University of Victoria
Department of Political Science / Department of History
Fall Term, 2018-19

POLI 371 A01 Chinese Politics (CRN: 12738) /
HSTR 365 A01 Topics in East Asian History: Chinese Politics (CRN: 11988)

Class schedule: Monday and Thursday, 13:00-14:20
Classroom: ELL (Elliott Building) 061

Instructor: Guoguang Wu
Office Hours: Thursday 14:30-16:30; or by appointment
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Course Description

This course provides an introductory overall investigation of the domestic politics of the People’s Republic of China. Covering the historical continuity and change of Chinese politics from 1949 to the present, the course is organized into two parts, namely, Mao Zedong’s reign with liberation and the proletarian dictatorship (1949-1976), and the post-Mao eras with reform and refreshed repression. Emphases of discussion will be given to: 1) contending theoretical perspectives to understanding contemporary Chinese politics; 2) fundamental political institutions of governing the revolutionary and then the transitional China; 3) the dynamics of revolution, reform, and repression embedded in state-society relations.

It also tries to seize every possible opportunity to consider China as a country case in comparative political perspectives, including comparisons with other communist states, transitional polities in East Asia, authoritarian politics in general, and, in terms of political economy of development, the Global South. The course, accordingly, attempts to investigate Chinese politics in lenses of comparative politics and comparative political economy, dealing with significant issues and emerging phenomena such as revolution, mass mobilization, social control, political legitimacy, liberalization and marketization, democratic transition, globalization, inequality, ethnicity, and social protest, while the central concern is on how contemporary Chinese politics is grounded, operated, evolved, challenged, and transformed in the face of those issues and phenomena.

A student taking this course does not need specialized background knowledge on Chinese politics, but, with the guidance provided by lectures and readings, is expected to experiment imagining of a political system that is perhaps fundamentally different from one in which he/she lives, and seizing of the concepts applicable to comprehending and analyzing the Chinese political system. Questions and comments from students during the lectures are always welcome and encouraged.

Diversity and Free Speech

While the University of Victoria is committed to respecting diversity and human rights, the university also upholds the principle that wide-ranging debate incorporating a diversity of perspectives is the best way to learn. Be prepared to be challenged in this course and be ready to exchange constructively with people who fundamentally disagree with your point of view. Strive to remain curious and open to new ideas. I ask that you remain civil and respectful at all times. Deliberate and repeated hate speech and/or speech that promotes violence can be considered harassment. Please see the University Policy on Harassment: https://www.uvic.ca/universitysecretary/assets/docs/policies/GV0205_1150_.pdf. If you feel you may be experiencing harassment, please consult with the University Ombudsperson (https://uvicombudsperson.ca/), or the Office of Equity and Human Rights (https://www.uvic.ca/equity/).

Requirements and Assessments

A registered student for credits of this course is required to accomplish the following tasks:
1) to attend all lecture meetings and classroom documentary shows;
2) to complete the reading assignments BEFORE each corresponding week’s meetings;
3) to submit two short research papers by the stipulated deadlines (see details below in “Papers and Exam”);
4) to complete a take-home exam (see details below in “Papers and Exam”).

The scheme for the final grade evaluation is as that follows:

- Attendance: 10%
- Two short papers: 30% X 2 = 60%
- Take-home exam: 30%
**Grading Scale**

Will follow the University’s official grading system. See: http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2012/FACS/UnIn/UARe/Grad.html.

**Academic Integrity**

Please see the University’s academic integrity policy: http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2017-09/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html

**Papers and Exam**

Each student is required to write two short research papers, as the first must deal with a topic relevant to the Mao era and the second, the post-Mao eras. The student is obligated to choose his/her own specific topic of the papers within the above restrictions while consultation with the instructor is encouraged. The length of each paper will be **approximately 3,000 words, notes included**. Footnotes or endnotes may be used as long as they are consistent, either with bibliography or not.

**The first paper is due on October 15 (Monday) by 3:00 pm; the second paper is due on November 22 (Thursday) by 3:00 pm.**

Each student is also required to complete the final take-home exam. **The exam will raise four discussion questions, among which a student chooses two to answer. The length of each answer is expected to be roughly 1,500 words.** The exam questions will be circulated online by 3:00 pm December 3 (Monday); the exam answers must be handed in by 3:00 pm December 6 (Thursday).

Each of above hand-ins must be submitted to the instructor electronically via email (to: wug@uvic.ca) in the following way:

1) make your assignment a WORD document, as **non-WORD documents will not be marked**;
2) name the electronic document of your paper as “Poli 371 [or Hstr 465] P1 [or P2] Your Last Name” (for example, Poli 371 P1 Robertson, or Hstr 465 P2 Woodside);
3) name the electronic document of your exam answers as “Poli 371 [or Hstr 465] Exam Your Last Name” (for example, Poli 371 Exam Robertson, or Hstr 465 Exam Woodside);
4) email your assignment as the attached document.

**Penalty of Late Submission**

**A late submission will be penalized by the deduction of one grade for each day of delay, weekend included** -- It means that a late submission will get the grade ‘B’ if the submission deserves ‘B+’ according to its academic quality but it is submitted one day after the deadline. Its grade will be ‘B-’ if it is submitted two days after the deadline, and so calculated with more days of delay. **The submission with the delay of one week will not be marked.**

**Course Experience Survey (CES)**

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term you will have the opportunity to complete a confidential course experience survey (CES) regarding your learning experience. The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. When it is time for you to complete the survey, you will receive an email inviting you to do so. If you do not receive an email invitation, you can go directly to http://ces.uvic.ca. You will need to use your UVic NetLink ID to access the survey, which can be done on your laptop, tablet or
mobile device. I will remind you nearer the time, but please be thinking about this important activity, especially the following three questions, during the course.

1. What strengths did your instructor demonstrate that helped you learn in this course?
2. Please provide specific suggestions as to how the instructor could have helped you learn more effectively.
3. Please provide specific suggestions as to how this course could be improved.

Textbook

No required textbook.

CLASS SCHEDULE

(Below * indicates a required reading assignment; others are recommended)

NOTE: Under exceptional circumstances, there may be some changes to the schedule. Students will be informed in advance as a schedule change is expected to emerge.

Sep 6 (Th): Class Introduction; Who Is Mao, and Why Him?

This meeting will be divided into two sections: the first is procedural, on organization of the class; the second, substantial, on Mao and Chinese politics.

No required reading.

Recommended reading:

PART I The Mao Era: Liberation and Dictatorship

Sep 10 & 13 (M & Th): Ideology and Organization: The Maoist State in the Perspective of Totalitarianism

It sketches the general picture of political life in Mao’s China with introducing the perspective of totalitarianism, and critically discusses each of the six characteristics of totalitarianism and its application to Maoist politics.


Sep 17 & 20 (M & Th): Danwei (Working Unit) and Qunzhong (Masses): The Maoist State in the Perspective of Neo-Traditionalism

With the emphases on the working unit system and the conceptual triplicity of activists-masses-enemies, it compares the perspective of neo-traditionalism with totalitarianism, and considers the strengths and limits of both theories in comprehending Mao’s China.


Sep 24 (M): The classroom show of the documentary The Sorcerer’s Apprentice (Princeton, NJ: Films for Humanities & Sciences, 2006).

It can be tremendously difficult for Canadian students and, actually, even for today’s Chinese students to imagine political life in Mao’s China. This documentary will help by showing you real pictures and lively details of how Chinese people lived in their magic or surreal world under the Great Leader.

Sep 27 & Oct 1 (Th & M): Political Campaign, Class Struggles, Mass Mobilization, and Social Control

It investigates the political dynamic of Maoist governance with both a general review of political campaigns and in-depth analysis of two cases of campaigns, namely, “Eliminating ‘four evils’” and the Great Leap Forward. It will also analyze how liberation and mobilization are turned to be social control through the unfolding of class struggles.


Oct 4 & 11 (Th & Th): Legitimacy, Personal Worship, and Power Succession

This week we will focus on elite politics and its connection with state-society interactions, and inquire into the myths of political legitimacy, Mao’s personal cult, and leadership power struggles.


[Oct. 8, Monday: Thanksgiving, NO CLASS]

**The first paper is DUE on Oct 15 (Monday) by 3:00 pm**

**PART II Post-Mao Changes: Marketization and Repression**

**Oct 15 & 18 (M & Th): The Origins of Rural Reform and the Politics of Rural Governance**


**Oct 22 & 25 (M & Th): Urban Marketization, Open-Door Policy, and the Politics of Economic Transition**


**Oct 29 & Nov 1 (M & Th): Administrative Rationalization, Political Liberalization, and Struggles for Democratization**

* It studies two waves of post-Mao political reform and the liberal-conservative cycles, investigates social dynamics of political reform, and analyzes why reform came to the Tiananmen tragedy in 1989.


**Nov 5 & 8 (M & Th): The Coercive Machine of Post-Tiananmen Growth: Momentum and Cost, Capacity and Corruption**

* Why is the “Chinese miracle” of economic growth since the 1990s? How to understand the so-called “China model” of development? Class discussions will be organized with lectures for outlining the features and impacts, and pros and cons of the domestic mechanism of the rise of China.


[Nov 12, Monday: Reading Break, NO CLASS]

> What connects a street carnival in New Orleans, USA and a remote factory in Fujian Province, PRC? And, what impact does a connection of such produce? This documentary pictures Chinese migrant workers’ life in the globalization age and reveals some secrets of China’s prosperity.

Nov 19 & 22 (M & Th): Governing Social Discontents: The Politics of Ethnicity, Inequality, Environmental Pollution, and Mass Protests

> How and why social discontents have grown fast in today’s China with economic prosperity? This week we investigate some deep causes such as corruption, inequality, and social injustice, while highlighting the factors of environmental pollutions and ethnic tensions. The regime’s responses will also be analyzed.


The second paper is DUE on November 22 (Thursday) by 3:00 pm

Nov 26 & 29 (M & Th): Governing Social Changes: The Politics of New Sectors, NGOs, Religions, and the Internet

> Today’s China is so different from Mao’s China, especially in socioeconomic life. The private sector is vital for the economy; NGOs are active in many realms; religions are revitalizing; people are immersed in online activities and social media. Will Chinese politics tame them, or will they change Chinese politics?


**Dec 3 (M): Rice without Rights? Political and Institutional Implications of China’s Prosperity**

| It will attempt to draw some concluding reflections over Chinese politics in comparative and global perspectives. |


**The Take-Home Exam:**

The questions will be handed out via email list December 3 (Monday) by 3:00 pm; the answers are due on December 6 (Thursday) by 3:00 pm.