

CHINESE POLITICS

Political Science 3352, Fall 2021
Tu 6:30–9:20pm, Dallas Hall 152
Web page: <http://canvas.smu.edu>

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Office hours: MW 1:30–3:00pm

Course Description and Objectives

This course offers a general introduction to the politics of contemporary China. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- (1) understand Chinese political history since the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949;
- (2) analyze some of the major challenges confronting the PRC today; and
- (3) to critically evaluate the positive and negative aspects of China's socialist experiment by using a working knowledge of Chinese politics.

Throughout the course, efforts will be made to integrate historical materials with the study of specific political issues and analytical concepts. We begin in Part I by reviewing historical background of current China, covering the 1949 communist revolution, socialist transformation, the Great Leap Forward, and the Cultural Revolution. Part II then examines China's post-Mao economic reforms in various aspects, including agriculture, industry, and international political economy. Part III discusses the buildup of internal political and socio-economic tensions throughout the post-Mao reform that promises to bedevil the Chinese leadership well into the 21st century.

For those lacking sufficient previous knowledge of Chinese history, I would highly recommend Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1990), or William T. Rowe, "Approaches to Modern Chinese Social History," in Oliver Zunz, ed., *Reliving the Past: The Worlds of Social History* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), pp. 236-96. Spence is particularly strong on intellectual history and foreign relations, and writes gracefully. Rowe provides a fine summary of the state of the field on the large questions in Chinese history: e.g., when feudalism ended; why capitalism did not develop; oriental despotism or local autonomy; administrative units or macro regions. **No prior knowledge of Chinese politics or history will be assumed.**

Course Requirements

1. Attendance and participation (including memo assignments) (20% of a student's course grade): Attendance at lecture and participation in discussion are mandatory. The readings vary in length and difficulty but average about 100–150 pages per week. You are expected to attend

all the lectures in-person and do the required readings. Come to class **prepared and ready to participate** in discussing the material assigned in the readings. Most importantly, *students are required to turn in a **memo on Canvas** to the instructor by 11:59pm of the due date.*

An unexcused absence will adversely affect your course grade, as will being present but unprepared to participate, participating without being prepared, or not following the incumbent masking rules. Your attendance will be counted as long as you let me know your absence (preferably in advance, but if not then as soon as possible). In short, you must communicate with me as soon as possible when you have to be absent from class.

*After four unexcused absences, I may give an FA (F for attendance) to your course grade. An excused absence is almost exclusively restricted to religious reasons, certain university activities, documented medical conditions, or documented family emergencies. Absences for religious reasons or for university extracurricular activities require communication with me at the **beginning** of the semester. It is **your** responsibility to make arrangements with me **prior** to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work.*

Ultimately your attendance and participation grade turns on **my** impression of how seriously you take this course. It is **your** responsibility to take this course seriously and let me know that. How? Attend class; be prepared for class—complete the reading assignments for understanding, be ready to ask and answer questions, take an informed role in discussions, and most importantly, write a good memo; **arrive early** to class; remain for the entire class; *be attentive in class without distracting me or your classmates with smart phones, text messages, side conversations, bathroom trips, coming-and-going, and so forth*; complete assignments when due; and demonstrate your understanding on the essays and other assignments. Laptops, cell phones, iPhones, and any other *electronic devices may not be used in class—**not even for note-taking**.*

Masks Recommended: While masks are not required in this course, individuals should use their own discretion if they prefer to wear masks. The instructor and students will show respect for individual decisions and responses to the health concerns of the pandemic for those who choose to continue wearing masks. Your vaccine status is private information and will neither be requested nor made public.

[Note: This masking policy will go into effect when the university's *temporary* masking policy is repealed.]

2. **Two Take-home midterms** (15% each): The exam is open book and open notes and will require 5–7 pages (typed, double-spaced, 12-point font) of writing. Essays will be evaluated on the basis of: demonstrated mastery of the assigned readings; skill in exposing nuances of similarity and difference in various defensible positions; cogency, clarity, precision and organization of presentation; and relevance of evidence marshaled to *support your argument(s)*. Papers shorter than the indicated length will receive deduction of your grade unless you receive my consent prior to submission. Same if your paper is single-spaced, you use abnormally small or large margins or fonts (12-point), or your paper is not typed. No extensions will be granted except in the case of a serious illness or a death in the family. **Please plan to finish the assignment**

prior to the due date, and leave adequate time to work out any computer problems that may arise.

3. Research paper (35%): Each student will be required to write a research paper of 12–15 pages (typed, double-spaced, and 12-point font) on a controversial issue in Chinese politics. Topics and readings for the paper should be developed in close consultation with the course instructor. *Each paper must be re-written, taking into account criticism of your first draft.* Each student is required to meet the following due dates:

Paper topic / question	Aug. 27
Progress report	Oct. 8
First draft	Nov. 5
Final draft	Dec. 3

Each research paper will be evaluated based on the final draft. However, *the paper will not be graded and given an F if you have not turned in the first draft or some of the previous assignments.* Moreover, if you turn in the first draft late, your research paper grade will be marked down with at least 20%. *A paper written without close consultation with the instructor will not be graded and given an F.* If you receive an F for the research paper, you will also receive an F for your course grade. **Late papers will not be accepted.** More detailed information on this assignment will be posted on the course web site.

4. Take-home final (15%): The take-home final will be made available on Nov. 30 and **due Dec. 14 at 11:59pm on Canvas.** It will cover material from the entire semester but mainly from Part III. The exam is open book and open notes and will require 5–7 pages (typed, double-spaced, 12-point font) of writing. **Late assignments will not be accepted.** Incompletes will be granted only in circumstances beyond your control: e.g., illness or family emergencies.

Each of you must meet with Professor Takeuchi for 15 minutes in the first weeks of the semester. Sign up for an appointment time during the first day in class. Be punctual.

Disability Accommodations

Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first register with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS). Students can call 214-768-1470 or visit www.smu.edu/Provost/SASP/DASS to begin the process. Once approved and registered, students will submit a DASS Accommodation Letter to faculty through the electronic portal *DASS Link* and then communicate directly with each instructor to make appropriate arrangements. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice to implement.

Religious Observance

Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence. (<https://www.smu.edu/StudentAffairs/ChaplainandReligious-Life/ReligiousHolidays>).

Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities

Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity should be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of your participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work. (See [2020–2021 SMU Undergraduate Catalog](#) under “Enrollment and Academic Records/Excused Absences.”)

Student Academic Success Programs (SASP)

Students needing assistance with writing assignments for SMU courses may schedule an appointment with the Writing Center through Canvas. Students wishing support with subject-specific tutoring or success strategies should contact SASP, Loyd All Sports Center, Suite 202; 214–768–3648; <https://www.smu.edu/sasp>.

Books and Readings

The following books are available for purchase at the bookstore. There may be changes in the readings and assignments below.

Bruce J. Dickson, *The Party and the People: Chinese Politics in the 21st Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2021).

Elizabeth C. Economy, *The Third Revolution: Xi Jinping and the New Chinese State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

Barry Naughton, *The Chinese Economy: Adaptation and Growth*, second edition (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2018).

Andrew G. Walder, *China Under Mao: A Revolution Derailed* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015).

Schedule and Reading Assignments

Readings provide background on topics covered in class lectures and discussions, so read the assignment **before** the class for which they are assigned. Because the course will make frequent reference to current events, you should make a habit of *reading a respectable newspaper on a regular basis* and pay attention to the events in China.

1. Introduction (Aug. 24)

Naughton, chapters 1–3 (pp. 1–64)

* Uri Friedman, “Why America Resists Learning from Other Countries,” *Atlantic*, May 14, 2020 (<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2020/05/coronavirus-could-end-american-exceptionalism/611605/>)

You are required to watch the documentary film, *China: A Century of Revolution 1: China in Revolution* (available at the Hamon Arts Library AV Collection: call number IDD 02678 & 02679; also available at You Tube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5cl0GjPjy4>) by Aug. 24.

RESEARCH PAPER TOPIC AND QUESTION DUE AUG. 27, 11:59PM ON CANVAS

I. Politics and Economics in the Maoist Era

2. Communist Revolution and Socialist Transformation (Aug. 31)

Walder, chapters 1–7 (pp. 1–151)

You are required to watch the documentary film, *China: A Century of Revolution 2: The Mao Years* (available at the Hamon Arts Library AV Collection: call number IDD 03575; also available at You Tube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GMaXSKH2w3c>) by Aug. 31.

Memo Assignment 1 due Sep. 3, 11:59pm on Canvas.

3. Great Leap Forward and Early Cultural Revolution (Sep. 7)

Walder, chapters 8–11 (pp. 152–262)

In preparation for the class discussion, you are required to watch the movie, *The Blue Kite* (available at the Hamon Arts Library AV Collection: call number IDD 02676; also available at You Tube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BCKlm7iPUhk>) by Sep. 7.

Recommended Film: *Morning Sun* (available at the Hamon Arts Library AV Collection: call number IDD 02813).

4. Late Cultural Revolution and Mao’s Legacies (Sep. 14)

Walder, chapters 12–14 (pp. 263–344)

Naughton, chapter 4 (pp. 65–93)

Recommended Film: *Farewell My Concubine* (available at the Hamon Arts Library Center AV Collection: call number IDD 00223).

THE FIRST TAKE-HOME MIDTERM DUE SEP. 17, 11:59PM ON CANVAS

II. Post-Mao Economic Reform

5. Patterns of Growth and Development (Sep. 21)

Naughton, chapters 5–10 (pp. 95–256)

6. China and the World Economy (Sep. 28)

Naughton, chapters 16–17 (pp. 397–449)

* Kurt M. Campbell and Ely Ratner, “The China Reckoning: How Beijing Defied American Expectations,” *Foreign Affairs* 97(2) (March/April 2018): pp. 60–70.

* Alastair Iain Johnston, “The Failure of the ‘Failure of Engagement’ with China,” *The Washington Quarterly* 42(2) (Summer 2019): pp. 99–114.

* Barry Naughton, “A Perspective on Chinese Economics: What Have We Learned? What Did We Fail to Anticipate?” in Anne F. Thurston, ed., *Engaging China: Fifty Years of Sino-American Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2021): pp. 174–196.

* Yeling Tan, “How the WTO Changed China: The Mixed Legacy of Economic Engagement,” *Foreign Affairs* 100(2) (March/April, 2021): 90–102.

* Hiroki Takeuchi, “Domestic Politics of Chinese Foreign Policy: Where Will Xi Jinping Bring China?” *Asian Security* 15(2) (May 2019): pp. 205–213.

* Elizabeth Economy, “China’s Inconvenient Truth,” *Foreign Affairs* (May 28, 2021).

* Thomas J. Christensen, “There Will Not Be a New Cold War: The Limits of U.S.-Chinese Competition,” *Foreign Affairs* (March 24, 2021).

* Jisi Wang, “The Plot Against China? How Beijing Sees the New Washington Consensus,” *Foreign Affairs* 100(4) (July/August 2021): pp. 48–57.

* Oriana Skylar Mastro, “The Taiwan Temptation: Why Beijing Might Resort to Force,” *Foreign Affairs* 100(4) (July/August 2021): pp. 58–67.

* Suisheng Zhao, “Rhetoric and Reality of China’s Global Leadership in the Context of COVID-19: Implications for the US-led World Order and Liberal Globalization,” *Journal of Contemporary China* (forthcoming, 2020): pp. 1–16.

Recommended Films: *Mardi Gras: Made in China* (available at the Hamon Arts Library AV Collection: call number IDD 02113); *China Blue* (available at the Hamon Arts Library AV Collection: call number IDD 04489)

Recommended videos:

SMU Tower Center Sun & Star Webinar: “The Belt, Road, and Beyond: Domestic Motivations and Implications for the World” (with Min Ye), November 5, 2020:
<https://blog.smu.edu/towercenter/2020/11/18/sun-star-the-belt-road-and-beyond-domestic-motivations-and-implications-for-the-world/>.

SMU Tower Center Sun & Star Webinar: “The Emperor’s New Road: China and the Project of the Century” (with Jonathan Hillman), February 25, 2021:
<https://blog.smu.edu/towercenter/2021/02/25/sun-star-webinar-series-the-emperors-new-road-china-and-the-project-of-the-century/>.

Memo Assignment 2 due Oct. 1, 11:59pm on Canvas.

7. Rural Reform and Agricultural Development (Oct. 5)

Naughton, chapters 11 & 13 (pp. 259–278 & 307–329)

* Hiroki Takeuchi, “Survival Strategies of Township Governments in Rural China: From Predatory Taxation to Land Trade,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 22 (2013): 755–772.

* Hiroki Takeuchi, “Vote Buying, Village Elections, and Authoritarian Rule in Rural China: A Game-Theoretic Analysis,” *Journal of East Asian Studies* 13(1) (January–April 2013): 69–105.

Recommended Film: *Not One Less* (available at the Hamon Arts Library AV Collection: call number IDD 00304).

RESEARCH PAPER PROGRESS REPORT DUE OCT. 8, 11:59PM ON CANVAS

8. Urban Reform and Industrial Development (Oct. 19)

Naughton, chapters 14–15 & 19–20 (pp. 333–394 & 479–539)

* Daniel H. Rosen, “China’s Economic Reckoning: The Price of Failed Reforms,” *Foreign Affairs* 100(4) (July/August 2021): pp. 20–29.

* Yuen Yuen Ang, “The Robber Barons of Beijing: Can China Survive Its Gilded Age?” *Foreign Affairs* 100(4) (July/August 2021): pp. 30–39.

Recommended Film: *Shower* (available at the Hamon Arts Library AV Collection: call number IDD 01526).

9. China's Future (Oct. 26)

Naughton, chapters 7–10 (re-read), 18, & 21 (pp. 155–256, 453–478, & 543–569)

* Barry Naughton, “Is China Socialist?” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 31(1) (Winter 2017): pp. 3–24.

Recommended video:

SMU Tower Center Sun & Star Webinar: “Integrating Air Pollution and Climate Policy in Asia” (with Eric Zusman), October 8, 2020: <https://blog.smu.edu/towercenter/2020/10/20/integrating-air-pollution-and-climate-change-policy-in-asia/>.

THE SECOND TAKE-HOME MIDTERM DUE OCT. 29, 11:59PM ON CANVAS

III. Post-Mao Political Reform

10. Elite Politics and the Chinese Communist Party (Nov. 2)

Dickson, introduction & chapters 1–4 (pp. 1–125)

RESEARCH PAPER FIRST DRAFT DUE NOV. 5, 11:59PM ON CANVAS

11. Political Participation and Public Response (Nov. 9)

Dickson, chapters 5–8 (pp. 126–254)

Memo Assignment 3 due Nov. 12, 11:59pm on Canvas.

12–14. Where Will Xi Jinping Bring China? (Nov. 16, 23, & 30)

Economy (entire)

RESEARCH PAPER FINAL DRAFT DUE DEC. 3, 11:59PM ON CANVAS

TAKE-HOME FINAL DUE DEC. 14, 11:59PM ON CANVAS