

HSS143 Introduction to Contemporary China

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Course description

This course examines contemporary China from a variety of perspectives including politics, economy, society, culture, and environment to enhance students' understanding of the dynamic changes in China today. For this, we will draw on not only the basic textbook on contemporary China but also newspaper articles, academic journal articles, and documentary films.

I will run the course as a lecture-led seminar, meaning that I will combine lectures with class-driven discussions. For our class discussions to be productive, you must come to class prepared. You must read all of the reading material carefully and bring questions on the readings with you. This is your responsibility for the course, as well as the key to your success in this class.

Course requirements*

Attendance and participation	10 %
Writing assignments (2), 15% each	30 %
Tests (2), 30% each	60 %

* Depending on the corona situation, the course requirements can be changeable.

Readings: Course materials

The main textbooks of this course are 1) **Rudolf, J. & Szonyi, M. (2018) *The China Questions: Critical Insights into a Rising Power*. Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press;** 2) **Gamer, R. & Toops, S. (2017) *Understanding Contemporary China, Fifth Edition*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers;** and 3) **Brown, K (2019) *Contemporary China, 3rd Edition*. London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.** You can borrow these books from our library course reserves. Also, we will use **a reading packet that you can purchase from Undergraduate Branch Library**. Additional reading materials may occasionally be made available in class.

Writing assignments

First assignment: Please read one of articles on China from the Western media (New York Times, Washington Post, Guardian, Economist, Wall Street Journal, Huffington Post etc.), summarize it and develop your own idea about how the West views, imagines, and problematizes China in the article you choose. For this assignment, I strongly recommend you to choose your article from the opinion pages of each media (editorials, columns or comments). Here you can sense media's (or columnists') own voice rather than simple facts. You should try to answer the questions, for instance, how does the West desire towards China? In which aspect does the West see China problematic? And what solution does the West suggest or impose to China? This essay should be around **600words** in length (this will come to ~2 to 3 pages). When you submit the first essay, please attach the newspaper article you choose along with your essay. (Due by April 27th)

Second assignment: Select one of the most critical issues facing contemporary China that you think. It can be economic, social, political, environmental or even cultural. Identify the problem, explain why your issue is important in China today, diagnose the situation, and present your *critical* outlook (not solution) on the issue. Please take advantage of reading materials of this class, newspaper articles, academic articles or other sources. This essay should be around **900words** in length (this will come to ~3 to 4 pages). (Due by June 8th)

Please submit both assignments printed as double-spaced (HWP Line spacing 200%), Times New Roman, 12 point font (with full reference and word count at the end of each essay)

Tests

You will take two tests (**April 15th** and **June 10th**) that are comprised of 'short-answer' questions and 'long-answer' questions. In case of 'short-answer' questions, I expect you to write 2-3 lines per question. For 'long-answer' question, I strongly recommend you to write 5-10 lines per question. Before each test, I will hand out study guide for you.

Course Calendar

Week	Date	Theme	Reading	Key Dates
1	Mar 2 & 4	Introduction to Course & Key figures to understand Contemporary China (I)	Brown (2019); Perry (2018)	
2	Mar 9 & 11	Key Figures to understand Contemporary China (II)	Economy (2018); Johnson (2017)	
3	Mar 16 & 18	The rise of China (I)	Shambaugh (2014; 2016)	
4	Mar 23 & 25	The rise of China (II)		
5	Mar 30 & Apr 1	How to understand China (Orientalism)	Vukovich (2011)	
6	Apr 6 & 8	How to understand China (Sinological Orientalism)		
7	Apr 13 & 15	China's War of Perception (I) & Test 1		Test 1: 15 Apr
8	Apr 20 & 22	Study Break		
9	Apr 27 & 29	China's War of Perception (II) & Geography of China (I): Spaces of Exception	Shambaugh (2015), The China Reader (2016)	First essay due by 27 Apr
10	May 4 & 6	Geography of China (II): Xinjiang Issue	Fallon (2015); Green (2019)	
11	May 11 & 13	Modern history of China (I): Pre-socialist China	Brown (2019) Ch.2	
12	May 18 & 20	Modern history of China (II): Socialist Revolution		
13	May 25 & 27	Modern history of China (III): Economic Reform	Brown (2019) Ch.2; Naughton (2007: Population)	
14	Jun 1 & 3	Politics of China: State-Society relations	Perry (2014)	
15	Jun 8 & 10	Environmental Challenges in China & Test 2	Engels (2018)	Second essay due by 8 June; Test 2: 10 June
16	Jun 15 & 17	Study Break		