

# Politics of China

Politics 141 • 23071 • Fall 2010  
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. 8a to 9:45a in Crown Classroom 208  
Office hours: Tues. & Thurs. 10a to 11:30a in 157 Merrill Faculty Annex, and by appointment  
Date of this syllabus: September 22, 2010. 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 books below are on reserve at McHenry Library, and is also available for purchase at the Bay Tree bookstore. If you wish to own them but want to try to save a little money, you might try the used books search on Amazon.com or other such services.

- William A. Joseph (ed.), *Politics in China: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010, ISBN: 9780195335316)
- Peter J. Seybolt, *Throwing the Emperor from His Horse: Portrait of a Village Leader in China, 1923-1995* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996, ISBN: 0-8133-3131-5)

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 MyUCSC 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'd like me to know about you.
- Grades are calculated on the basis of the following assignments, though the exact percentages are subject to adjustment. All grades are given on a 0-100 scale, where 90-100 is an A, 80-89 is a B, etc. A-range grades are reserved for work of exceptionally high quality.
  - Map quiz (in class, Thursday, September 30, 2010) — 5 percent of course grade
  - Class participation and pop quizzes — 20 percent
  - In-class midterm examination (Thursday, October 21, 2010) — 30 percent
  - Final exam (see date at bottom of syllabus) — 45 percent
- We will have 19 class meetings in Fall 2010. Details are below.

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

### Thursday, September 23: [First Meeting] Course orientation / discussion of assigned readings

- William A. Joseph, "Studying Chinese Politics," in *Politics in China*, pp. 3-24 [partial chapter]
- *Throwing the Emperor*, preface and pp. 1-18
- Ted C. Fishman, "The Chinese Century," *New York Times Magazine*, July 4, 2004
- Arthur Kroeber, "Rising China and the Liberal West," *China Economic Quarterly* (March 2008)

### Tuesday, September 28: [Imperial China and the Qing dynasty] Lecture / discussion

- R. Keith Schoppa, "From Empire to People's Republic," in *Politics in China*, pp. 37-44 [partial chapter]
- Immanuel C.Y. Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*, 6th edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 45-80. This is an overview of political, economic and social institutions in the Qing dynasty, 1644-1911.
- Familiarize yourselves with the map of China (note that there is also a map in the Seybolt text). Study the map terms found on the eCommons site. You may need to make use of the web (even Google Maps) or printed atlases to find some of them. The map quiz may require more preparation than you expect.

### Thursday, September 30: [1911 Revolution and the Kuomintang] Lecture / discussion [Map quiz]

- R. Keith Schoppa, "From Empire to People's Republic," in *Politics in China*, pp. 44-53 [partial chapter]
- John King Fairbank and Merle Goldman, *China: A New History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 235-293
- Ramon H. Myers, "The Chinese State During the Republican Era," in David Shambaugh, ed., *The Modern Chinese State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 42-72

### Tuesday, October 5: [Origins and Rise of the Chinese Communist Party] Lecture / discussion

- R. Keith Schoppa, "From Empire to People's Republic," in *Politics in China*, pp. 53-61 [partial chapter]
- John King Fairbank and Merle Goldman, *China: A New History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 294-341
- *Throwing the Emperor*, pp. 19-30

## Part II / Political History of the People's Republic of China, 1949-2010

### Thursday, October 7: [Socialist Transformation] Lecture / discussion

- Frederick Teiwes, "Mao Zedong in Power," in *Politics in China*, pp. 63-76 [partial chapter]
- Frederick Teiwes, "The Establishment and Consolidation of the New Regime, 1949-57," in Roderick MacFarquhar, ed., *The Politics of China: The Eras of Mao and Deng* (2nd ed.), pp. 5-86
- Julia C. Strauss, "Paternalist Terror: The Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries and Regime Consolidation in the People's Republic of China, 1950-1953," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 44/1 (2002), pp. 80-105
- *Throwing the Emperor*, pp. 31-50

### Tuesday, October 12: [The Great Leap Forward] Lecture / discussion

- Frederick Teiwes, "Mao Zedong in Power," in *Politics in China*, pp. 76-83 [partial chapter]
- Kenneth Lieberthal, "The Great Leap Forward and the Split in the Yan'an Leadership, 1958-65," in Roderick MacFarquhar, ed., *The Politics of China: The Eras of Mao and Deng* (2nd ed.), pp. 87-147
- *Throwing the Emperor*, pp. 51-64
- Jasper Becker, *Hungry Ghosts: Mao's Secret Famine* (New York: The Free Press, 1996), pp. 130-149

### Thursday, October 14: [The Cultural Revolution (1)] Lecture / discussion

- Frederick Teiwes, "Mao Zedong in Power," in *Politics in China*, pp. 83-91 [partial chapter]
- Roderick MacFarquhar and Michael Schoenhals, "Introduction," *Mao's Last Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006), pp. 1-13
- 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

### Tuesday, October 19: [The Cultural Revolution (2)] Lecture / discussion

- *Throwing the Emperor*, 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

### Thursday, October 21: [The End of the Mao Era] Short lecture [in-class midterm exam]

- Frederick Teiwes, "Mao Zedong in Power," in *Politics in China*, pp. 91-101 [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

### Tuesday, October 26: [Deng Xiaoping and the Early Reforms] Lecture / discussion

- Bruce Gilley, "Deng Xiaoping and his Successors," in *Politics in China*, pp. 103-111 [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
- *Throwing the Emperor*, pp. 77-88, on decollectivization

Thursday, October 28: [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. 112-114 [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

Tuesday, November 2: [1989 and the CCP’s Recovery] Lecture / discussion

- Bruce Gilley, “Deng Xiaoping and his Successors,” in *Politics in China*, pp. 114-124 [partial chapter]
- Andrew G. Walder, “Unruly Stability: Why China’s Regime Has Staying Power,” *Current History* (September 2009), pp. 257-263
- *Throwing the Emperor*, pp. 89-130
- Richard McGregor, “The Red Machine: The Party and the State,” in *The Party: The Secret World of China’s Communist Rulers* (New York: HarperCollins, 2010), pp. 1-33
- [OPTIONAL] Cheng Li, “The Rise of Technocrats: Elite Transformation in the Reform Era,” in *China’s Leaders: The New Generation* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), pp. 25-50

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

Thursday, November 4: [Structures of Governance] Lecture / discussion

- Cheng Li, “China’s Communist Party-State: The Structure and Dynamics of Power,” in *Politics in China*, pp. 165-191
- 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
- Lily L. Tsai, “The Struggle for Village Public Goods Provision: Informal Institutions of Accountability in Rural China,” in Elizabeth J. Perry and Merle Goldman, eds., *Grassroots Political Reform in Contemporary China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007), chapter 6

Tuesday, November 9: [The Politics of China’s Economy] Lecture / discussion

- David Zweig, “China’s Political Economy,” in *Politics in China*, pp. 192-221
- 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)
- [OPTIONAL] Eric Thun, “Shanghai: A Local Developmental State,” in *Changing Lanes in China: Foreign Direct Investment, Local Governments, and Auto Sector Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), chapter four, pp. 100-135

Thursday, November 11: [Veterans Day — no class meeting]

Tuesday, November 16: [Political Participation, Elections and Connections] Lecture / Discussion

- John James Kennedy, "Rural China: Reform and Resistance," in *Politics in China*, pp. 225-249
- *Washington Post* series of articles by John Pomfret on the nature of power in China (2002-3)
  - "One Corrupt City Reflects Scourge Plaguing China," March 6, 2002
  - "Band Hits Sour Note in China," June 10, 2002
  - "For China's Local Bigwigs, New Money Means Power," July 7, 2002
  - "Bringing Revolution to China's Villages," September 15, 2002
  - "In U.S.-China Firm, a Struggle for Power," November 18, 2002
  - "Evangelicals on the Rise in Land of Mao," December 24, 2002
  - "Defense Lawyers in China Find State is Judge and Jury," December 31, 2002
- Evan Osnos, "The Forbidden Zone," *The New Yorker* (July 20, 2009)
- Rebecca MacKinnon, "Flatter World and Thicker Walls? Blogs, Censorship and Civic Discourse in China," *Public Choice* (2007) vol. 134, pp. 31-46
- George J. Gilboy and Benjamin L. Read, "Political and Social Reform in China: Alive and Walking," *The Washington Quarterly* Vol. 31 No. 3 (2008), pp. 143-64
- [OPTIONAL] Kevin J. O'Brien and Rongbin Han, "Path to Democracy? Assessing Village Elections in China," *Journal of Contemporary China* Vol. 18 No. 60 (June, 2009), pp. 359-378

Thursday, November 18: [Contention and Civil Society] Lecture / discussion

- William Hurst, "Urban China: Change and Contention," in *Politics in China*, pp. 250-268
- Laura M. Luehrmann, "Facing Citizen Complaints in China, 1951-1996," *Asian Survey* Vol. 43 No. 5 (2003), pp. 845-66
- Andrew C. Mertha, *China's Water Warriors: Citizen Action and Policy Change* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), pp. 94-149
- Meg Davis, "China's New Nonprofit Regulations: Season of Instability," *Asia Catalyst* (June 14, 2010)
- [OPTIONAL] Benjamin L. Read, "Assessing Variation in Civil Society Organizations: China's Homeowner Associations in Comparative Perspective," *Comparative Political Studies* Vol. 41 No. 9 (2008), pp. 1240-65

Tuesday, November 23: [Key Topics in Public Policy] Lecture / discussion

- Katherine Morton, "Policy Case Study: The Environment," in *Politics in China*, pp. 278-287
- Joan Kaufman, "Policy Case Study: Public Health," in *Politics in China*, pp. 288-297
- Tyrene White, "Policy Case Study: Population," in *Politics in China*, pp. 298-312
- Mark Frazier, "After Pension Reform: Navigating the 'Third Rail' in China," *Studies in Comparative International Development* (Summer 2004) Vol. 39, No. 2, pp. 45-70
- Evan Osnos, "Green Giant: Beijing's Crash Program for Clean Energy," *The New Yorker* (December 21 and 28, 2009), pp. 54-65

Thursday, November 25: [Thanksgiving — no class meeting]

**Note:** Two short but enlightening chapters are assigned over Thanksgiving break:

- Gardner Bovingdon, "Xinjiang," in *Politics in China*, pp. 336-354
- Sonny Shiu-hing Lo, "Hong Kong," in *Politics in China*, pp. 355-366

Tuesday, November 30: [Taiwan: The Alternate Reality of the ROC] Lecture / discussion

- Shelley Rigger, "Taiwan," in *Politics in China*, pp. 367-381
- Shelley Rigger, "Political Reform under Chiang Ching-kuo (1972-1988)," chapter 5 of *Politics in Taiwan: Voting for Democracy* (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 103-130

Thursday, December 2: [Tibet] Lecture / discussion

- Robert Barnett, "Tibet," in *Politics in China*, pp. 315-335
- Melvyn C. Goldstein, "The United States, Tibet, and the Cold War," *Journal of Cold War Studies* Vol. 8, No. 3 (2005), pp. 145-164
- Barry Sautman, "Protests in Tibet and Separatism: The Olympics and Beyond," *China Left Review* No. 1 (2008)

**Final exam: Thursday, December 9, 2010, 8a-11a**