

# Politics of China 中国政治

Politics 141 • 43192 • Winter 2020  
University of California, Santa Cruz  
Prof. Benjamin L. Read

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Course web site:	<a href="https://canvas.ucsc.edu/">https://canvas.ucsc.edu/</a>
Instructor's web site:	<a href="https://benread.net">https://benread.net</a>
Course meetings:	Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11:40a to 1:15p, in Physical Sciences 130
Office hours:	Tuesdays, 2:00p to 4:00p, in 157 Merrill Faculty Annex, and by appointment
Date of this syllabus:	<u>January 6, 2020</u> . Subject to change; check websites for latest version

## Overview:

Home to more than one-fifth of the world's people, China compels our attention for many reasons—particularly its authoritarian political system, which contrasts sharply with liberal democracies. This course aims to help the student acquire an understanding of this state's tortuous political development, its recent rise to global prominence, its prowess and its pathologies, how it works and how it doesn't work. The first two sessions provide essential background to the People's Republic, and the next six sessions cover essential episodes in the first four decades of the PRC, looking at the Communist Party's efforts to transform Chinese society, the Cultural Revolution, and the tensions and achievements of the early reform era, including the 1989 protest movement. The second half of the course explores themes and topics that are vital for understanding the politics of today's China. These include the institutions through which China is governed, the current state president and party secretary Xi Jinping, political participation (e.g., village elections and popular protests), media and public opinion, associations and civil society, China's state-capitalist mode of economic development, and topics in public policy. We also look at the special regions of Hong Kong, Xinjiang, and Tibet. No background in the study of Asia is assumed for this undergraduate course.

## Readings:

The book below can be read online as an e-book via the UCSC Library website, and is also available for purchase at the Bay Tree bookstore (and, of course, at online stores.) I recommend that you acquire a copy right away, or familiarize yourself with how to access it on the library site.

- William A. Joseph (ed.), *Politics in China: An Introduction*, third edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019, ISBN: 9780190870737). Be sure to get this edition, and not the first or second edition.

The many other required readings will be available on the course Canvas site (<https://canvas.ucsc.edu>).

## Assignments and Ground Rules:

- Please read the following carefully before deciding to stay enrolled in this course.
- **Self-introduction:** please send me an email in the first week of class introducing yourself. You may wish to lay out such basic facts as your year in school; college; major; prior courses (if any) in Asian languages, history, or politics; international travel experience (if any); future career interests. I'd also like to know what you're most excited about in school and in your life; any challenges you're facing; and anything else you would like me to know about you. It can be useful for me to know such things, but really I am just curious to know whatever you would like to tell me about yourself.
- **Attendance:** Attending class, on time, is firmly required. I'm not indifferent to whether you're there or not. Quite the contrary: it matters a lot to me, and more importantly, to you. Your being there helps you learn and makes the class work. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. Good attendance is rewarded

with a modest bonus. Unexcused absences will lower your quarter grade. Three 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. It is entirely possible to fail the course through non-attendance; this has happened before. I am quite understanding about family emergencies, illness or other serious exigencies, and will treat them as excused absences. If you miss class, explain the circumstances via email (in advance if possible).

- **Classroom participation and etiquette:**
  - Come prepared for class, and contribute actively to class discussion. Participation in class counts for part of your class grade.
  - Please do not use electronic devices (computers, tablets, phones) in class.
  - Please use the bathroom prior to the start of each session, and try not to disrupt class by getting up at other times except in cases of utmost urgency. If you need to leave class early, please let me know ahead of time.
- **Reading:** 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 (except the first day). 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. I will circulate discussion questions at least 24 hours before class to help guide you and to set the stage for in-class discussion.
- **Email:** You must use and regularly check your official UCSC email account, i.e., the one that AIS sends mail to. Make sure Canvas sends announcements to this account.
- **Grading:** Most assignments are scored on a 0-100 scale, where 90-100 is an A, 80-89 is a B, etc. Grades of A minus or higher are reserved for work of exceptionally high quality. The grade of B is for work that is truly good although not great. The grade of C is for minimally acceptable work.
- **Grade weighting:** Your final grade for the quarter will be calculated per the following, though the exact percentages are subject to adjustment.
  - Map quiz (in class, Thursday, January 16, 2020): **5 percent** of course grade
  - Class participation: **20 percent**
  - Pop quizzes: **25 percent**
  - Take-home midterm examination (due via email Sunday, February 2, 2020, 3pm): **20 percent**
  - Final exam (Monday, March 16, 2020, 8am to 11:00am): **30 percent**
- **Time commitment:** The UCSC Academic Senate reminds us: “Systemwide Senate Regulation 760 specifies that one academic credit corresponds to three hours of work per week for students during a 10-week quarter. This means that the average workload for a 5-credit course is 150 hours or 15 hours per week.” With this in mind, expect to spend each week, on average:
  - Lectures and discussion: 3 hours and 10 minutes
  - Reading, note-taking, the take-home midterm, and review for the final exam: 11 hours and 50 minutes, i.e., something like 5 hours for each class session.
- **Accommodations:** UC Santa Cruz is committed to creating an academic environment that supports its diverse student body. If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me privately during my office hours or by appointment, preferably within the first two weeks of the quarter. We would also like to discuss ways we can ensure your full participation in the course. We encourage all students who may benefit from learning more about DRC services to contact DRC by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at [drc@ucsc.edu](mailto:drc@ucsc.edu).
- **Course materials:**
  - **Slides and audio recording:** Within a few days after each lecture I will post the slides and an audio recording. The recording is mainly in case you had to miss class for some good reason. Please bear in mind that these are for your personal use only and shouldn't be distributed or posted on the public internet. The Academic Senate has asked faculty to include a note to this effect, as follows:
  - **Warning from the university about distribution of lecture notes and materials:** Please note that students may be disciplined for selling, preparing, or distributing course lecture notes, including notes created independently by students. The unauthorized sale of lecture notes, handouts, readers or other course materials is a violation of campus policies as well as state law. Violation by distribution to the

public may also constitute copyright infringement subject to legal action.

## Part I / Fundamentals and Pre-PRC Background

Tuesday, January 7: [First Meeting]

- William A. Joseph, “Studying Chinese Politics,” in *Politics in China*, pp. 3–27 [partial chapter with basic background on China and approaches to the study of China]

Thursday, January 9: [Essential Legacies from China’s Ancient and Recent Past]

- R. Keith Schoppa, “From Empire to People’s Republic,” in *Politics in China*, pp. 45–73
- Peter J. Seybolt, *Throwing the Emperor from His Horse*, preface and pp. 1–30
- Go to “Maps and Map Quiz” under “Files” in the Canvas site. Familiarize yourselves with the maps of China, and study the map terms. You may need to make use of the web (even Google Maps) or printed atlases to find some of them. The map quiz will likely require somewhat more preparation than you expect.

## Part II / The People’s Republic of China, 1949–1989

Tuesday, January 14: [Socialist Transformation]

- Frederick Teiwes, “Mao Zedong in Power,” in *Politics in China*, pp. 76–91 [partial chapter]
- William A. Joseph, “Ideology and China’s Political Development,” in *Politics in China*, chapter 5, pp. 157–182 [partial chapter]
- Peter J. Seybolt, *Throwing the Emperor from His Horse*, pp. 31–49 (chapters 2 and 3)

Thursday, January 16: [The Great Leap Forward] [Map quiz]

- Frederick Teiwes, “Mao Zedong in Power,” in *Politics in China*, pp. 91–100 [partial chapter]
- Peter J. Seybolt, *Throwing the Emperor from His Horse*, pp. 51–64
- Yang Jisheng, “Anxious in Anhui,” chapter 8 of *Tombstone: The Great Chinese Famine, 1958–1962* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2012), pp. 269–319

Tuesday, January 21: [The Cultural Revolution (1)]

- Frederick Teiwes, “Mao Zedong in Power,” in *Politics in China*, pp. 100–108 [partial chapter]
- 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, January 23: [The Cultural Revolution (2)]

- Peter J. Seybolt, *Throwing the Emperor from His Horse*, pp. 65–76
- Andrew G. Walder, “Bending the Arc of Chinese History: The Cultural Revolution’s Paradoxical Legacy,” *The China Quarterly* 227 (September 2016), pp. 613–631
- Susanne Weigelin-Schwiedrzik and Cui Jinke, “Whodunnit? Memory and Politics before the 50th Anniversary of the Cultural Revolution,” *The China Quarterly* 227 (September 2016), pp. 734–751
- Frederick Teiwes, “Mao Zedong in Power,” in *Politics in China*, pp. 108–120 [partial chapter]

Tuesday, January 28: [Deng Xiaoping and the Early Reforms]

- Bruce Gilley, “Deng Xiaoping and his Successors,” in *Politics in China*, pp. 124–133 [partial chapter]
- Zhao Ziyang, selections from *Prisoner of the State: The Secret Journal of Premier Zhao Ziyang*, translated and edited by Bao Pu, Renee Chiang, and Adi Ignatius (Simon & Schuster, 2009): pp. 91–110, 161–182
- Peter J. Seybolt, *Throwing the Emperor from His Horse*, pp. 77–88 and 89–98, on decollectivization and the state of the village as of the late 1980s

Thursday, January 30: [The Protest Movement and Political Crisis of 1989]

- Prior to class, watch the 3-hour documentary “Gate of Heavenly Peace” (1995), by Carma Hinton and Richard Gordon. It’s available online (Part I: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Gtt2JxmQtg> Part II: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o0lgc4fWkWI>) and in the McHenry Library media center.
- We will begin class with a quiz on the documentary.
- Bruce Gilley, “Deng Xiaoping and his Successors,” in *Politics in China*, pp. 133–134 and box 4.1, pp. 135–136 [partial chapter, giving a bare-bones overview]
- **[Take-home midterm assignment will be handed out]**

Sunday, February 2: **[Take-home midterm due via email, 3pm]**

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

Tuesday, February 4: [The CCP’s Post-1989 Recovery and “Authoritarian Resilience”]

- Louisa Lim, “Student,” chapter 4 of *The People’s Republic of Amnesia: Tiananmen Revisited* (Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 83–104
- Bruce Gilley, “Deng Xiaoping and his Successors,” in *Politics in China*, pp. 132–144 [partial chapter]
- William A. Joseph, “Ideology and China’s Political Development,” in *Politics in China*, chapter 5, pp. 182–197 [partial chapter]
- Bruce Dickson, “Introduction: The CCP’s Strategy for Survival,” in *The Dictator’s Dilemma: The Chinese Communist Party’s Strategy for Survival* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 1–29

#### Optional further reading:

- A debate in the pages of *Foreign Affairs* (January/February 2013):
  - Eric X. Li, “The Life of the Party”
  - Yasheng Huang, “Democratize or Die: Why China’s Communists Face Reform or Revolution”

Thursday, February 6: [Structures of Governance]

- Cheng Li, “China’s Communist Party-State: The Structure and Dynamics of Power,” in *Politics in China*, pp. 201–234
- 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
- Peter J. Seybolt, *Throwing the Emperor from His Horse*, pp. 99–130

Tuesday, February 11: [Xi Jinping]

- Evan Osnos, “Born Red,” *The New Yorker*, April 6, 2015 [Profile of Xi Jinping]
- Elizabeth C. Economy, *The Third Revolution: Xi Jinping and the New Chinese State* (Oxford University Press, 2018), chapters 1 “Introduction” and 2 “Heart of Darkness,” pp. 1–54
- Manfred Elfstrom, “Inside China: Xi’s Risky Power Play,” *Democracy: A Journal of Ideas*, Spring 2019, <https://democracyjournal.org/magazine/52/inside-china-xis-risky-power-play/>

Thursday, February 13: [China's Political Economy (1): Drivers of Growth and Competitiveness]

- **[Prof. Read will be in China for UCEAP. Lecture and discussion to take place digitally.]**
- David Zweig, "China's Political Economy," in *Politics in China*, chapter 8, pp. 274–307
- Arthur R. Kroeber, "Industry and the Rise of the Export Economy" and "Urbanization and Infrastructure," chapters 3 and 4 of *China's Economy: What Everyone Needs to Know* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016)
- James Fallows, "China Makes, the World Takes," *The Atlantic* (July/August 2007), <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200707/shenzhen>

Tuesday, February 18: [China's Political Economy (2): What Remains of Socialism?]

- **[Prof. Read will be in China for UCEAP. Lecture and discussion to take place digitally.]**
- Barry Naughton, "Is China Socialist?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 31, no. 1 (Winter 2017), pp. 3–24
- Martin King Whyte, "China's Post-Socialist Inequality," *Current History* (September 2012), pp. 229–234
- Ching Kwan Lee, "Precarization or Empowerment? Reflections on Recent Labor Unrest in China," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 75:2 (May 2016), pp. 317–333

**Optional further reading and viewing:**

- Charlotte Goodburn, "The End of the Hukou System? Not Yet," China Policy Institute Policy Paper (2014)
- Leslie T. Chang, *Factory Girls: From Village to City in a Changing China* (New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2009)
- Documentary: "We the Workers," (2017) trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndY1294mVDk>
- Documentary: "Plastic China," (2017), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y3Oz7Yp40EY>
- Arthur R. Kroeber, *China's Economy: What Everyone Needs to Know*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016

Thursday, February 20: [Media, Internet, and Public Opinion]

- Yang Guobin, "Policy Case Study: Internet Politics," in *Politics in China*, chapter 15, pp. 440–451
- Elizabeth C. Economy, *The Third Revolution: Xi Jinping and the New Chinese State* (Oxford University Press, 2018), chapter 3 "Chinanet," pp. 55–90
- Bruce Dickson, "Generating Support," chapter 5 of *The Dictator's Dilemma: The Chinese Communist Party's Strategy for Survival* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 213–259

**Optional further reading:**

- Evan Osnos, "The Forbidden Zone," *The New Yorker* (July 20, 2009) [on Hu Shuli and Caijing magazine]

Tuesday, February 25: [Contention and Civil Society]

- William Hurst and Christian Sorace, "Urban China: Change and Contention," in *Politics in China*, chapter 10
- Andrew G. Walder, "Unruly Stability: Why China's Regime Has Staying Power," *Current History* (September 2009), pp. 257–263
- Diana Fu, "Disguised Collective Action in China," *Comparative Political Studies* vol. 50, no. 4 (2017)

Thursday, February 27: [Local Elections and Democracy]

- Prior to class, watch the documentary "Wukan: China's Democracy Experiment," created by Lynn Lee and James Leong and broadcast on Al Jazeera. It's in six parts, each about 20 minutes. Links and URLs:  
[Part 1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mgIQckQGwbG) [Part 2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P0BEcmZuTCI) [Part 3](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Dxb3sT4dB0) [Part 4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GIMbmDBXoGg) [Part 5](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cfzn-3RCfFU) [Part 6](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7wbZlyNFgn4)
- We will begin class with a quiz on the documentary and on the following reading:
- Bruce Dickson, "Defining Democracy," chapter 6 of *The Dictator's Dilemma: The Chinese Communist Party's*

*Strategy for Survival* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 260–299

**Optional further reading:**

- John James Kennedy, “Rural China: Reform and Resistance,” in *Politics in China*, chapter 9
- 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

Tuesday, March 3: [Topics in Public Policy]

- Richard Curt Kraus, “Policy Case Study: The Arts,” in *Politics in China*, chapter 11
- Katherine Morton and Fengshi Wu, “Policy Case Study: The Environment,” in *Politics in China*, chapter 12
- Joan Kaufman, “Policy Case Study: Public Health,” in *Politics in China*, chapter 13
- Tyrene White, “Policy Case Study: Population Policy,” in *Politics in China*, chapter 14

Thursday, March 5: [The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region]

- Sonny Shiu-hing Lo, “Hong Kong,” in *Politics in China*, chapter 18
- Jiayang Fan, “Hong Kong’s Protest Movement and the Fight for the City’s Soul,” *The New Yorker*, December 9, 2019

**Optional further reading:**

- Jeffrey Wasserstrom, *Vigil: Hong Kong on the Brink*, Columbia Global Reports, February 2020
- Sebastian Veg, “Legalistic and Utopian: Hong Kong’s Umbrella Movement,” *New Left Review* 92 (March/April 2015), pp 54–73

Tuesday, March 10: [Xinjiang]

- Gardner Bovingdon, “Xinjiang,” in *Politics in China*, chapter 17
- James Millward, “‘Reeducating’ Xinjiang’s Muslims,” *The New York Review of Books*, February 7, 2019
- *The Economist*, “Who is Chinese? The Upper Han,” November 19, 2016

**Optional further reading:**

- James Leibold, “The Spectre of Insecurity: The CCP’s Mass Internment Strategy in Xinjiang,” *China Leadership Monitor*, March 1, 2019

Thursday, March 12: [Tibet]

- Robert Barnett, “Tibet,” in *Politics in China*, chapter 16
- Evan Osnos, “The Next Incarnation,” *The New Yorker*, October 4, 2010

**Final exam: Monday, March 16, 2019, 8am–11:00am**

- Note that the final exam must be taken at the above time; alternative times cannot be arranged.