Chinese Politics

Dr. Rongbin Han
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Class Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00 - 12:15 (Caldwell Hall 107)
Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:30-3:30pm or by appointment (322 Candler Hall)

Course Overview
This course introduces students to institutions, reform processes and major events in Chinese political life under the communists since 1949, with special focus on the reform era since 1978. In particular, it will walk students through the economic and political development in China—their causes, patterns, consequences, and implications—in a broader context of transition from socialism. The course will apply concepts and theories in comparative politics in analyzing Chinese politics. By taking this class, students are expected to gain substantial knowledge about contemporary Chinese politics and acquire some basic ability to apply such knowledge to relate to and analyze current affairs concerning China.

Suggested Readings for Students without prior knowledge about China

Useful websites
  Online News on China: http://www.china.org.cn/
  China Daily: http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/
  China Digital Times: http://chinadigitaltimes.net/
  EastSouthWestNorth Blog: http://www.zonaeuropa.com/weblog.htm
  China Media Project: http://chinamediaproject.org/

Course Requirements and Grading Criteria
Attendance (15%) One absence is allowed for any reason. Additional absences will need legitimate reasons and documentation (ex. doctor’s note). Please report to the instructor if you are late. Failing to do so may result in absence in record not disputable.

Participation (15%) Read and reflect upon assigned readings before coming to class. Besides engaging in class discussion actively, you will also do a mini presentation on one selected date. You shall present the most important points in the readings in your own words and clarify them with original examples if necessary. The presentation shall be strictly 10 minutes or shorter.

Mid-terms (25%) The exam include two parts. The first part will be a take-home open book essay question (15%). The second part will be a set of multiple choice and “true or false” questions (10%) done in class. Detailed instructions will be announced before the exams.

Movie Reviews (10%) You are expected to write two movie reviews on assigned movies, each accounting for 5% of the total grade. The movie reviews should be between 600 to 1000 words.

1 The syllabus is a general plan for the course; updates and revisions may be necessary.
Final Paper (35%; 5% for submitting the topics timely; 30% for the paper) Please report to the instructor by October 31st a few potential topics, with research question, and potential data sources. There are only two restrictions on topics: (1) It must be related to China; (2) It must be empirical. The end product shall be a 15-page paper. You are expected to make an argument and try to convince readers with your analysis. Additional attention shall be paid to organization of the paper, the coherence of the analysis and the elaboration of your argument. You have to cite sources properly and avoid grammatical errors.

***** Important Dates *****

October 3rd  Midterm I (take home essay question) due next Tuesday
October 31st Submit your research paper topics
November 14th Midterm II (in class, all multiple choice and “true or false” questions)
December 12th Final Paper due

Grade Dispute:
If you have any questions about your exam grade, you shall report to the instructor within one week from the time you receive the grade. You need to present a written appeal explaining why you think your grade should be changed. Please also bear in mind that disputing grade may end up with higher, lower or no change in your grade.

Academic Honesty:
As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University’s academic honesty policy, “A Culture of Honesty,” and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in “A Culture of Honesty” found at: www.uga.edu/honesty. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

Topics and Readings

Week 1 (August 15) Introduction: Why China & China before PRC

* Douglas Broom, “China by Numbers,” World Economic Forum (June 24, 2019),
https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/06/china-by-numbers-10-facts-to-help-you-understand-the-
superpower-today/.

Week 2 (August 20 & 22) China’s Revolution and Its Legacies

Tuesday
* Lieberthal, pp.28-56, 59-83.

Thursday
Understanding Economic Reform and Opening Up

Week 3 ((August 27 & 29))

Tuesday **Rural Reform and Industrialization**

Thursday **SOEs and Urban Reform**

Week 4 (September 3 & 5)

**Movie Week: To Live**

Week 5 (September 10 & 12)

Tuesday **The Rise of the Private Sector**

Thursday **Foreign Direct Investment**

Week 6 (September 17 & 19)

Tuesday **Explaining China’s Economic Reform**

Thursday **Explaining China’s Economic Reform (continued)**

State Society Relations in Reform Era: Problems, Protests, and Participation

Week 7 (September 24 & 26) Economic Liberalization and Political Reform

Tuesday *Why Economic Liberalization Failed to Bring Democracy*

Thursday *China’s Deep Reform?*

Week 8 (October 1 & 3)
Tuesday *Rural Grassroots Democracy*

Thursday *Engaging Law in China*

Week 9 (October 8 & 10)
Tuesday *Tiananmen and Its Implications*
**Documentary: Tiananmen: The People Versus the Party (2019)**

Thursday

Week 10 (October 15 & 17)
Tuesday *Protests and Resistance in Reform Era*
Thursday

*Suggest reading*

**Week 11 (October 22 & 24)**

**Tuesday Civil Society?**

**Thursday Documentary: Ai Weiwei Never Sorry (2012)**

**Week 12 (October 29 & 31) Media and Cyber Politics**

**Tuesday**
*Suggest reading* * Xiaoping Li, “Focus’ (Jiaodian Fangtan) and the Changes in the Chinese Television Industry.” Journal of Contemporary China 11:30(2002): 17–34.

**Thursday Cyber Activism**

**Week 13 (November 5 & 7) Media and Cyber Politics**

**Tuesday State Responses to Cyberactivism**

**Thursday Nationalism and Cyber-nationalism**
*Suggest reading* * Rongbin Han, “Patriotism without state blessing,” book chapter.

<Year, Hair, Affair> Youtube Clips
Week 14 (November 12 & 14) Resilient Authoritarianism or Fragile Super Power?
Tuesday
* Minxin Pei, *China’s Trapped Transition: The Limits of Developmental Autocracy* (Harvard University Press, 2009), Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

Thursday

Week 15 (November 19 & 21) China Rise and Its Global Implications
Tuesday

Thursday

Week 16 (November 26)
Tuesday
No-class meeting; please watch one of the two assigned movies on your own: *Wolf Warrior 2* (2017) or *The Wandering Earth* (2019)

Thursday
Thanksgiving break, no class

Week 17 (December 3)
Happy hour and Q&A for class; Two Movie Reviews due today