

POP88324 Proseminar in Chinese Politics

Hilary Term 2024

Instructor: Dr. Jiwon Baik

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Office Hours: TBA

Meeting Time: TBA

Room: TBA

Course Description:

This course provides an introduction to the study of Chinese politics. It is specifically geared towards graduate students. The aim of this course is several-fold: to provide students with a basic, substantive understanding of contemporary Chinese politics; to establish a basic degree of literacy in the existing literature on Chinese politics, past and present; to call attention to the trade-offs between the depth of knowledge of China, on the one hand, and the imperatives of the discipline of political science and comparative politics more generally; and to provide a rare glimpse into the meta-level controversies, narratives, and trade-offs that exist at the level of the subfield and of the discipline and how that can trickle down into the substance of what we do as scholars. No prior knowledge of China is required or expected.

This course relies on vigorous (and rigorous) discussion and debate during our seminar meeting times. It is very important that you have mastered the readings *before* we meet. Towards that end, you will be required to prepare one-page weekly memos (due the night before class at 8:00 PM) on the readings in which you provide the following information on one page for each reading (up to five for those weeks when we have more than five readings):

Argument: a one-sentence statement of the thesis

Literature review: who and what is the piece responding to?

Variables (DV, INDV, and causal theory): if applicable

Research design: case selection, data generation, theory building and testing vs. description

Critique: You may discuss weakness(es) of the piece. However, also critically evaluate its merits. In other words, why was it published?

This will be the starting point of our seminar discussions each week. In addition to these memos and seminar participation, your grade will also be based on a survey/research paper due at the end of the semester and which will be based on a topic of particular interest to you and related to China. During the last week of class, you will present a short introduction of your final project to the class.

Assessment:

Participation: 20%

Weekly Responses: 30%

Final Paper: 40%

Mini-presentation: 10%

Course Schedule:

Week 1: Historical Developments and the Chinese Communist Party

- Frederick C. Teiwes, *Politics in Mao's Court: Gao Gang and Party Factionalism in the Early 1950s* (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 1990), chapters 1 –6
- Charlotte Lee, *Training the Party: Party Adaptation and Elite Training in Reform-era China*, New York: Cambridge University Press (2015), chapter 1

[Recommended]

- Yasheng Huang, *Inflation and Investment Controls in China*, New York: Cambridge University Press (1996), chapter 4, pp. 89-124.
- Christian Sorace, *Shaken Authority: China's Communist Party and the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press (2017), chapters 1-3

Week 2: Political Institutions

- Kenneth Lieberthal and Michel Oksenberg, *Policy Making in China: Leaders, Structures and Processes*, Princeton: Princeton University Press (1988), chapters 1, 3, and 4

- Gabriella Montinola, Yingyi Qian, and Barry R. Weingast, "Federalism, Chinese Style: The Political Basis for Economic Success," *World Politics* 48: 1 (1996): 50-81
- Final Paper topic check-in

[Recommended]

- Iza Ding and Michael Thompson-Brusstar. 2021. "The Anti-Bureaucratic Ghost in China's Bureaucratic Machine." *China Quarterly* 248 (S1): 116-140.
- Andrew Mertha, "China's 'Soft' Centralization: Shifting Tiao/Kuai Authority Relations Since 1998," *The China Quarterly* 184 (December 2005): 792-810

Week 3: Economy

- Susan Shirk, *The Political Logic of Economic Reform in China*, Berkeley: University of California Press (1993), chapters 1, 3, and 4
- Barry Naughton, *Growing out of the Plan: Chinese Economic Reform, 1978-1993*, New York: Cambridge University Press, (1995), Introduction
- Jean Oi, "The Role of the Local State in China's Transitional Economy," *The China Quarterly* 144 (December 1995): 1132-1149

[Recommended]

- Yasheng Huang, *Capitalism with Chinese Characteristics: Entrepreneurship and the State*, New York: Cambridge University Press (2008).
- Yuen Yuen Ang, *How China Escaped the Poverty Trap*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016.
- Margaret Pearson, Meg Rithmire, and Kellee S. Tsai, "Party-State Capitalism in China," *Current History*, Vol. 119, No. 819 (2020), pp. 207-213.

Week 4: State and Society

- Andrew G. Walder, *Communist Neo-Traditionalist: Work and Authority in Chinese Industry*, Berkeley: University of California Press (1986), chapters 1 and 5

- Brantly Womack, "Review Essay: Transfigured Community: Neo-Traditionalism and Work Unit Socialism in China," *The China Quarterly*, No. 126 (Jun. 1991), pp. 313-332 and Walder's Response.
- Lily Tsai, "Solidary Groups, Informal Accountability, and Local Public Goods Provision in Rural China," *The American Political Science Review* 101: 2 (May 2007): 355-372

[Recommended]

- Kevin O'Brien, "Rightful Resistance," *World Politics* 49:1 (October 1996): 31-55
- Diana Fu, "Disguised Collective Action in China," *Comparative Political Studies* (2016): 1-29
- Iza Ding, *The Performative State: Public Scrutiny and Environmental Governance in China*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press (2022).

Week 5: China and the World

- Mini-presentations (no weekly reading response for this week)
- Min Ye, *The Belt Road and Beyond: State-Mobilized Globalization in China: 1998–2018*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (2020). Ch.1
- Sarah Cook. 2020. "Beijing's Global Megaphone: The Expansion of Chinese Communist Party Media Influence since 2017." Freedom House Report
- Trade War *TBA*