

## **POLS/GLAS 231 Chinese Politics and Society Spring 2022**

Time: Tuesday/Thursday 2:00 – 3:15 PM

Location: BSB 311

Instructor: Professor Yue Zhang (yuezhang@uic.edu)

Assistant: Kaiyu Li (kli20@uic.edu)

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is a broad introduction to the main issues of contemporary Chinese politics and social change. Although there is a strong focus on the reform period (post-1978), we will also spend considerable time and energy on understanding the previous century of change and upheaval, including the decline of the last imperial dynasty, the rise of communism and China under the rule of Mao Zedong. The course will offer an opportunity for students to gain background knowledge about key individuals and events in China in a historical perspective. It will also introduce students to the changes and challenges facing contemporary China. Major issues including economic development, civil society, rural/urban division, and international relations will be discussed in the course. The aim of this course is to demystify China, to make it accessible to you, and to give you the basic tools and motivation to pursue further engagement with China – be it through language study, travel, a higher-level class on China, or any other form.

### **REQUIREMENTS**

The course employs a mix of innovative teaching methods to make students' learning experiences as inclusive and engaging as possible. These methods include lectures and discussions, news presentation, documentaries, and group projects. To achieve the best learning outcome, careful reading and active class participation are both important. Class attendance is required. Please communicate with me if you become ill or emergencies arise so that I will be aware of your circumstances.

In order to keep up with the current state of affairs in China, every student is responsible for presenting one article on China from one of the following major newspapers or magazines, including *Newsweek*, *The Economist*, *Foreign Policy*, *Financial Times*, *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *The Wall Street Journal*. Please post your selected article on Blackboard at least 24 hours before class. The student should provide a brief summary of the article and discuss its implication for our understanding of China. Students will present based on the alphabetical order (A to Z) of their last names.

Documentaries are an important source of information and can provide a close observation of a society that we cannot obtain personally. We will be watching several documentaries as an educational tool in this course in order to trace the histories and understand the current political, economic, and social development in China. Students can watch the documentaries on their own

devices by using their UIC library privilege. Students are required to write a movie review essay based on the documentary *China: A Century of Revolution*. The essay should discuss a specific aspect of Chinese politics and society in the pre-reform era. Essays should be 5-8 double-spaced pages and are due on February 17. Late assignments will not be accepted.

Students will conduct a group project on Chinese politics and economics in the reform era. Each group will choose a topic from the following options:

- 1) China's War on Poverty
- 2) China's High-speed Rail Development
- 3) The Belt and Road Initiative
- 4) China in Africa
- 5) U.S.-China Relations
- 6) China's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Groups will present their projects on March 29 and 31. Each group has 15 minutes for the presentation, followed by a brief Q&A session. Every student is required to write a project report independently, which is due on April 7. Reports should be 8-10 double-spaced pages. Use proper grammar, appropriate language, citation and quotation, and proofread and spell-check the final copy of every assignment. Late assignments will not be accepted. Your grade for the group project will be based on the in-class presentation and the report.

A take-home final exam will be distributed on April 26 and due on May 1. Grades for exams will be based on both substance and style. Late submissions will be penalized one third of a grade for every 24 hours that they are late.

## **GRADING**

Your grade will be based on five components:

- Class Attendance and Participation: 10%
- News Presentation: 10%
- Movie Review Essay: 20%
- Group Project: 30%
- Take-home Final Exam: 30%

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Cheating will not be tolerated. You must write your own papers and your own exams. Any student caught cheating will receive a failing grade in the class and be referred to the administration for disciplinary actions. Keep in mind that the technology that allows students to retrieve papers from the Internet also allows instructors to find those papers. If you are unclear what constitutes plagiarism please talk to Professor Zhang.

## READINGS

Two textbooks are used in this course and are available for purchase at the University Bookstore. All the other readings are available in electronic format on Blackboard.

Kenneth Lieberthal. 2004. *Governing China: From Revolution Through Reform*. New York and London: Norton.

Robert E. Gamer and Stanley W. Toops eds. 2017. *Understanding Contemporary China*. Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

## IMPORTANT COVID-19 STATEMENT

- Please do NOT COME TO CAMPUS if you have COVID-19 symptoms. See the Healthcheck app for a list of these symptoms.
- Students, faculty, and staff coming to campus or engaging in academic and clinical activities or field placements off-campus, are required to be vaccinated and to obtain a COVID-19 booster shot [once they are eligible](#). If you still need to obtain your vaccine or booster, you can do so [on campus](#) or at a [location near you](#).
- Prior to or upon returning to campus, re-entry testing will be required for all members of the UIC community, including those who are fully vaccinated and boosted. Given the limited availability of testing in the Chicago area and across the country at this time, we strongly recommend that you take advantage of [on-campus saliva testing](#) within 72 hours of your first visit to campus for work or study to fulfill your re-entry testing requirement.
- All students, faculty, and staff are expected to WEAR A MASK that is tight-fitting and covers both the mouth and nose when inside any building at UIC including classrooms, regardless of vaccination status. Individuals may remove their masks when alone in a private office or personal residence hall room, or if they have a medical condition, disability or other reason that prevents them from safely wearing a face mask. The university recommends using two-layer cloth (utilize the filter insert, if applicable), KN95 or procedural masks to cover your mouth and nose AT ALL TIMES. Also, consider double masking to provide a snugger fit. Single-ply masks, neck gaiters, and masks with exhaust valves are not acceptable masks on campus.
- If you test positive for COVID-19 at a non-UIC testing location, please report test results via the [UIC COVID-19 Reporting Tool](#). The UIC contact tracing team will contact students, faculty and staff who test positive using on-campus testing as well as those who self-report off-campus test results. The UIC contact tracing team counsels individuals on isolation, identifies and notifies their close contacts on campus, monitors both groups for COVID-19 symptoms, and connects individuals with campus and external resources to successfully complete isolation and quarantine. Note that on-campus positive testing results are automatically recorded.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **PART I. Historical Legacies and Cultural Context**

#### **Week 1: Introduction**

January 11

- Course Overview, No Readings

January 13

- Lieberthal, “The Legacies of Imperial China” (Chapter 1)

#### **Week 2: The Historical and Geographic Context**

January 18

- Gamer and Toops, “China: A Geographic Preface” (Chapter 2)

January 20

- Discussion

#### **Week 3: The Rise of Communism (I): Republican Era**

January 25

- Lieberthal, “The Republican Era” (Chapter 2)

January 27

- *China: A Century of Revolution*, Disc 1, Part I  
([https://i-share-uic.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CARLI\\_UIC/1k7iidj/alma99329943412005897](https://i-share-uic.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CARLI_UIC/1k7iidj/alma99329943412005897))

#### **Week 4: The Rise of Communism (II): Maoist System**

February 1

- Lieberthal, “The Maoist System: Ideas and Governance” (Chapter 3)
- Ralph Thaxton. 1977. “On Peasant Revolution and National Resistance: Toward a Theory of Peasant Mobilization and Revolutionary War with Special Reference to Modern China.” *World Politics*, Vol. 30, No. 1, pp. 24-57.

February 3

- *China: A Century of Revolution*, Disc 1, Part II

#### **Week 5: The Cultural Revolution**

February 8

- Lieberthal, “The Maoist Era” (Chapter 4)

- Lucian Pye. 1986. "Reassessing the Cultural Revolution." *The China Quarterly*, No. 108, pp. 597-612.

February 10

- *China: A Century of Revolution*, Disc 2, Part I

## **PART II. Political Institutions and Economic Transformation**

### **Week 6: Reform and Opening Up**

February 15

- Lieberthal, "The Reform Era" (Chapter 5)
- Mary Gallagher. 2002. "'Reform and Openness': Why China's Economic Reforms Have Delayed Democracy." *World Politics*, Vol. 54, No. 3, pp. 338-372.

February 17

- *China: A Century of Revolution*, Disc 2, Part II

**\*\*\*Movie Review Essay Due on February 17\*\*\***

### **Week 7: The Political System**

February 22

- Lieberthal, "The Organization of Political Power and Its Consequences: The View from the Outside" (Chapter 6)
- Lieberthal, "The Organization of Political Power and Its Consequences: The View from the Inside" (Chapter 7)
- Andrew Nathan. 2001. "The Tiananmen Papers: An Editor's Reflections." *The China Quarterly*, No. 167, pp. 724-37.
- Andrew Nathan. 2003. "Authoritarian Resilience." *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 6-17.

February 24

- *China: A Century of Revolution*, Disc 3, Part I

### **Week 8: The "Socialist Market System"**

March 1

- Lieberthal, "Economic Development" (Chapter 8)
- Gamer and Toops, "China's Economy" (Chapter 5)

March 3

- *China: A Century of Revolution*, Disc 3, Part II

## **Week 9: The Urban-rural Divide**

March 8

- Gamer and Toops, "Population Growth and Urbanization" (Chapter 8)
- Kam Wing Chan & Li Zhang. 1999. "The Hukou System and Rural-Urban Migration in China: Processes and Changes." *China Quarterly*, No. 160, pp. 818-55.

March 10

- Documentary: *Made in China or American Factory* (Netflix)  
(<https://uic.kanopy.com/video/made-china>)

## **Week 10: Group Project, No Class**

March 15 & March 17

## **Week 11: Spring Break, No Class**

## **Week 12: Group Presentation**

March 29 & March 31

## **PART III. Major Policy Issues**

## **Week 13: Cities and Urban Space**

April 5

- Yue Zhang. 2008. "Steering Towards Growth: Symbolic Urban Preservation in Beijing, 1990-2005." *Town Planning Review* 79 (2-3): 187-208.
- Jennifer Currier. 2008. "Art and Power in the New China: An Exploration of Beijing's 798 District and Its Implication for Contemporary Urbanism." *Town Planning Review*, 79 (2-3): 237-265.

April 7

- Documentary: *Chinese Mayor*  
([https://i-share-uic.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CARLI\\_UIC/1k7iidj/alma9949489912870589/1](https://i-share-uic.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CARLI_UIC/1k7iidj/alma9949489912870589/1))

**\*\*\*Group Project Report Due on April 7\*\*\***

## **Week 14: Gender and Family**

April 12

- Gamer and Toops, "Family, Kinship, Marriage, and Sexuality" (Chapter 10)
- Gamer and Toops, "Women and Development" (Chapter 11)

April 14

- Overseas Chinese and Chinatown Development

**Week 15: Religion and Ethnic Minority**

April 19

- Gamer and Toops, “Religion” (Chapter 12)

April 21

- Gamer and Toops, “China Beyond the Heartland” (Chapter 6)

**Week 16: China and the World**

April 26

- Gamer and Toops, “International Relations” (Chapter 7)
- Susan L. Shirk. 2007. “The Echo Chamber of Nationalism: Media and the Internet” (Chapter 4), pp. 79-104 in *China: Fragile Superpower*. New York: Oxford University Press.

**\*\*\*Take-home Final Exam Distributed on April 26\*\*\***

**\*\*\*Take-home Final Exam Due on May 1\*\*\***