

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS OF CHINA

Political Science 353

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11-11:50 MWF
346 HRCB
Office hrs. MWF 1-2 p.m.

Course Objectives:

The objective of this course is to introduce students to the Communist Revolution in China and the study of Chinese politics. We will cover three general areas: the Communists' rise to power, the party/state structure and policy process, and state-society relations. We will study the roots of the communist revolution and the attempt to build socialism in China under Mao Zedong, analyze the dramatic reforms initiated by Deng Xiaoping, and conclude by studying contemporary political and economic developments.

Requirements and Grading:

The course grade will be based on a midterm, a final exam, two book reviews (4 pages) and a term paper (10-12 pages).

You are required to work with your assigned Writing Fellow when writing your book reviews. This includes discussing your planned revisions during a scheduled meeting with your fellow after your first draft is returned. **Your first draft must be handed in on time or you will lose all credit for that assignment.** The final draft will be read and graded by the instructor. The term paper can be on any topic related to the PRC and I urge you to get started early and discuss your topic with me before starting your research. The research methods and mechanics of your papers should meet university standards as taught in Political Science 200. A term paper written for another course is not acceptable. *Do not use a cover of any kind, but simply staple the paper in the upper left-hand corner.* The term paper grade will be reduced by 10% if it is not turned in on time.

The exams are each worth 25%, the paper is worth 25%, and the book reviews each worth 12.5% of the final grade. The final grade will be based on standard percentages.

Important dates: Book Review first drafts, January 30 and March 13; **Research Paper**, April 13; **Midterm**, February 25 (Testing Center); **Final**, April 20, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Deadlines and exam dates are set. Only documented serious illness or family tragedy will be considered if you need to reschedule an exam (see University policy).

Required readings should be completed in advance so students can participate in class discussion.

Required Reading:

Lowell Dittmer & Guoli Liu, eds., *China's Deep Reform: Domestic Politics in Transition* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2006)

June Teufel Dreyer, *China's Political System: Modernization and Tradition* 6th ed. (Pearson Longman, 2008).

Ian Johnson, *Wild Grass: Three Portraits of Change in Modern China* (Vintage, 2004)
Write a review of this book.

Jan Wong, *Red China Blues: My Long March from Mao to Now* (Anchor Books, 1997).
Write a review of this book.

Academic Standards and Policies:

While all students sign the honor code, there are still specific skills most students need to master over time in order to correctly cite sources, especially in this new age of the internet, as well as deal with the stress and strain of college life without resorting to cheating. Please know that I will watch carefully for instances of cheating on exams or plagiarizing on papers. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes plagiarism; if you have questions, do not hesitate to ask the instructor to review the criterion.

Federal law and BYU policy prohibits sex discrimination. This extends not only to employees of the university but to students as well. This includes discrimination in programs, activities, and sexual harassment. BYU's policy against sexual harassment extends not only to employees of the University but to students as well. If you encounter sexual harassment or gender based discrimination, please talk to your professor, contact the Equal Opportunity Office at 422-5895 or 888-238-1062 (24 hours) or contact the Honor Code Office at 422-2847.

Brigham Young University seeks to accommodate qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability that may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the University Accessibility Center (422-2767) in 2170 WSC. If you need assistance, or you feel you have been discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through the established grievance policy and procedures. You should contact the Equal Opportunity Office at 422-5895 or 888-238-1062 (24 hours).

Final Exam policy: Students must plan their schedules to complete their final examinations during the regularly scheduled examination times. If unplanned, non-academic extenuating circumstances (such as serious illness, personal injury, etc.) prevent completion of a final examination before the Grade Submission Deadline, an Incomplete Grade Contract (available from the Records Office) should be completed and submitted.

The class schedule and procedures are subject to change in case of extenuating circumstances

I. The Communists' Rise to Power

January 5-9 The Roots of Revolution—Dreyer, chs. 2-3; Dittmer, ch. 1

January 12-16 “China in Revolution” documentary film.

January 19 (No Class)

January 21-26 The Communists take Power—Dreyer, ch. 4.

January 28-30 An overview of post-1949 China—Dreyer, chs. 5-6.
***Red China Blues* Draft Review Due Jan. 30th**

II. Party and State

February 2-6 The Political System—Dreyer, chs. 1 & 9.

February 9-13 The Politics of Policy Making—Dreyer, review ch. 5; Dittmer, ch. 2

February 16 (No Class)

February 17(Tu)-20 The Politics of Succession—Dreyer, review ch. 6; Dittmer, chs. 3-4

February 23 Catch up and Review.

February 25 **MIDTERM** (All day in the Testing Center)

III. State-Society Relations

February 27-March 6 Building Mao’s Socialism—Dreyer, chs. 7.

March 9-13 Post-Mao Reforms—Dreyer, chs. 7 & 11; Dittmer, chs. 5, 8, 13
***Wild Grass* Review Due March 13th**

March 16 “In Search of China” video.

March 18 Toward a Rule of Law—Dreyer ch. 8; Dittmer, chs. 6-7

March 20-23 Mobilization and Control—Dreyer, chs. 10 & 12; Dittmer, chs. 10-11

March 25-27 “The Gate of Heavenly Peace” documentary.

March 30 Open

April 1-10 Contemporary Challenges— Dittmer, chs. 9, 11, 14-15 & 17

April 13 Conclude and Review, Dreyer, ch. 15. **Research Paper Due**

FINAL Monday, April 20, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

BOOK REVIEW GUIDE

Book Title by Author (Publisher, date), total pages.

Reviewed by, Your Name

(Do not use a cover of any kind, but simply staple the paper in the upper left-hand corner.)

The Purpose of this note is to explain what kind of work is expected in order to fulfill the assignment to write a "book review" in this class.

Perhaps it will be most helpful to begin negatively, by specifying what is not expected. The following are unacceptable:

1. A chapter-by-chapter summary of the book, with a "conclusion" giving your opinion of it tacked on at the end (or the beginning!).
2. A statement about how valuable the book was, and how much you got out of it.
3. A statement about how bad the book was, and how little you got out of it.

The above approaches all neglect analysis, and do not place the book you have read in the intellectual framework of the course. Those two qualities are expected. They can be attained in the following ways (among others):

1. You can subject the book to a theoretical or empirical review based on what you have learned in the course, explaining what points the author has failed to make, connections that have not been perceived, ideas not carried out to their logical conclusion, assumptions taken for granted, etc.
2. You can show how the book considers issues that should have been but were not considered by other authors you read for this course. In other words, you can reverse the approach of (1), and use the book to criticize the course material or other books.
3. You can, of course, do both of the above at once, in the event that the book, in your opinion, illuminates some problems but obscures others.
4. You can show how the book adds to one or more of the authors you read in the course, by considering their ideas in a different context -- a different model or paradigm, another historical era, another philosophical framework, etc. Here you can make comparisons between the book and the course material/other books, with regard to how they enlighten or affect you.

5. You can simply discuss ideas, relevant to the course, that are suggested by the book, without ever specifically referring to course material, but showing by the nature of your discussion that the material has become a part of your consciousness. You may, for example, show how the book demolishes or supports conventional notions about the same problems that the course subject matter deals with.
7. You can defend the book against hostile criticisms, calling on material from the course to help your defense.
8. You may take one line of argument discovered in the book and extend it beyond the author's frame of reference by calling on material from the course, from other courses, or from other writings.

Note that whether you analyze the book, or use the book to help analyze something else, you do not have to be negatively critical of the book. Being critical is not simply being negative; it is using your ideas to evaluate the material.

You are encouraged to consult World Politics or The New York Review of Books for examples of book reviews that analyze rather than merely report

Book Review Grade Criteria

Analysis

The major idea or premise of the book is made clear, but this is not achieved merely by a detailed description of the books contents. Rather by a "reconstruction" of the underlying assumptions and premises of the author.

What is the contribution of the book? A "critical assessment" of the author's success (or lack of it) in clearly communicating ideas. What does it offer to a student of politics or how is it helpful in furthering our understanding Chinese politics?

Intellectual framework of the course

The book reviewed is placed in the larger context of the course. Is it reviewed in a "vacuum," just on its own merits, or are other ideas incorporated in judging the validity and value of the ideas presented by the author?

Mechanics

Are the basic rules of English composition followed?

X Factor

The review is "cohesive," offers good "insights" into the material covered by the book and is written with "clarity." (Or simply stated: How does this book review, in all aspects, stack up against other book reviews?)