

The Rise of China 中国崛起

Politics 161 | 50417 | Spring 2023
University of California, Santa Cruz
Prof. Benjamin L. Read

Professor's email: bread (at) ucsc (dot) edu. Email is the best way to reach me, much better than Canvas.
Course web site: <https://canvas.ucsc.edu/>
Professor's web site: <https://benread.net>
Course meetings: Tuesday and Thursday, 11:40am–1:15pm; attendance required
Classroom: Cowell Classroom Building 131
Office hours: On Zoom on Mondays, 2:00–3:00pm; in person on Tuesdays, 1:30–2:30pm
Please sign up at <https://tinyurl.com/benreadofficehours>
You may also email me to make an appointment outside this time slot.
Date of this syllabus: April 3, 2023, version 1. The syllabus may be updated during the academic term.

Overview

This course provides a broad introduction to the foreign relations of China. The rise of China—its growing economic clout, political influence, and military muscle—is often called the single most momentous process in the international relations of our time. We aim to understand this process from many perspectives, including by learning about Xi Jinping and what China is striving to accomplish under his leadership. As many (including the U.S. Secretary of State in 2012) have observed, in the context of a post-Cold War order centered on the United States, this ascendance raises the crucial question of “what happens when an established power and a rising power meet.” Thus, this course gives considerable attention to the U.S.–China relationship in its various manifestations, from differences over core values to technological competition. We examine how China interacts with other states in the Asia/Pacific, and how places such as the two Koreas, Japan, Taiwan, and Australia are reacting to their neighbor’s emerging prominence. The course also examines issues such as China’s influence on the developing world and global governance. In exploring each of these topics, we assess the value of major theoretical approaches to the study of international relations, particularly the realist tradition. We endeavor to understand the perspectives of China’s Communist Party leadership and ordinary people as well as external and critical points of view. There are no prerequisites for this course, nor is any Chinese language required, though there is an optional add-on module for students who are learning to read Chinese.

Course Goals and Core Questions

The goals of this course are:

- Students will build greater competence and confidence in interpreting international affairs.
- Students will gain a deeper understanding of China’s rise in power and prominence, and a host of related questions and issues, including aspects of U.S. foreign policy.
- Students will sharpen skills of reading, research, speaking, and writing.

The course accomplishes the above goals in large part through sustained consideration of the following core questions:

- How should we understand China’s rising regional and global prominence, and what are its implications?
- What drives or what explains China’s foreign policy decisions?
 - What does the CCP leadership want?
 - How is it pursuing those goals in bilateral relationships, multilateral forums, and particular issue areas?
 - Is China’s foreign policy different under Xi than under previous leaders?

- In what ways are other countries responding to China's rise?
 - Are they "balancing" against China or "bandwagoning" with China? Something else?
- How have the United States and China dealt with one another across a range of issues and problems?
 - To the extent that there are frictions or tensions, what factors are responsible for them and how feasible is it to mitigate them? Is conflict inevitable between a rising power and an established "hegemon"?
- What are the advantages and limitations of the realist theory of international relations in illuminating the above questions?

Readings

We will read a 2022 book by Bates Gill called *Daring to Struggle: China's Global Ambitions under Xi Jinping* (Oxford University Press). If you like having hard copies of books, you might order it on Amazon or elsewhere. I'll make sure that PDF copies of the individual chapters are available if you prefer that.

All readings will be available on Canvas (canvas.ucsc.edu), unless otherwise indicated on the syllabus. In Canvas, see Files / Readings.

Assignments and Ground Rules

- **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, and in international relations; international travel experience (if any); future career interests; 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 would just like to read whatever you would like to tell me about yourself.
- **Attendance:** Attending class 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. Good attendance is rewarded with a modest bonus. Unexcused absences will lower your quarter grade. 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. It is entirely possible to fail the course through non-attendance; this has happened before.
- **Discussion:** Contribute actively to class discussion. Participation in class counts for 10% of your class grade.
- **Reading:** This course involves a fair amount of reading, and the readings are required; complete them before the class meeting for which they are assigned. I will circulate discussion questions at least 24 hours before class to help guide you and to set the stage for in-class discussion.
- **Reading responses:** Short reading responses will be due in Canvas prior to the start of most classes (30% of class grade)
- **Research paper:** Students will research and write an original paper (~8 pages) on a relevant topic of your choosing. Deadlines for components of this paper are as follows. All components should be submitted to me via email as MS Word (or Open Office / Libre Office) documents. I will circulate detailed instructions early in the quarter.
 - A one-paragraph summary and a bibliography with at least 10 high-quality and substantive sources is due after Week 5; specifically, at noon on Saturday, May 6, 2023 (5% of class grade).
 - A 4-page (at least) preliminary draft of the paper is due at noon on Saturday, May 20, 2023 (5% of class grade).
 - The final version of the paper is due at noon on Saturday, June 10, 2023 (20% of class grade.)
- **Final exam:** The final exam will be noon to 3pm on Tuesday, June 13, 2021 (30% of class grade). The final exam covers all the lectures, discussions, readings and themes of the course.
- **Midterm:** There will be no midterm.
- **Grading:** All 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.
- **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 15 minutes
- Reading, note-taking, and review for the exams: 6 hours and 45 minutes
- Research and writing for the paper: 5 hours
- **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.
- **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.

Schedule of class meetings

#1, Tuesday, April 4, 2023 Introduction

- (There are no required readings for today)
- **Optional reading:**
- Chris Buckley, “[China’s Combative Nationalists See a World Turning Their Way](https://nyti.ms/3acJMPN),” *New York Times* (December 14, 2020), <https://nyti.ms/3acJMPN>

#2, Thursday, April 6, 2023 Realism as a general theory of international relations

- John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (Norton, 2001), chapters 1 and 2

#3, Tuesday, April 11, 2023 Influences from history and geography

- Andrew J. Nathan and Andrew Scobell, “What Drives Chinese Foreign Policy?” in *China’s Search for Security* (Columbia, 2012), pp. 3–36
- Suisheng Zhao, “Rethinking the Chinese World Order: The Imperial Cycle and the Rise of China,” *Journal of Contemporary China*, 24 (2015), 961–982
- **Optional further reading:**
- Odd Arne Westad, *Restless Empire: China and the World since 1750* (New York: Basic Books, 2012)

#4, Thursday, April 13, 2023

The Party, leaders, and institutions 1

- Bates Gill, *Daring to Struggle* (2022), introduction and Chapter 1, “Opportunities,” pp. 1–31
- Andrew J. Nathan and Andrew Scobell, “Who Runs Chinese Foreign Policy?” in *China’s Search for Security* (Columbia, 2012), pp. 37-62

#5, Tuesday, April 18, 2023

The Party, leaders, and institutions 2

- Bates Gill, *Daring to Struggle* (2022), Chapter 2, “Legitimacy,” and Chapter 3, “Sovereignty,” pp. 32–77
- Andrew Small and Dhruva Jaishankar, “[“For Our Enemies, We Have Shotguns”: Explaining China’s New Assertiveness.](#)” *War on the Rocks* commentary (July 20, 2020)

Optional further reading:

- Xi Jinping, “[Secure a Decisive Victory in Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in All Respects and Strive for the Great Success of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era.](#)” speech delivered at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (October 18, 2017)
- Jianying Zha, “[China’s Heart of Darkness — Prince Han Fei & Chairman Xi Jinping.](#)” *China Heritage* (2020)
- Avery Goldstein, “China’s Grand Strategy under Xi Jinping,” *International Security* 45:1 (2020)
- Elizabeth C. Economy, *The Third Revolution: Xi Jinping and the New Chinese State*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.

#6, Thursday, April 20, 2023

China and the United States: Key events and themes

- James Mann, *About Face: A History of America’s Curious Relationship with China, from Nixon to Clinton* (Knopf, 1998), chapters 15 and 16 on the Clinton administration and Most Favored Nation status, pp. 274–317

Optional further reading:

- Thomas J. Christensen, *The China Challenge: Shaping the Choices of a Rising Power* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2015)
- John Pomfret, *The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom: America and China, 1776 to the Present* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2016)
- Robert G. Sutter, *U.S.-Chinese Relations: Perilous Past, Pragmatic Present*, 3rd edition (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2017)
- David Shambaugh, *Tangled Titans: The United States and China* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2013)

#7, Tuesday, April 25, 2023

China and the United States today: Focus on tech and trade

- Kurt M. Campbell and Ely Ratner, “The China Reckoning: How Beijing Defied American Expectations,” *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2018
- Two very short reports by the Congressional Research Service, “U.S.-China Trade Relations,” updated December 22, 2022, and “U.S.-China Phase One Trade Deal,” updated December 16, 2022
- Michael Riley and Ben Elgin, “China’s Cyberspies Outwit Model for Bond’s Q,” *Bloomberg*, May 2, 2013
- Gregory C. Allen, “Choking off China’s Access to the Future of AI: New U.S. Export Controls on AI and Semiconductors Mark a Transformation of U.S. Technology Competition with China,” CSIS (October 2022)

Optional further reading:

- Information Office of the State Council, People’s Republic of China, “[The Facts and China’s Position on China-US Trade Friction.](#)” white paper, September 2018
- Kai-Fu Lee. *AI Superpowers: China, Silicon Valley, and the New World Order*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018.

#8, Thursday, April 27, 2023

Values, culture, and human rights

- Zhou Qi and Andrew J. Nathan, “Political Systems, Rights, and Values,” ch. 3 in Nina Hachigian, ed., *Debating China* (2014)
- Susan B. Glasser, “Head of State: Hillary Clinton, the blind dissident, and the art of diplomacy in the Twitter era,” *Foreign Policy* (July/August 2012)
- MERICS, “China’s Anti-Foreign Sanctions Law: A Warning to the World” (June 24, 2021), short report

Optional further reading:

- Gary J. Bass, “Human Rights Last,” *Foreign Policy* (March/April 2011)

#9, Tuesday, May 2, 2023

China’s goals, continued: Wealth and power

- Bates Gill, *Daring to Struggle* (2022), Chapter 4, “Wealth,” and Chapter 5, “Power,” pp. 78–134

#10, Thursday, May 4, 2023

China’s goals, continued: Leadership and ideas

- Bates Gill, *Daring to Struggle* (2022), Chapter 6, “Leadership,” and Chapter 7, “Ideas,” pp. 135–185

Optional further reading:

- Nadège Rolland, “China’s Vision for a New World Order,” National Bureau of Asian Research special report #83 (2020)
- Melanie Hart and Blaine Johnson, “Mapping China’s Global Governance Ambitions,” (Center for American Progress, 2019)
- Ted Piccone, “China’s Long Game on Human Rights at the United Nations,” (Brookings, 2018)
- Allen Carlson, “Is There Something Beyond No? China and Intervention in a New Era,” in DeLisle and Goldstein, eds., *China’s Global Engagement* (Brookings, 2017), 183–205
- Rosemary Foot, “U.S.-China Interactions in Global Governance and International Organizations,” in David Shambaugh, *Tangled Titans: The United States and China* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2013)
- Michael Fullilove, “China and the United Nations: The Stakeholder Spectrum,” *The Washington Quarterly* 34:3, 2011, pp. 63-85

#11, Tuesday, May 9, 2023

The China-Taiwan-U.S. triangle 1

- Shelley Rigger, “Taiwan in U.S.-China Relations,” in David Shambaugh, *Tangled Titans: The United States and China* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2013)
- Jia Qingguo and Alan D. Romberg, “Taiwan and Tibet,” ch. 9 in Nina Hachigian, ed., *Debating China* (2014)

Optional further reading:

- People’s Republic of China, “The Taiwan Question and China’s Reunification in the New Era,” white paper (August 2022)

#12, Thursday, May 11, 2023

The China-Taiwan-U.S. triangle 2

- Dexter Filkins, “A Dangerous Game over Taiwan,” *New Yorker* (November 14, 2022)
- Henley, Lonnie D., “Beyond the First Battle: Overcoming a Protracted Blockade of Taiwan,” *CMSI China Maritime Reports* #26 (2023)
- Oriana Skylar Mastro, “The Taiwan Temptation: Why Beijing Might Resort to Force,” *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2021)
- Jessica Chen Weiss, “Don’t Panic About Taiwan,” *Foreign Affairs* (March 2023)

#13, Tuesday, May 16, 2023

China, Russia, and Ukraine

- Yu-Shan Wu, “Russia and Chinese Security,” *Routledge Handbook of Chinese Security* edited by Lowell Dittmer and Maochun Yu (2015)
- Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, “[China-Russia Relations One Year into the Ukraine War](#),” *Carnegie Global Dialogue Series* (February 15, 2023) — prior to class, watch this discussion among Alexander Gabuev, Li Mingjiang, and Hoang Thi Ha
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, “China’s Position on the Political Settlement of the Ukraine Crisis,” February 24, 2023

Optional further reading:

- Naazneen Barma, Ely Ratner and Steven Weber, “A World Without the West,” *The National Interest* July/August 2007, pp. 23-30

#14, Thursday, May 18, 2023

China’s “soft power” and “sharp power”

- Marshall Sahlins, “China U,” *The Nation*, November 18, 2013
- Edward A. McCord, “Confucius Institutes in the U.S.: Let a Hundred Flowers Bloom; Let a Hundred Schools of Thought Contend” [a rebuttal to Sahlins; their exchange continued after this.]
- Anne-Marie Brady, “Magic Weapons: China’s Political Influence Activities under Xi Jinping” (2017). You don’t have to read the whole report, just pp. 1–25.

Optional further reading:

- Joshua Kurlantzick, “How Beijing is Controlling Chinese Media in Canada and Around the World,” *Council on Foreign Relations* (2023)
- The Hoover Institution, “Chinese Influence & American Interests: Promoting Constructive Vigilance” (2018)
- Yenna Wu, “Recognizing and Resisting China’s Evolving Sharp Power,” *American Journal of Chinese Studies* 26:2 (2019)
- Bonnie S. Glaser and Deep Pal, “Is China’s Charm Offensive Dead?” *China Brief*, 14/15, July 31, 2014
- Joshua Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive: How China’s Soft Power is Transforming the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007)

#15, Tuesday, May 23, 2023

China and Australia

- Rory Medcalf, “Australia and China: Understanding the Reality Check,” *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 73:2 (2019), 109–118
- “‘If You Make China the Enemy, China will Be the Enemy’: Beijing’s Fresh Threat to Australia,” *The Sydney Morning Herald* (November 18, 2020)

Optional further reading:

- John Fitzgerald, “Overstepping Down Under,” *Journal of Democracy* 29:2 (April 2018), 59–67

- James Reilly, “Counting on China? Australia’s Strategic Response to Economic Interdependence,” *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, Vol 5, 2012, 369–394
- Clive Hamilton, *Silent Invasion: China’s Influence in Australia* (Hardie Grant, 2018)
- Critical review of *Silent Invasion* by David Brophy

#16, Thursday, May 25, 2023

China and Japan

- Lam Peng Er, “China–Japan Paradox: Antagonism Despite Interdependency,” in Lam, ed., *China–Japan Relations in the 21st Century: Antagonism Despite Interdependency* (Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 1–22
- (While you’re at it, check out this [short profile](#) of Prof. Lam!)
- Yang Lijun, “A Clash of Nationalisms: Sino–Japanese Relations in the Twenty-First Century,” in Lam, Peng Er, ed., *China–Japan Relations in the 21st Century: Antagonism Despite Interdependency* (Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 83–101

Optional further reading:

- Rowena Xiaoqing He, “Identifying with a ‘Rising China’? Overseas Chinese Student Nationalism,” in Edward Vickers and Krishna Kumar, eds., *Constructing Modern Asian Citizenship* (Routledge, 2015), pp. 314–340
- Wang Zheng. *Never Forget National Humiliation: Historical Memory in Chinese Politics and Foreign Relations* (Columbia University Press, 2012)
- Saadia M. Pekkanen, “China, Japan, and the Governance of Space: Prospects for Competition and Cooperation,” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* (2020)
- Ezra F. Vogel, *China and Japan: Facing History* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press, 2019)
- June Teufel Dreyer, *Middle Kingdom and Empire of the Rising Sun: Sino-Japanese Relations, Past and Present* (Oxford University Press, 2016)
- Sheila A. Smith, *Intimate Rivals: Japanese Domestic Politics and a Rising China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015)
- Yinan He, “Remembering and Forgetting the War: Elite Mythmaking, Mass Reaction, and Sino-Japanese Relations, 1950–2006,” *History and Memory* 19/2 (2007), pp. 43–74

#17, Tuesday, May 30, 2023

China and the Korean Peninsula

- International Crisis Group, “Fire on the City Gate: Why China Keeps North Korea Close,” Asia Report #254, December 9, 2013
- Ellen Kim and Victor Cha, “Between a Rock and a Hard Place: South Korea’s Strategic Dilemmas with China and the United States,” *Asia Policy* #21 (January 2016), pp. 101–121
- Patricia M. Kim, “Lost Illusions: How Beijing Failed to Woo Seoul,” *Foreign Affairs*, September 30, 2016

#18, Thursday, June 1, 2023

China and the Developing World: The Belt and Road Initiative

- Prior to class, watch the movie “When China Met Africa” (2010). I will explain how to view it.
- *The Economist* magazine, set of articles from a special report on China’s Belt and Road Initiative (February 2020)
- Maria Abi-Habib, “[How China Got Sri Lanka to Cough up a Port](https://nyti.ms/2lwfNHU),” *New York Times* (June 25, 2018), <https://nyti.ms/2lwfNHU>
- Brook Larmer, “Is China the World’s New Colonial Power?” *New York Times Magazine*, May 2, 2017

Optional further reading:

- Cynthia A. Watson, “Concentrated Interests: China’s Involvement with Latin American Economies,” in DeLisle and Goldstein, eds., *China’s Global Engagement* (Brookings, 2017), 123–154

- Nicholas Casey and Clifford Krauss, “It Doesn’t Matter if Ecuador Can Afford This Dam. China Still Gets Paid.” *New York Times*, December 24, 2018
- Ching Kwan Lee, *The Specter of Global China: Politics, Labor, and Foreign Investment in Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018)
- Ben Lampert and Giles Mohan, “Sino-African Encounters in Ghana and Nigeria: From Conflict to Conviviality and Mutual Benefit,” *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 43/1 (2014), pp. 9-39
- Check out this photo essay: <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/01/08/a-new-silk-road>

#19, Tuesday, June 6, 2023

China and Southeast Asia

- David M. Lampton, Selina Ho, and Cheng-Chwee Kuik, *Rivers of Iron: Railroads and Chinese Power in Southeast Asia* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2020), 1–9, 84–150

Optional further reading:

- Howard W. French, “China’s Dangerous Game,” *The Atlantic*, October 13, 2014

#20, Thursday, June 8, 2023

Wrap-up

- Bates Gill, *Daring to Struggle* (2022), Chapter 8, “Challenges,” and conclusion, pp. 186–224
- Graham Allison, “The Thucydides Trap: Are the U.S. and China Headed for War?,” *The Atlantic*, September 24, 2015

Optional further reading:

- Adam P. Liff and G. John Ikenberry, “Racing toward Tragedy? China’s Rise, Military Competition in the Asia Pacific, and the Security Dilemma,” *International Security* 39.2 (2014): 52–91