Government/East Asian Studies 297:  
Introduction to Chinese Politics

Fall 2011  
Monday, Wednesday 2:40-4:00  
PAC 421  
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Office Hours: Wed. 1:00-2:30  
Thurs. 11:00-12:00  
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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 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 ½ 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 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 in the course Moodle. I recommend that you take the time to download all of the readings at once and put them in a folder on your computer. You don’t want to have your ability to write papers dependent on fluky internet connections. Please DO NOT PRINT unless you absolutely have to. At last count the Wesleyan community was using three pounds of paper per person per week! Don’t contribute to that wasteful statistic!

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?

Sept. 5  
*Introduction—China’s Place in the World*

Sept. 7  
*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?

Sept. 12  
*The Communist Party*

Sept. 14  
*Elected/Selected Representatives—National People’s Congress and Local Assemblies*

**China in the news #1**

Sept. 15 Optional talk: EAST@4:30  
*From Conservationist to Artist*

Sept. 19  
*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?

Sept. 21  
**Political Activism**

Sept. 22 Optional talk:  EAST@4:30  Evolution of Chinese Authoritarianism

Sept. 26  
**Environmental Activism**
Andrew Mertha, *China’s Water Warriors* Ch. 1 and 4.

Sept. 27 Mandatory Talk Russell House@4:30
Ma Jun,  Environmental Challenges and China's Green Choice

Sept. 28  
**Local Advocacy Groups; Interaction with global NGOs**

Sept. 28 Optional talk:  EAST@4:30;  Anatomy of Financial Crisis Intervention

Oct. 3  
**Minorities**

**MIDTERM HANDED OUT**

Oct. 5  
**Media**
Section 4: Industrial and Financial Policy—Economic Growth

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

Oct. 10

In Class Film—The Men Who Would Conquer China

MIDTERM DUE October 10th at the beginning of class AND to turnitin.com for time stamp

Oct. 12

State Owned Enterprises and Privatization

Oct. 17

Industrial and Financial Policy

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?

Oct. 19

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

Oct. 24

October Break—No class!

Oct. 26

Democracy Movement

China in the news #4

Oct. 31

One Child Policy
Tyrene White, “Domination, resistance and accommodation in China’s one-child

**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?

Nov. 2  **Nationalism**

Nov. 7  **Foreign Investment**

Nov. 9  **Foreign Aid—China in Africa**

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

Nov. 14  **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.

Nov. 16  **Chinese Diaspora**

**China in the news #5**

Nov. 21  **Security Policy**

**In class debate on the China threat.**
Nov. 23  THANKSGIVING BREAK—NO CLASS    Eat Much, Sleep Much, Be Merry

Section 6: Student Presentations and Wrapping Up

Nov. 28   Presentations
Nov. 30   Presentations

Dec. 5   Presentations
Dec. 7   Wrapping up

Rough Draft posted to wesfiles by noon on Dec 6—Peer Reviews in Class

Final Paper Due: Midnight Dec. 15

Turnitin.com before midnight Dec. 15; hard copy to me (PAC 221) by noon on Dec. 16.