseph, *Politics in China*, 96-118

### September 21-25: China's Foreign Policy during the Cold War

- A. Sino-Soviet Alliance and Its Split
- B. Sino-American Rapprochement

- June Teufel Dreyer, *China's Political System* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, 2015), 329-349

### **PART III: THE REFORM ERA**

#### September 28-October 2: Beginning of the Reform Era

- A. Early Reforms under Deng Xiaoping
- B. The Tiananmen Incident of 1989

- Ezra Vogel, “A Decade of Reforms,” in *One Step Ahead in China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 76-122
- Joseph, *Politics in China*, 119-132; 177-182

#### October 5-9: Post-Deng Leadership

- A. The Jiang Zemin Administration
- B. The Hu Jintao Administration

- Joseph, *Politics in China*, 132-146; 182-191
- Cheng Li, “China’s Team of Rivals,” *Foreign Policy* (March/April 2009). Available at <http://foreignpolicy.com/2009/10/01/chinas-team-of-rivals/>.

#### October 12-14: The Xi Jinping Leadership

- A. The Rise of Xi Jinping
- B. Midterm Review

- David M. Lampton, “How China is Ruled: Why It’s Getting Harder for Beijing to Govern,” *Foreign Affairs* 93:1 (2014): 74-84
- Elizabeth C. Economy, “China’s Imperial President: Xi Jinping Tightens his Grip,” *Foreign Affairs* 93:6 (2014): 80-91

#### October 16: In-Class Midterm

#### October 19-23: Deepening Economic Reforms

- A. Political Economy
- B. Successes and Failures

- Joseph, *Politics in China*, 192-218

#### October 26-30: Political Reforms

- A. Political Reforms
- B. Will China Democratize?

- Joseph, *Politics in China*, 165-190
- Articles by Fukuyama; Pei; and Chu in special issue on “China and East Asian Democracy,” *Journal of Democracy* 23:1 (January 2012): 14-56

November 2-6: Social Transformation

- A. Social Conditions
- B. Rise of Nationalism

- Joseph, *Politics in China*, 225-268; 298-311
- Suisheng Zhao, “Foreign Policy Implications of Chinese Nationalism Revisited: the strident turn,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 22:82 (2013): 535-553

November 9-13: Politics on China’s Periphery

- A. Tibet and Xinjiang
- B. Hong Kong and Taiwan

- Joseph, *Politics in China*, 401-484

November 16-18: China’s Post-Cold War Foreign Policy

- A. China and the United States: Containment or Engagement
- B. China and Russia: Friends of Convenience?

- Henry A. Kissinger, “The Future of U.S.-Chinese Relations,” *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2012): 44-55
- Dmitri Trenin, “From Greater Europe to Greater Asia? The Sino-Russian Entente,” *Carnegie Moscow Center*, April 9, 2015. Available at <http://carnegie.ru/publications/?fa=59728#>.

November 20: In-Class Discussion: Preparing for the Debate

November 23: In-Class Debate: Is China a Threat to the United States?

**PART IV: PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE**

November 30-December 4: China and the World

- A. The “China Model”?
- B. China’s Challenge

- Christopher A. McNally, “Sino-Capitalism: China’s Reemergence and the International Political Economy,” *World Politics* 64:4 (October 2012): 741-776
- Andrew Nathan, “China’s Challenge,” *Journal of Democracy* 26:1 (2015): 156-170

December 7: In-Class Review

December 9: Final Essay Due