Government/East Asian Studies 297: 
Introduction to Chinese Politics

Spring 2010  
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Tuesday, Thursday 9:00-10:20  
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Overview
This an upper-division course on Chinese Politics. You do not have to know anything about China, and some background in government would be helpful but is not necessary. The course is designed to give you a general understanding about the main features of contemporary Chinese politics and a more specialized understanding of a topic of your choice.

One of the core themes of the course is China as an (re)-emerging regional and global power. We will be paying particular attention to the tension between China’s communist political system and an increasingly capitalist economy. We will spend considerable time examining the relationship between the Chinese state and its society as well as how China relates to other countries around the world.

While the focus of this course is China, an important theme will be international comparison. We will be investigating the dynamics of China’s political institutions, but we will be doing so with an eye toward broader comparisons with other countries—those that are also developing countries, other Asian countries, and other large emerging market countries. Therefore, we will be asking questions like: “How is China different from other developing countries?” “How is China the similar?” “Is China becoming more or less like other countries?”

Objectives
There are five primary learning goals for this class:

- Understand the how government and politics works in China
- Develop a comparative perspective when analyzing politics around the world
- Expand independent research skills
- Improve oral presentation skills
- Improve academic writing skills

Expectations
This is an upper-division seminar, so I expect a high level of student involvement in the course. The course will involve in-class discussions of the reading, a take home midterm, and an independent research paper with an oral presentation about that research. I expect each student to come to class prepared and to participate actively.

Grading
There are four types of assignments in this course on which your grade will be based: participation, quizzes, a take-home midterm exam, and a final research paper and presentation.
This is a writing intensive course, and we will be focusing on writing throughout the course and will put considerable emphasis on improving writing skills.

**Participation:**
In class participation is required and expected of all students. In addition to coming to class prepared and engaging in lively discussions related to the readings, each student will participate in one of four “China in the news” presentations. These will be short (5-7 minute) group presentations about a current event topic related to China. Performance on these presentations will be included in your overall participation grade.

**Quizzes:**
Five in-class quizzes will be given over the course of the semester, of which the top four will be included in your grade. No make-up quizzes will be given. The purpose of these quizzes is to make sure that you keep up with the reading and to help prepare you for the larger take-home assignments. There will also be opportunities to hand in write-ups of public events related to the course that will count as $\frac{1}{2}$ a quiz.

**Midterm Exam:**
The midterm exam will cover the broad conceptual material in the first half of the course. It will be a 5-6 page take home exam. Grades will be reduced by $\frac{1}{3}$ (e.g. from A- to B+) for every 24hrs or part thereof that the exam is late.

**Research Paper**
You will complete an independent research paper on the topic of your choice related to Chinese politics. The paper must be 18-20 pages long and use at least ten different academic sources (e.g., books, journal articles, primary sources. Non-academic sources such as newspaper articles, magazine articles, blogs, etc. can be used but do not count toward the ten). About a month before the paper is due you will hand in a thesis statement and a preliminary bibliography. Throughout the semester you will be meeting in “research groups” with peers conducting research on similar topics in order to discuss your progress, share resources, and circulate drafts. In the final week you will present your research to your peers in an academic conference format of themed panels. You will also conduct peer reviews of rough drafts of the paper before handing it in at the beginning of exam week.

I am not tolerant of cheating or plagiarism. See the Student Handbook’s section on the Honor System for an explanation of student responsibilities, the process involved in prosecuting an Honor System violation, and an essay on plagiarism. [http://www.wesleyan.edu/studenthandbook/3_honorsystem.ctt](http://www.wesleyan.edu/studenthandbook/3_honorsystem.ctt). I take the Honor System very seriously and will take any violations to the Honor Board. I will give you all the tools you need to do well on all of your assignments throughout the semester, so there should be no need for unacceptable assistance. If you have questions about the appropriate way to use or cite a source, please do not hesitate to ask me before you hand in your paper.
Breakdown of grade:
The breakdown of the course grade is as follows:

- Participation
  - In class discussions, presentations, wiki: 10%
  - Quizzes: 10%
- Take-home Midterm: 35%
- Final Project
  - Oral Presentation: 5%
  - Paper: 40%

Grade Complaints:
Grade complaints will not be entertained until 24 hours after the exam/assignment is returned to you or more than two weeks after the exam/assignment has been returned. If you have a question concerning the grade you have received:

1) Wait 24 hours.
2) Write out an explanation of your question, including the reasons why you think your grade should be changed.
3) Submit your written complaint/question to me, and make an appointment to meet either during my office hours or at some other time.

Readings
All readings are available either through e-reserves or through the library’s online journal subscriptions. Please go through both steps before deciding that you cannot find the reading.

1) E-reserve readings
   1) Go to e-reserves: http://eres.olin.wesleyan.edu/eres/courseindex.aspx?page=search
   2) Type in course number (govt297) and the password
   3) Look for the reading (alphabetical)
--if it is not there…
2) Use the full citation given in the syllabus to look up the reading
   4) Go to the “journal locator” on the library home page:
      http://www.wesleyan.edu/libr/php/journ allocator/jlocate.php
   5) Type in the title of the journal (e.g., Foreign Affairs)
   6) Press on one of the “connect” buttons and find the exact issue and article

A Final Note

I hope that you will look to me as a resource. I highly encourage you to take advantage of my office hours to stop by and talk about issues raised in the course, or other questions you have. I am very open to feedback about the course, and would appreciate you sharing any thoughts you might have for improvement earlier rather than later in the semester. I am very excited about this course on Chinese politics, and I hope that we can all have an interesting and productive semester!

I reserve the right to change this syllabus without notice.
**Reading Schedule**

**Section 1: Chinese Political History in a Nutshell**
- What elements of China’s imperial history persist in contemporary politics?
- What was the Cultural Revolution and why did it matter?
- How were Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping different? How were they the same?

Jan. 21  
*Introduction—China’s Place in the World*

Jan. 26  
*The Legacy of China’s History on Contemporary Politics*  

**Section 2: The Structure of Government**
- What is the difference between the Communist Party and the Chinese government?
- What is the relationship between local governments and the government in Beijing?
- What are the mechanisms of control—how does the state control society?
- What are the mechanisms of accountability/change—how does society make itself heard?

Jan. 28  
*The Communist Party*  


Feb. 2  
*Elected/Selected Representatives—National People’s Congress and Local Assemblies*  


**China in the news #1**

Feb. 4  
*The Legal System*  

**Turn in Paper Topic—The “Puzzle” You Want to Answer—and List 3 print sources.**

**Discussion of Zotero, Endnote and library resources**
Section 3: Voices from Outside of the Center

- What is the relationship between party bosses in Beijing and those outside?
- How does reform happen?
- How “democratic” are these processes?

Feb. 9  Political Activism

Feb. 11  Local Advocacy Groups

Feb. 16  Minorities

MIDTERM HANDED OUT

Feb. 18  Media

China in the news #2

MIDTERM DUE February 23rd at the beginning of class
AND to turnitin.com for time stamp

Section 4: Industrial and Financial Policy—Economic Growth

- What are the key components of China’s economic growth?
- What are some of the challenges?

Feb. 23  Film—The Men Who Would Conquer China

Feb. 25  State Owned Enterprises and Privatization
LECTURE: Peter Perdue, “On Exhausting the Earth” 4:30 EAST

Mar. 2  Industrial and Financial Policy

Mar 4  Environmental Challenges and Growth

China in the news #3

SPRING BREAK—no class

Section 5: Democracy Movement and Social Policy
• What is the relationship between the Chinese state and its society?
• How are citizens involved in China’s politics?
• How are citizen roles changing?

Mar. 23  Democracy Movement

Mar. 25  Human Rights—Guest Speaker—Prof. Angle (Philosophy)

China in the news #4

Mar. 30  One Child Policy

In class debate about the one-child policy.

Section 6: Foreign Policy
• What are the core elements of China’s Foreign Policy?
• How does China relate to other great powers?
• How does China relate to Asian neighbors?
• How does nationalism affect China’s international relations?

Apr. 1  Nationalism

Apr. 6  
**Foreign Investment**  

Apr. 8  
**Foreign Aid—China in Africa—Guest Speaker—Prof. Nelson (Government)**  

**THESIS STATEMENT, OUTLINE, AND BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE**

Apr. 13  
**Taiwan**  
Chien-min Chao, “Will Economic Integration between Mainland China and Taiwan Lead to a Congenial Political Culture?” *Asian Survey* 43:2 (2003), 280-304.

Apr. 15  
**Chinese Diaspora**  

**China in the news #5**

**LECTURE: Zhang Longxi, “Nature and Landscape in the Chinese Tradition”**  
4:10 EAST

Apr. 20  
**Security Policy**  

**In class debate on the China threat.**

**Section 6: Student Presentations and Wrapping Up**

Apr. 22  
**Presentations**

Apr. 27  
**Presentations**

Apr. 28  
**LECTURE: Su Zheng, “Shen Yun’s Global Mission: A Tool of Falun Gong or Rediscovering the True Heritage?”**
Apr. 29  Presentation

May 4  Wrapping up
Rough Draft posted to wesfiles by noon on May 3—Peer Reviews in Class

Final Paper Due: May 12 by 12:00 noon:
Uploaded to turnitin.com (for time-stamp)
AND Hard copy to me (in my office PAC 221).