

Politics of China

MW 12:30PM, F 1:10PM, Leighton 402

Professor Huan Gao

Office: Willis 413

Office hour: MW 2:30-5PM or by appointment

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Course Description

This course is a broad introduction to the main issues of Chinese politics and society. Though contemporary issues are at the heart of the course, students will delve into an entire century of change and upheaval in order to understand the roots of current affairs in China. The course roughly follows chronological order and is divided into four units focusing on four themes: 1) the communist revolution and Maoist China, 2) economic reform and development, 3) post-Reform government and politics, and 4) social policies and current affairs. Readings will include both historical narratives and political science analysis.

Course Materials

- Mitter, Rana. *Modern China*. Sterling Publishing Company, Inc., 2009. *Please purchase*.
- Naughton, Barry J. *The Chinese economy: Adaptation and growth*. MIT Press, 2018. *Available on reserve in Gould library and electronically*.
- Spence, Jonathan D. *The search for modern China*. WW Norton & Company, 1990. *Available on reserve in Gould library and scans will be made available on Moodle*.
- Arendt, Hannah. *The origins of totalitarianism*. Duke University Press, 2007. *Scans available*.
- Yang, Dali. *Calamity and reform in China: State, rural society, and institutional change since the Great Leap Famine*. Stanford University Press, 1996. *Scans available*.

Class Requirements

This course is about reading, analyzing, and criticizing the classic theories and cutting-edge research in political science, as well as leveraging things learned to pursue new inquiries. Therefore, it is crucial that students keep up with their readings assignments and always arrive in class having read the assigned materials and ready to discuss. This course does not require any book purchase; all readings will be made available electronically. You are encouraged to mark up questions, reflections, and points of interest as you read, and you should bring these responses to the class discussion.

Classroom Policy

Active participation in class discussion is a crucial part of this course. It will also form a part of your grade. Participation means actively analyzing, questioning, and otherwise engaging with readings as well as comments from your classmates in discussions. You are expected to participate often and demonstrate that you consistently complete reading assignments. Participation also means contributing to a positive classroom environment. It means being punctual for class, showing courtesy and supporting your peers in discussions, and taking responsibility in group projects and peer support activities.

Laptops and other electronic devices can be used in class; please use them as productive tools instead of distractions.

Office Hours

Office hours are Monday and Wednesday afternoon, from 2:30 to 5PM. You should also feel welcome to come to office hour with any question or concern. Please use the sign-up sheet on my office door to plan for a timeslot and avoid line-ups. You can also email me for appointment time outside of usual office hour should you be busy during regular office hour.

Student Evaluations

Student evaluations will be based on five components:

- 1) Class participation 20%
- 2) In-class midterm 20%
- 3) Response paper assignment 15%
- 4) Data exploration assignment 10%
- 5) Final paper 25% and preliminary assignments 10%

Summary of Assignments

Participation (20%)

Your participation grade is determined by both your participation in class discussions and your contribution towards a constructive learning environment. Participation means actively analyzing, questioning, and otherwise engaging with readings as well as comments from your classmates in discussions. You are expected to participate often and demonstrate that you consistently complete reading assignments. Participation also means contributing to a positive classroom environment. It means being punctual for class, showing courtesy and supporting your peers in discussions, and taking responsibility in group projects and peer support activities. Peer evaluations for group activities will also play a part in participation grade.

Film response paper assignment (15%)

For this assignment, you will review the feature film or one of the two documentaries viewed in class. These film/documentaries all depict major historical events in 20th century China and ruminate upon important themes in Chinese politics and society. Your review should provide a brief synopsis of the film/documentary and apply theories learned in the course to discuss events depicted in the film. Your review should focus on these questions: why did events depicted in the film occur? What theory can best help viewers understand these events? What motivate the main characters? What do these events

say about Chinese society and politics? The review should be between 3 and 5 pages in length, or 600 to 1000 words.

Data assignment (10%)

The data assignment guides students in exploring the China Statistical Yearbook compiled by the National Bureau of Statistics of China. You will produce summary statistics and visualization of the data, as well as explore the method of data collection and evaluation employed by the NBSC. The final written report should be 3-5 pages in length, including graphs and visualization.

Research paper (25%) and preliminary assignments (10%)

In place of a final exam, this course requires a research paper, due on the last day of the exam period. The paper should be between 8 and 12 pages in length. It needs to propose a well-defined research question, answer said question with a clear thesis statement, review existing literature, and present strong evidence in support of the thesis. Students are required to submit a paper proposal right after the October break, alongside the data assignment. This proposal should lay out the research question, list some relevant literature, propose a research method to address the question, list some potential sources of data and evidence, and justify both the question and the proposed method. After submitting the proposal and receiving feedback and suggestions from the professor, student will prepare a more substantial outline of the paper as a powerpoint presentation. The outline should also contain key arguments, some preliminary evidence, potential sources of more data and evidence, in addition to the question and method first laid out in the proposal. We will hold a workshop to help everyone further their research ideas. You will also have to produce written feedback for one assigned partner. The initial proposal and feedback to your partner will be graded on completion (5%), the outline presentation will be evaluated based on quality (5%). The final paper is due on the last day of the exam period.

Schedule of Classes and Assignments

September 15	Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction and explains the syllabus
<i>A brief history of revolutionary China</i>		
September 17	What is "China"?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitter, Rana. 2016. <i>Modern China: A Very Short Introduction</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1-51.
September 20	The Chinese Revolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theda Skocpol, "France, Russia, China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions," <i>Comparative Studies in Society and History</i> 18, no. 2 (1976): 175–210.
September 22	Mao's party-state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spence, Jonathan. 1991. <i>The Search for Modern China</i>. New York: WW Norton & Company. "The Birth of the People's Republic." 489-498, 514-543.
September 24	The Great Leap Forward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yang, Dali. 1998. <i>Calamity and reform in China: State, rural society, and institutional change since the Great Leap Famine</i>. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 22-67. "The Path to Disaster," "The Political Economy of the Great Leap Famine."
September 27	Cultural Revolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitter, Rana. 2016. <i>Modern China: A Very Short Introduction</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 51-60.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spence, Jonathan. 1991. <i>The Search for Modern China</i>. New York: WW Norton & Company, "Cultural Revolution." 565-586. • Mao Zedong, "Bombard the Headquarters!" In Chen, Janet Y., Pei-kai Cheng, Michael Elliot Lestz, and Jonathan D. Spence, eds. <i>The Search for Modern China: A Documentary Collection</i>. New York: WW Norton, 2014, 426. • PBS Documentary, "China: 100 Years of Revolution - The Mao Years." 1:01:00-end. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fsh2FHq0tUA&t=3793s
September 29	Understanding Maoist China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arendt, Hannah. <i>The origins of totalitarianism</i>. Duke University Press, 2007. 305-326, 389-459
<i>Forty Years of Economic Transformation</i>		
October 1	The reform begins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naughton, Barry. <i>The Chinese economy: Transitions and growth</i>. MIT press, 2007, 85-98. "Market Transition" • Yang, Dali. 1998. <i>Calamity and reform in China: State, rural society, and institutional change since the Great Leap Famine</i>. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press,
October 4	Growth in the globalized age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naughton, Barry. <i>The Chinese economy: Transitions and growth</i>. MIT press, 2007, 100-110, 377-399.
October 6	Uneven development, inequality, and other challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naughton, Barry. <i>The Chinese economy: Transitions and growth</i>. MIT press, 2007, 113-135. • Han, Jin, Qingxia Zhao, and Mengnan Zhang. "China's income inequality in the global context." <i>Perspectives in Science</i> 7 (2016): 24-29. • Fan, Jiayang. "The Golden Generation." February 22, 2016, <i>The New Yorker</i>. https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/02/22/chinas-rich-kids-head-west
October 8	Looking at data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koch, Christoffer, and Ken Okamura. "Benford's law and COVID-19 reporting." <i>Economics letters</i> 196 (2020): 109573. • Koch-Weser, Iacob N. "The reliability of China's economic data: An analysis of national output." <i>US-China Economic and Security Review Commission Staff Research Project</i> 4 (2013). • <i>Midterm review</i>
October 11	Understanding "Chinese capitalism"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peck, Jamie, and Jun Zhang. "A variety of capitalism... with Chinese characteristics?" <i>Journal of Economic Geography</i> 13, no. 3 (2013): 357-396. • Bremmer, Ian. "State capitalism comes of age-the end of the free market." <i>Foreign Affairs</i> 88 (2009): 40.

October 13	Abandoning the Washington Consensus?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hsu, S. Philip, Suisheng Zhao, and Yushan Wu, eds. <i>In search of China's development model: Beyond the Beijing consensus</i>. Routledge, 2011. Chapter 1, 4. • Midterm Q&A
October 15		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midterm • Evening film viewing (<i>Farewell My Concubine</i>)
<i>The post-Mao party-state</i>		
October 20	The party-state, revisited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tiananmen Square documentary</i> • Shambaugh, David L., and Joseph J. Brinley. <i>China's communist party: atrophy and adaptation</i>. Univ of California Press, 2008. 1-10, 128-160. • Paper proposal due • Data exploration assignment due
October 22	Fragmented authoritarianism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lieberthal, Kenneth, and Michel Oksenberg. <i>Policy making in China</i>. Princeton University Press, 2020. • Mertha, Andrew. "'Fragmented authoritarianism 2.0': Political pluralization in the Chinese policy process." <i>The China Quarterly</i> 200 (2009): 995-1012.
October 25	Contentious politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chen, Xi. 2012. <i>Social protest and contentious authoritarianism in China</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 87-134, "The Xinfang system and political opportunity." • Film response due
October 27	State and society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liang, Fan, Vishnupriya Das, Nadiya Kostyuk, and Muzammil M. Hussain. "Constructing a data-driven society: China's social credit system as a state surveillance infrastructure." <i>Policy & Internet</i> 10, no. 4 (2018): 415-453. • Tomba, Luigi. <i>The government next door</i>. Cornell University Press, 2014. Introduction, chapter 4.
October 29	Civil society with Chinese characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teets, Jessica C. "The evolution of civil society in Yunnan province: Contending models of civil society management in China." <i>Journal of Contemporary China</i> 24, no. 91 (2015): 158-175. • Tang, Shui-Yan, and Xueyong Zhan. "Civic environmental NGOs, civil society, and democratisation in China." <i>The Journal of Development Studies</i> 44, no. 3 (2008): 425-448.
November 1	An alternative political order?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bell, Daniel A. <i>The China Model</i>. Princeton University Press, 2015. Chapter 1-2
November 3	Paper proposal workshop 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed paper outline due

November 5	Paper proposal workshop 2	•
<i>Contemporary Social Issues</i>		
November 8	Gender, sexuality, and fertility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ebenstein, Avraham. "The "missing girls" of China and the unintended consequences of the one child policy." <i>Journal of Human resources</i> 45, no. 1 (2010): 87-115. • Denise Hare, "What Accounts for the Decline in Labor Force Participation among Married Women in Urban China, 1991-2011?" <i>China Economic Review</i>, vol. 38, pp. 251-266, April 2016.
November 10	Labor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lee, Ching Kwan. 2007. <i>Against the law: Labor protests in China's rustbelt and sunbelt</i>. Berkeley: University of California Press, 157-204, "The Making of New Labor in the Sun Belt."
November 12	Censorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King, Gary, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E. Roberts. 2013. "How censorship in China allows government criticism but silences collective expression." <i>American Political Science Review</i> 107(2): 326-343. • Mitter, Rana. 2016. <i>Modern China: A Very Short Introduction</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 118-127
November 15	Nationalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wang, Zheng. 2008. "National humiliation, history education, and the politics of historical memory: Patriotic education campaign in China." <i>International Studies Quarterly</i> 52(4): 783-806. • Hyun, Ki Deuk, and Jinhee Kim. "The role of new media in sustaining the status quo: Online political expression, nationalism, and system support in China." <i>Information, Communication & Society</i> 18, no. 7 (2015): 766-781.
November 17	Crisis management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sorace, Christian P. <i>Shaken Authority</i>. Cornell University Press, 2017. Chapter 1.
November 19	China's future paths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buckley, Chris, "Xi Jinping Thought Explained: A New Ideology for a New Era." <i>The New York Times</i>, 26 Feb, 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/26/world/asia/xi-jinping-thought-explained-a-new-ideology-for-a-new-era.html • Stanzel, Angela et al. 2017. "China's 'New Era' with Xi Jinping Characteristics." https://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/chinas_new_era_with_xi_jinping_characteristics7243
November 24	End of exam days	• Research paper due 9AM

Resources for Students

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Carleton College is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Office of Accessibility Resources (Henry House, 107 Union Street) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations. If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, autism spectrum disorders, chronic health, traumatic brain injury and concussions, vision, hearing, mobility, or speech impairments), please contact OAR@carleton.edu or call Sam Thayer ('10), Director of the Office of Accessibility Resources (x4464), to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

Assistive Technologies: Technological Resources for Students

The Assistive Technologies program brings together academic and technological resources to complement student classroom and computing needs, particularly in support of students with physical or learning disabilities. Accessibility features include text-to-speech (Kurzweil), speech-to-text (Dragon) software, and audio recording Smartpens. If you would like to know more, contact aztechs@carleton.edu or visit go.carleton.edu/aztech.

Library

Library staff can help you find and evaluate articles, books, websites, statistics, data, government documents, and more. [You can make an appointment with a librarian](#), get help via chat 24/7 from any page on the library's website, [email, or call](#). The Library building has lots of great study spaces, and we'd love for you to visit! For more information and our hours, visit the Gould Library website at carleton.edu/library.

Writing

The Writing Center

The Writing Center a space with peer writing consultants who can work with you during any stage of the writing process (brainstorming to final proofreading). Hours and more information can be found on the [writing center website](#). You can reserve specific times for conferences by using their [online appointment system](#).

The Term-Long Program for Multilingual Writers

If English is not your first language and you believe you might benefit from working regularly with a writing consultant this term, email Melanie Cashin, [Multilingual Writing Coordinator](#), at mcashin@carleton.edu. She can arrange once- or twice-a-week meetings between you and a specific writing consultant throughout the term.