Politics of China
MW 9:50AM, F 9:40AM, Gould Library 344

Professor Huan Gao
Office: Hasenstab 317
Office hour: MW 2:30-5PM or by appointment
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Course Description
This course is a broad introduction to the main issues of Chinese politics and society. Though contemporary issues are at the heart of the course, students will delve into an entire century of change and upheaval in order to understand the roots of current affairs in China. The course roughly follows chronological order and is divided into four units focusing on four themes: 1) the communist revolution and Maoist China, 2) economic reform and development, 3) post-Reform government and politics, and 4) social policies and current affairs. Readings will include both historical narratives and political science analysis.

Class Requirements

Classroom Policy
Active participation in class discussion is a crucial part of this course. You are expected to complete course readings on time, contribute your thoughts and analysis in class, and engage in dialogue with your classmates. You are also expected to contribute to building a positive classroom environment. It means being punctual for class, showing courtesy and supporting your peers in discussions, and taking responsibility in group projects and peer support activities. Laptops and other electronic devices can be used in class; please use them as productive tools instead of distractions.

Office Hours
Office hours are Monday and Wednesday afternoon, from 2:30 to 5:00 PM. You are welcome to come to office hours with any question or concern. Please use the sign-up sheet on my office door to plan for a timeslot and avoid line-ups. You can also email me for appointment time outside of usual office hours should you be busy during regular office hours.

Student Evaluations
Student evaluations will be based on five components:

1) Class participation 20%
2) In-class midterm 20%
3) Film response paper assignment 10%
4) Data exploration assignment 10%
5) Debate (group) 10%
6) Final paper 30%
Translation of percentages to letter grades is as follows:

- **A**: 94+
- **A-**: 90-93
- **B+**: 87-89
- **B**: 84-86
- **B-**: 80-83
- **C+**: 77-79
- **C**: 74-76
- **C-**: 70-73
- **D**: 60-69
- **F**: under 60

**Summary of Assignments**

**Participation (20%)**
Participation means actively analyzing, questioning, and otherwise engaging with readings as well as comments from your classmates in discussions. You are expected to participate often and demonstrate that you consistently complete reading assignments. To earn a full participation grade, you must contribute meaningfully to class discussions or Moodle discussions at least twice every week.

**Data exploration assignment (10%)**
The data assignment guides students in exploring the China Statistical Yearbook compiled by the National Bureau of Statistics of China. You will produce summary statistics and visualization of the data, as well as explore the method of data collection and evaluation employed by the NBSC. The final written report should be 3-5 pages in length, including graphs and visualization.

**Film response paper assignment (10%)**
For this assignment, you will review the feature film or one of the two documentaries viewed in class. These film/documentaries all depict major historical events in 20th century China and ruminate upon important themes in Chinese politics and society. Your review should provide a brief synopsis of the film/documentary and apply theories learned in the course to discuss events depicted in the film. Your review should focus on these questions: why did events depicted in the film occur? What theory can best help viewers understand these events? What motivate the main characters? What do these events say about Chinese society and politics? The review should be between 3 and 5 pages in length.

**Debate (group) (10%)**
For this assignment, the class will be randomly split into two groups and assigned positions on a debate topic statement. A half-day will be dedicated to debate preparation, and the actual debate will take place in the following class.

**Research paper (30%)**
To conclude this course, you will complete a final research paper that investigates an original research question that interests you. Any topic relevant to Chinese politics broadly defined is welcome. The paper should be between 8 and 12 pages in length. It needs to propose a well-defined research question, answer said question with a clear thesis statement, review existing literature, and present strong evidence in support of the thesis. Students are required to submit a paper proposal right after the October break, alongside the data assignment. This proposal should lay out the research question, list some relevant literature, propose a research method to address the question, list some potential
sources of data and evidence, and justify both the question and the proposed method. After submitting
the proposal and receiving feedback and suggestions from the professor, student will prepare a more
substantial outline of the paper as a powerpoint presentation. The outline should also contain key
arguments, some preliminary evidence, potential sources of more data and evidence, in addition to the
question and method first laid out in the proposal. We will hold a workshop to help everyone further
their research ideas; you will also have to produce written feedback for one assigned partner. The final
paper is due on the last day of the exam period.

**Schedule of Classes and Assignments**

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<td>September 11</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<th>Revolutionary China</th>
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| September 29 | Maoist China and its legacies                                        | • PBS Documentary, “China: 100 Years of Revolution - The Mao Years.” 1:01:00-end.  
|          | **Forty Years of Economic Transformation**                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
• Data exploration assignment due                                                                                               |
| October 6  | The China Model?                                                      | • Hsu, S. Philip, Suisheng Zhao, and Yushan Wu, eds. *In search of China's development model: Beyond the Beijing consensus*. Routledge, 2011. Chapter 1, 4.                                                 |
• Midterm Q&A                                                                                                                     |
| October 11 | **Midterm**                                                          | • In-class midterm                                                                                                                                   |
• The 'lying flat' movement standing in the way of China’s innovation drive                                                      |
• Gate of Heavenly Peace documentary viewing                                                                                      |
| --- | --- | --- |
| October 30 | Paper workshop | • *Final paper outline due*  
• *Paper outline discussion* |

**Contemporary social issues**

| --- | --- | --- |
• *Amid Low Birth Rate Worries, China Increases Pressure on Women* |
| November 6 | Censorship and culture | • *Film review assignment due*  
| November 10 | Debate preparation | • |
| November 13 | Final debate | • |
| November 15 | Final project work period | • |
| November 20 | End of exam days | • *Research paper due 9:30 PM* |

**Resources for Students**

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Carleton College is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Office of Accessibility Resources (Henry House, 107 Union Street) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations. If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, autism spectrum disorders, chronic health, traumatic brain injury and concussions, vision, hearing, mobility, or speech impairments), please contact OAR@carleton.edu or call Sam Thayer ('10), Director of the Office of Accessibility Resources (x4464), to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

**Assistive Technologies: Technological Resources for Students**
The Assistive Technologies program brings together academic and technological resources to complement student classroom and computing needs, particularly in support of students with physical or learning disabilities. Accessibility features include text-to-speech (Kurzweil), speech-to-text (Dragon) software, and audio recording Smartpens. If you would like to know more, contact aztechs@carleton.edu or visit go.carleton.edu/aztech.

Library

Library staff can help you find and evaluate articles, books, websites, statistics, data, government documents, and more. You can make an appointment with a librarian, get help via chat 24/7 from any page on the library’s website, email, or call. The Library building has lots of great study spaces, and we’d love for you to visit! For more information and our hours, visit the Gould Library website at carleton.edu/library.

Writing

The Writing Center

The Writing Center a space with peer writing consultants who can work with you during any stage of the writing process (brainstorming to final proofreading). Hours and more information can be found on the writing center website. You can reserve specific times for conferences by using their online appointment system.

The Term-Long Program for Multilingual Writers

If English is not your first language and you believe you might benefit from working regularly with a writing consultant this term, email Melanie Cashin, Multilingual Writing Coordinator, at mcashin@carleton.edu. She can arrange once- or twice-a-week meetings between you and a specific writing consultant throughout the term.