

# Politics of China

Politics 141 • 61707 • Spring 2015  
University of California, Santa Cruz  
Prof. Benjamin L. Read

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Instructor's web site: <http://benread.net>  
Course web site: <http://ecommons.ucsc.edu/>  
Course meetings: Tues. & Thurs., noon to 1:45p, in Engineering 2, room 192  
Office hours: Tues. & Thurs., 2:15p to 3:45p, in 157 Merrill Faculty Annex, and by appointment  
Date of this syllabus: April 2, 2015. Subject to change; check websites for latest version.

## Overview:

China is home to more than one-fifth of the world's people. For well over a century and a half its history has continually intersected with that of the United States in geopolitics, in trade, in war, and in flows of migrants, culture, capital, and ideas. This course aims to help the student acquire an understanding of this country's tortuous political development and its recent rise to global prominence. It devotes six weeks to an overview of China's political history, providing a quick primer on the late imperial state and the Republican Era, then covering the rise to power of Mao's Communist Party, its efforts to transform Chinese society, the Cultural Revolution, and the tensions and achievements of the reform era. It also explores the institutions through which China is governed and several themes of current politics: political participation (including village elections and popular protests), associations and civil society, property rights and economic development, and other major policy challenges. No background in the study of Asia is assumed for this undergraduate course.

## Readings:

The book below is on reserve at McHenry Library, and is also available for purchase at the Bay Tree bookstore.

- William A. Joseph (ed.), *Politics in China: An Introduction*, second edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, ISBN: 978-0199339426). Be sure to get this edition, and not the first edition.

The many other required readings will be available on the course eCommons site.

## Assignments and Ground Rules:

- Please read the following items carefully before deciding to stay enrolled in this course.
- Class attendance is a firm requirement. Attendance will be taken at every session at the beginning of class. I am quite understanding about family emergencies, illness or other serious exigencies, and will treat them as excused absences if verifiable documentation is provided. See my web page for the absence form, which must be printed, filled out, and signed. Two percentage points will be deducted from your course grade for every unexcused absence. To put that in perspective, the difference between a B+ and a C+ is ten percentage points.
- This course involves a substantial amount of reading and you are required to do it. Readings must be completed before the class meeting for which they are assigned. Note that although I have strived to make it easy for you to find the readings, it is your responsibility to obtain and read these items. In particular, download the electronic readings ahead of time.
- You must use and regularly check your official email account, i.e. the one that AIS or eCommons sends mail to.
- Self-introduction: please send me an email in the first week of class explaining your year in school;

college; major; prior courses in Asian languages, history, or politics; all international travel; and anything else you would like me to know about you. Please include a phone number where I can reach you in case an urgent need to do so should arise.

- Grading: Most assignments are scored on a 0-100 scale, where 90-100 is an A, 80-89 is a B, etc. Grades of A minus or higher are reserved for work of exceptionally high quality. The grade of B is for work that is truly good although not great. The grade of C is for minimally acceptable work.
- Grades are calculated on the basis of the following assignments, though the exact percentages are subject to adjustment.
  - Map quiz (in class, Thursday, April 9, 2015): **5 percent** of course grade
  - Pop quizzes: **25 percent**. Note that these are a significant part of the grade.
  - In-class midterm examination (Tuesday, April 28, 2015): **30 percent**
  - Final exam (Monday, June 8, 2015, 7:30pm to 10:30pm): **40 percent**
  - Active class participation results in extra-credit points
  - Additionally and optionally, students may contact me about the possibility of writing a research paper on a relevant topic, 8-10 pages in length.

## Part I / Introduction: Imperial China, Republican China

Tuesday, March 31: [First Meeting] Course orientation / discussion of assigned readings

- William A. Joseph, "Studying Chinese Politics," in *Politics in China*, pp. 3-26 [partial chapter]
- Arthur Kroeber, "Rising China and the Liberal West," *China Economic Quarterly* (March 2008)

Thursday, April 2: [Imperial China and the Qing dynasty] Lecture / discussion

- R. Keith Schoppa, "From Empire to People's Republic," in *Politics in China*, pp. 41-53 [partial chapter]
- Peter J. Seybolt, *Throwing the Emperor from His Horse*, preface and pp. 1-18
- Go to "Map and map quiz material" under "Resources" in the eCommons site. Familiarize yourselves with the maps of China, and study the map terms. You may need to make use of the web (even Google Maps) or printed atlases to find some of them. The map quiz will likely require somewhat more preparation than you expect.

Tuesday, April 7: [1911 Revolution and the Kuomintang] Lecture / discussion

- R. Keith Schoppa, "From Empire to People's Republic," in *Politics in China*, pp. 53-57 [partial chapter]
- John King Fairbank and Merle Goldman, *China: A New History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 235-293

Thursday, April 9: [Origins and Rise of the Chinese Communist Party] Lecture / discussion [Map quiz]

- R. Keith Schoppa, "From Empire to People's Republic," in *Politics in China*, pp. 57-69 [partial chapter]
- John King Fairbank and Merle Goldman, *China: A New History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 294-341
- Peter J. Seybolt, *Throwing the Emperor from His Horse*, pp. 19-30

## Part II / Political History of the People's Republic of China, 1949-1989

Tuesday, April 14: [Socialist Transformation] Lecture / discussion

- Frederick Teiwes, "Mao Zedong in Power," in *Politics in China*, pp. 72-87 [partial chapter]
- William A. Joseph, "Ideology and China's Political Development," in *Politics in China*, chapter 5, pp. 149-174
- Peter J. Seybolt, *Throwing the Emperor from His Horse*, pp. 31-50

Thursday, April 16: [The Great Leap Forward] Lecture / discussion

- Frederick Teiwes, “Mao Zedong in Power,” in *Politics in China*, pp. 87–96 [partial chapter]
- Peter J. Seybolt, *Throwing the Emperor from His Horse*, pp. 51-64
- Jasper Becker, *Hungry Ghosts: Mao’s Secret Famine* (New York: The Free Press, 1996), pp. 130-149

Tuesday, April 21: [The Cultural Revolution (1)] Lecture / discussion

- Frederick Teiwes, “Mao Zedong in Power,” in *Politics in China*, pp. 96–103 [partial chapter]
- Maurice Meisner, “The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, 1966-1969,” *Mao’s China and After: A History of the People’s Republic*, 3rd edition (New York: The Free Press, 1999), pp. 312-351

Thursday, April 23: [The Cultural Revolution (2)] Lecture / discussion

- Peter J. Seybolt, *Throwing the Emperor from His Horse*, pp. 65-76
- Andrew G. Walder, *Fractured Rebellion: The Beijing Red Guard Movement* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009), pp. 88-122
- Elizabeth J. Perry and Xun Li, “Rebels: The Workers’ General Headquarters,” in *Proletarian Power: Shanghai in the Cultural Revolution* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), pp. 29-69

Tuesday, April 28: [The End of the Mao Era] Short lecture [In-class midterm exam]

- Frederick Teiwes, “Mao Zedong in Power,” in *Politics in China*, pp. 103–116 [partial chapter]
- Maurice Meisner, “The Aftermath of the Cultural Revolution and the Close of the Maoist Era, 1969-1976,” *Mao’s China and After: A History of the People’s Republic*, 3rd edition (New York: The Free Press, 1999), pp. 376-410

Thursday, April 30: [Deng Xiaoping and the Early Reforms] Lecture / discussion

- Bruce Gilley, “Deng Xiaoping and his Successors,” in *Politics in China*, pp. 119–129 [partial chapter]
- Maurice Meisner, “The Rise of Deng Xiaoping and the Critique of Maoism,” and “Market Reforms and the Development of Capitalism,” in *Mao’s China and After: A History of the People’s Republic*, 3rd edition (New York: The Free Press, 1999), pp. 427-482
- Peter J. Seybolt, *Throwing the Emperor from His Horse*, pp. 77-88, on decollectivization

Tuesday, May 5: [The Crisis of 1989] Short lecture / film excerpts / discussion

- Film excerpts to be shown in class: “Gate of Heavenly Peace,” 1995
- Bruce Gilley, “Deng Xiaoping and his Successors,” in *Politics in China*, pp. 129–132 [partial chapter, giving a bare-bones overview]
- Richard Baum, “The Road to Tiananmen: Chinese Politics in the 1980s,” in Roderick MacFarquhar, ed., *The Politics of China: The Eras of Mao and Deng*, 2nd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 431-467
- Craig Calhoun, “Cultural Crisis,” “Claiming Democracy,” and “To Be Worthy of the Cause,” chapters 6, 7, and conclusion of *Neither Gods Nor Emperors: Students and the Struggle for Democracy in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 213-270

### **Part III / Key Themes and Topics in Contemporary Chinese Politics**

Thursday, May 7: [1989 and the CCP’s Recovery] Lecture / discussion

- Bruce Gilley, “Deng Xiaoping and his Successors,” in *Politics in China*, pp. 132–144 [partial chapter]
- William A. Joseph, “Ideology and China’s Political Development,” in *Politics in China*, chapter 5, pp. 174–188

- Andrew G. Walder, "Unruly Stability: Why China's Regime Has Staying Power," *Current History* (September 2009), pp. 257-263
- Peter J. Seybolt, *Throwing the Emperor from His Horse*, pp. 89-130

Tuesday, May 12: [Structures of Governance] Lecture / discussion

- Cheng Li, "China's Communist Party-State: The Structure and Dynamics of Power," in *Politics in China*, pp. 192-223
- Richard McGregor, "The Keeper of the Files: The Party and Personnel," in *The Party: The Secret World of China's Communist Rulers* (New York: HarperCollins, 2010), pp. 70-103
- A debate in the pages of *Foreign Affairs* (January/February 2013):
  - Eric X. Li, "The Life of the Party"
  - Yasheng Huang, "Democratize or Die: Why China's Communists Face Reform or Revolution"

Thursday, May 14: [The Politics of China's Economy] Lecture / discussion

- David Zweig, "China's Political Economy," in *Politics in China*, chapter 8
- James Fallows, "China Makes, the World Takes," *The Atlantic* (July/August 2007), <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200707/shenzhen>
- Leslie T. Chang, *Factory Girls: From Village to City in a Changing China* (New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2009), pp. 3-58
- Michael Wines, "China Fortifies State Businesses to Fuel Growth," *New York Times* (August 30, 2010)
- "Beijing's High-Tech Ambitions: The Dangers of Germany's Dependence on China," *Spiegel Online* (August 27, 2010)

Tuesday, May 19: [Media and Internet] Lecture / Discussion

- Selected *Washington Post* articles by John Pomfret on the nature of power in China (2002-3)
  - "Band Hits Sour Note in China," June 10, 2002
  - "Bringing Revolution to China's Villages," September 15, 2002
  - "Evangelicals on the Rise in Land of Mao," December 24, 2002
- Evan Osnos, "The Forbidden Zone," *The New Yorker* (July 20, 2009) [on Hu Shuli and Caijing magazine]
- Rebecca MacKinnon, "China's Networked Authoritarianism," *Journal of Democracy* (April 2011) vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 32-46
- Michael Wines, "China's Censors Misfire in Abuse-of-Power Case," *New York Times*, November 17, 2010 [About the "My father is Li Gang" affair]

Thursday, May 21: [Contention and Civil Society] Lecture / discussion

- William Hurst, "Urban China: Change and Contention," in *Politics in China*, chapter 10
- Katherine Morton, "Policy Case Study: The Environment," in *Politics in China*, chapter 12
- Andrew C. Mertha, *China's Water Warriors: Citizen Action and Policy Change* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), pp. 94-149
- Susan K. McCarthy, "Repurposing the State: Religious Charity and Resistance in China," *The China Journal*, No. 70 (July 2013), pp. 48-72

Tuesday, May 26: [Elections and Leadership] Lecture / discussion

- John James Kennedy, “Rural China: Reform and Resistance,” in *Politics in China*, chapter 9
- Jacques deLisle, “What’s Happened To Democracy In China? Elections, Law And Political Reform” *Foreign Policy Research Institute* (April 2010)
- Evan Osnos, “Born Red,” *The New Yorker*, April 6, 2015 [Profile of Xi Jinping]

Thursday, May 28: [Xinjiang and Hong Kong] Lecture / discussion

- Gardner Bovingdon, “Xinjiang,” in *Politics in China*, chapter 16
- Sonny Shiu-hing Lo, “Hong Kong,” in *Politics in China*, chapter 17
- Sebastian Veg, “Legalistic and Utopian: Hong Kong’s Umbrella Movement,” *New Left Review* 92 (March/April 2015), pp 54–73

Tuesday, June 2: [Tibet] Lecture / discussion

- Robert Barnett, “Tibet,” in *Politics in China*, chapter 15
- Melvyn C. Goldstein, “The United States, Tibet, and the Cold War,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* Vol. 8, No. 3 (2005), pp. 145-164
- Evan Osnos, “The Next Incarnation,” *The New Yorker*, October 4, 2010
- Wang Lixiong, “Last-words Analysis — Why Tibetans Self-immolate”

Thursday, June 4: [Perspectives on the Future] Online discussion

- We will not meet in person today (the instructor will be attending an out-of-town workshop) but will have an online discussion. Each student is required to contribute at least two paragraphs’ worth of material. The discussion will deal with the following readings:
  - Arthur Kroeber, “Here Is Xi’s China: Get Used to It” (December 2014)
  - David Shambaugh, “The Coming Chinese Crack-up” (March 2015)
  - Tim Heath, “No, China’s Not about to Collapse” (March 2015)

**Final exam: Monday, June 8, 2015, 7:30pm–10:30pm**

- Note that the final exam must be taken at the above time; alternative times cannot be arranged.