

**HARVARD UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT**

**GOV 1280
GOVERNMENT & POLITICS OF CHINA
SPRING 2023**

**TIME: Mondays and Wednesdays 12:00-1:00 PM
LOCATION: JEFFERSON 250**

This version: 1/20/2023

Professor Yuhua Wang

Email: yuhuawang@fas.harvard.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday 1:00-2:30 PM (sign-up slots are available here:

<https://calendly.com/yuhuawang/30min>) or by appointment

Office: CGIS K214

Teaching Fellow:

Chengyu Fu

cfu@g.harvard.edu

Office Hours: TBD

Course website: <https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/114506>

PREREQUISITE

None

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a broad introduction to the main issues of contemporary Chinese politics and social change. Although there is a strong focus on the reform period (post-1978), we will also spend considerable time and energy on understanding the previous century of change and upheaval, including the decline of the last imperial dynasty, the rise of communism, and China under the rule of Mao Zedong (1949-1976).

The course is divided into two sections: the first section covers the period from the end of the last imperial dynasty to the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976. The second section examines the last forty years of economic reform, looking at both how the reforms began and how they were sustained. We also investigate the many political and social consequences of reform and the changing landscape of Chinese politics. We will also spend some time discussing China's economic and political relationships with the United States and the rest of the world.

THE CLASS FORMAT

Gov 1280 will be held in a live lecture format, along with a weekly discussion section:

- The class will be taught live at 12-1 PM ET on Mondays and Wednesdays, with participation and activities built into the class to maximize engagement and build community.
- Additionally, there will also be a weekly hour-long discussion section in small groups of 18 or less with the Teaching Fellows. More information about the section times will be made available after the course registration deadline.
- The course does not have an enrollment cap, so anyone can enroll without needing to run a lottery.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

For undergrads:

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|---|-----|
| • Discussion Section attendance/participation | 20% |
| • Map quiz (2/8) and 2 reading quizzes (unannounced) | 20% |
| • In-class midterm exam (IDs and one essay): March 6 | 25% |
| • Take-home final paper (12-15 pages): due May 11 5pm | 35% |

For grads:

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| • Research paper (25-30 pages): due May 11 5pm | 100% |
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Grade Scale: Final grades for the course will be determined as follows: A (100-94); A- (93-90); B+ (89-87); B (86-83); B- (82-80); C+ (79-77); C (76-73); C- (72-70).

Section Participation: 20% of the final grade will be based on participation. The participation grade in section will be based on a number of factors: showing up to section, but also having completed the readings, and being ready to ask questions, provide reactions, and critically engage with the course material. Participation grades will be based on the quality of participation rather than quantity, but you can't participate if you aren't there, so not only will multiple absences affect your participation grade negatively, so it is crucial for students to do the readings and come to class prepared to discuss the material. Some students tend to be less comfortable with speaking up in class than their peers; if this is something you're worried about, please contact your TF so that we can find other ways of calculating your participation grade.

Quizzes: There are three quizzes in this class. The map quiz is in lecture (2/8). The other two are unannounced. We will drop your lowest quiz score. Your final quiz grade will be

the average of your top two quiz scores. Reading quizzes may take place in lecture or discussion section.

Final Paper: The final assignment of this course is a final paper (12-15 double-spaced pages, 12 pt. Times New Roman font), due on May 11 at 5 PM. We will provide a list of topics right after the midterm for you to choose. We encourage you to start working on this paper early and talk to your TF throughout the writing process.

Late Policy: All late exams will be marked down a third of a grade (ex. A to A-) for each day following the due date. Teaching Fellows are not responsible for submission errors or corrupted/unreadable electronic files. *Any unreadable assignment submitted will be marked late and dated to when a readable version is received.* We understand that students may confront unexpected health or logistical difficulties due to COVID-19. If circumstances make it difficult for you to complete an assignment on time, contact your Teaching Fellow. If possible, do so in advance of the deadline (cases for extensions are weaker when made the day of or after the deadline). We will be as flexible as possible in providing extra time to do those who need it.

COURSE POLICIES

Grade Disputes: If you have any questions regarding your grade on an assignment, you must first contact your TF. You have one week to submit a formal grievance. However, you must wait a full 24 hours after receiving your grade to submit a grievance. If you remain dissatisfied after the TF reconsiders your grade, s/he will forward your grievance to the Professor for consideration. Please be advised that this can result in your grade being raised or lowered and the Professor's decision is final.

Academic Integrity Policy: Discussion and the exchange of ideas are essential to academic work. For assignments in this course, you are encouraged to consult with your classmates on the choice of paper topics and to share sources. You may find it useful to discuss your chosen topic with your peers, particularly if you are working on the same topic as a classmate. However, you should ensure that any written work you submit for evaluation is the result of your own research and writing and that it reflects your own approach to the topic. You must also adhere to standard citation practices in this discipline and properly cite any books, articles, websites, lectures, etc. that have helped you with your work. If you received any help with your writing (feedback on drafts, etc.), you must also acknowledge this assistance.

STAYING INFORMED ABOUT CHINA

We recommend the following English-language sources of news and updates about China

Bill Bishop's Sinocism (daily/weekly newsletter) (politics)
<https://sinocism.com/about>

The newsletter provides analysis, commentary and curated links to the important English and Chinese news of the day. Bill Bishop, former media executive, spends an enormous amount of time collecting sources in both Chinese and English and ranging from official channels to independent blogs.

Trivium China “Tip Sheet” (daily newsletter) (politics)

<https://triviumchina.com/trivium-daily-newsletter/>

A daily roundup of five key stories about Chinese politics, technology, and foreign affairs from Trivium, a consulting firm headquartered in Beijing.

Politico’s China Watcher (weekly newsletter) (politics)

<https://www.politico.com/newsletters/politico-china-watcher>

David Wertime, a journalist (and one-time Congressional candidate in Pennsylvania) collects relevant news stories and commentary from China-focused political commentators and scholars.

China Neican (weekly newsletter + blog) (politics)

<https://neican.substack.com/>

China Neican is a weekly column on the China Story blog written by Yun Jiang and Adam Ni from the China Policy Centre in Canberra, Australia. Features in-depth analyses of contemporary Chinese political issues.

What’s on Weibo (irregular newsletter + blog) (politics and culture)

<https://www.whatsonweibo.com/newsletter/>

Manya Koetse highlights what’s going viral on Weibo, China’s version of Twitter. Despite government censorship and attempts to rein in popular Weibo accounts, Weibo remains a key platform of issues in contemporary Chinese society.

South China Morning Post (newsletters + news stories) (politics)

<https://www.scmp.com/newsletters>

The leading international newspaper based out of Hong Kong, SCMP coverage provides close

Caixin (newsletter + news stories) (politics and economics)

<https://www.caixinglobal.com/>

Although still regulated as a news outlet from China — and thus labeled by Twitter as state-affiliated media — Caixin’s business and economics focus and independent-minded founder have made it the leading source for investigative journalism inside the system.

Sixth Tone (newsletter + news stories) (politics)

<http://www.sixthtone.com/>

The English language subsidiary of Shanghai-based newspaper Pengpai (The Paper), its coverage of contemporary challenges, including translated op-eds from scholars, is impressively forthright and illuminating.

Radii China (newsletter + blog) (politics and culture)

<https://radiichina.com/newsletter/>

Radii focuses on Chinese culture, particularly art, music, and film.

PingWest (newsletter + blog) (politics and tech)

<https://en.pingwest.com/insights>

Run by a tech consulting firm, it features insightful news and articles about the intersection of technology, innovation, and politics in China.

Introduction

Lecture 1: January 23

- Evan Osnos, “Making China Great Again”, *The New Yorker*.
- Fareed Zakaria, “The New China Scare,” *Foreign Affairs*.

Lecture 2: January 25

China during COVID-19

- Peter Hessler, “How China Controlled the Coronavirus,” *The New Yorker*. You might also want to read Geremie R. Barmé’s critique of Hessler.
- Lingling Wei and Jonathan Cheng, “Why Xi Jinping Reversed His Zero-Covid Policy in China,” *Wall Street Journal*.

PART I: THE “PRE-HISTORY” OF REFORM CHINA

The Decline of the Dynastic China: Internal Decay and External Threat

Lecture 3: January 30

The Failure of Self-Strengthening and the Boxer Uprising

- Lieberthal, *Governing China*, Chapter 1, “The Legacies of Imperial China.”
- Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, Chapter 10, “New Tensions in the Late Qing.”

Lecture 4: February 1

The Republican Revolution

- Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, “The Rule of Yuan Shikai,” pp. 277-283.

- Keith Schoppa, “From Empire to People’s Republic,” *Politics of China*, chapter 2, pp. 41-71.

The Rise of Communism and the Fall of the KMT

Lecture 5: February 6

The KMT, the CCP, and the War against Japan

- Lieberthal, *Governing China*, Chapter 2, “The Republic Era.”
- Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, Chapters 15 and 16, “The Guomindang in Power” and “Communist Survival,” pp. 342-409.

Consolidation, Campaigns, New Modes of Control

Lecture 6: February 8

- Lieberthal, *Governing China*, Chapter 3, “The Maoist System.”
- Frederick Teiwes, Mao Zedong in Power, 1949-1976, *Politics of China*, chapter 3.

Lecture 7: February 13

- Lu Dingyi, “The Hundred Flowers Campaign, May 1956,” In *The Search for Modern China: A Documentary Collection*, pp. 385-392.
- “Professors Speak Out, June 10, 1957,” In *The Search for Modern China: A Documentary Collection*, pp. 392-395.
- Deng Xiaoping, “The Anti-Rightist Campaign, September 23, 1957,” In *The Search for Modern China: A Documentary Collection*, pp. 396-399.
- Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, excerpt from Chapter 20, “Planning the New Society,” pp. 505-513.

The Great Leap Forward

Lecture 8: February 15

- Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, Chapter 21, “Deepening the Revolution.”
- Jung Chang, *Wild Swans*, Chapter 12.

*******February 20: NO CLASS, PRESIDENTS’ DAY*******

The Cultural Revolution

Lecture 9: February 22

- Spence, Chapter 22, “Cultural Revolution.”
- Mao Zedong, “Bombard the Headquarters!” In *The Search for Modern China: A Documentary Collection*, p. 426.
- Macfarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao’s Last Revolution*, Chapters 6 and 7, “The Red Guards” and “Red Terror.”
- [Optional] B. Michael Frolic, “A Foot of Mud and a Pile of Shit” and “My Neighborhood,” in *Mao’s People*. This excerpt from Frolic may not seem to go with the urban-centered readings for this week. But we read it to get a sense of how rural residents responded (or didn’t respond) to political campaigns.

End of the Mao Era

Lecture 10: February 27

End of the Mao Era and the Rise of Deng

- Lieberthal, *Governing China*, Chapter 5, “The Reform Era,” pp. 123-148.
- Ezra Vogel, *Deng Xiaoping*, Chapters 12 and 13, “Launching the Deng Administration, 1979-1980” and “Deng’s Art of Governing.”

Lecture 11: March 1

Film Screening: China in Revolution

***** **March 6: In-Class Mid-Term Exam (One Hour)*******

PART II: THE POLITICS OF REFORM

Lecture 12: March 8

The First Phase of Economic Reforms

- Naughton, *The Chinese Economy*, Chapter 5, “Market Transition,” pp. 85-98.
- Richard Baum, “The First Fang/Shou Cycle,” in *Burying Mao*, Chapter 3. (Chapter 1 optional)
- Susan Shirk, *How China Opened Its Door*, Chapters 1-4, pp. 1-33. (Harding’s comments optional)

*****March 13 and 15: NO CLASS, SPRING RECESS*****

Lecture 13: March 20

The 1989 Student Movement

- “Testing the Limits, Documents from the Student Movement of 1989”, in *Search for Modern China: A Documentary Collection*, Chapter 26.
- Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, Chapter 26, “Testing the Limits,” and beginning of Chapter 27 to page 714.
- [Optional] Denton, Kirk A. “1989 DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT AND THE MAY FOURTH.” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 20, no. 4, 1993, pp. 387–424.

We will show clips from the documentary “Gate of Heavenly Peace.”

Domestic Politics and Economy

Lecture 14: March 22

Political Economy of China during the Era of Xi Jinping

Guest Lecture by Professor Yasheng Huang (Epoch Foundation Professor of Global Economics and Management at MIT Sloan School)

- Reading to be distributed...

Lecture 15: March 27

The Second Phase of Economic Reforms

- Yingyi Qian, “How Reforms Worked in China,” in *In Search of Prosperity: Analytic Narratives on Economic Growth*.
- Naughton, *The Chinese Economy*, Chapter 5, “Market Transition: Strategy and Process,” pp. 98-110.
- [Optional] Peter Hessler, “China’s Boomtowns,” *National Geographic*, Vol. 211, No. 6, June 2007, pp. 88-117.

Lecture 16: March 29

Communist Party Rule, Bureaucracy, and Policy Implementation

- Susan Lawrence and Michael Martin, *Understanding China’s Political System*, Congressional Research Service, 2013.

- Richard McGregor, *The Party: The Secret World of China's Communist Rulers*, Chapter 1, "The Red Machine."
- [Optional] Lieberthal, *Governing China*, Chapters 6 & 7.

Lecture 17: April 3

Rule of Law, Rule by Law

- Jacques DeLisle, China's Legal System, *Politics in China*, chapter 7.
- Donald Clarke, Peter Murrell, and Susan Whiting, "The Role of Law in China's Economic Development," in *China's Great Economic Transformation*, Chapter 11, pp. 375-428.

Lecture 18: April 5

Political Reform and Corruption

- Tianjian Shi, "Village Committee Elections in China: Institutional Tactics for Democracy," in *China's Deep Reforms*, Chapter 13, pp. 353-380.
- Melanie Manion, *Corruption by Design*, Chapter 3, "An Explosion of Corruption in Mainland China."

Lecture 19: April 10

Inequality and Social Conflict

- Naughton, *The Chinese Economy*, Chapters 5 & 9
- Mark Selden and Elizabeth Perry, "Introduction: Reform, conflict and resistance in contemporary China," in *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict and Resistance*, Chapter 1.
- Kevin O'Brien, "Rightful Resistance," *World Politics* 49 (1): 31-55.

Lecture 20: April 12

The Environment and Economic Development

- Elizabeth Economy, "A Great Leap Backward," *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2007.
- Katherine Morton and Fengshi Wu, "Policy Case Study: The Environment," in *Politics in China*, edited by William Joseph. Oxford University Press, 2019.
- [Optional] Arthur Kroeber, *China's Economy*, Chapter 8.

Lecture 21: April 17

Ethnicity, Periphery, Nationalism, and the Media

- Gardner Bovingdon, Xinjiang, *The Politics of China*, Chapter 16.
- Zhao Suisheng, “A State-Led Nationalism,” *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 31 (3): 287-302.
- King, Gary, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E. Roberts. “How censorship in China allows government criticism but silences collective expression.” *American Political Science Review* 107.2 (2013): 326-343.
- [Optional] Ashley Esarey, “Control of the Chinese Media,” Freedom House Special Report.

Foreign Relations

Lecture 22: April 19

China’s Role in the Global Economy

- Geo-economics with Chinese Characteristics: How China’s Economic Might is Reshaping World Politics, *World Economic Forum Report*, 2016.
- Arthur Kroeber, *China’s Economy*, Chapter 13, “China and the World.”

Lecture 23: April 24

China-US Relations

- Graham Allison, “The Thucydides Trap: Are the US and China Headed for War?” *The Atlantic Monthly*, September 24, 2015.
- Gideon Rachman, “Destined for war? China, America and the Thucydides trap,” *Financial Times*.
- Ian Buruma, “Are China and the United States Headed for War?” *The New Yorker*.
- Stephen Roach, *Unbalanced: The CoDependency of America and China*, pps. 1-38.

Lecture 24: April 26

Review of Course Themes

*******Final Essay (Due May 11 at 5 PM EST)*******

*******Graduate Student Final Paper (Due May 11 at 5 PM EST)*******