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PSCI 328.01: Politics of China

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Political Science 328: Politics of China

Dexter Tiff Roberts, Spring 2022

Office 352 LA building, phone 243-6181; email: dexter1.roberts@umontana.edu

This class will be taught every Tuesday and Thursday (9:30 to 10:50 am) from Jan. 18 through May 5

Office Hours: I look forward to meeting students for office hours, in person or via zoom. Appointments should be requested via email and will be scheduled at our mutual convenience.

this syllabus may be adjusted or supplemented during the term

This course will use a reading and discussion format, supplemented by videos and occasional guest lectures by experts, to examine the origins, ideology, institutions, policies, and people of Chinese politics, from the Mao era, through the Deng Xiaoping period, up until the Xi Jinping era of today. We will look at how politics is entwined in the society and economy of China to a degree unusual in many other countries of the world, how that blocks needed reforms to its system, and affects its development today. We will study how politics has had an inordinate influence over private business and on the lives of the Chinese people including Tibetans and Uighur Muslims, and holds heavy sway over Chinese populations beyond its borders, in Hong Kong and Taiwan. We will examine how the Internet and technology have evolved to become tools of political control in China. Finally, we will look at how the now shaky relationship between China and the West, particularly the United States, is deeply affected by conflicting political visions in the context of China's push for global political power.

The questions all of us should be asking as we move through the course are: **What historical background did China's politics arise from? How does ideology affect China's past and today? How have political institutions, policies, and leaders affected China's past and today? How has politics affected China's economic development? How has politics been used to help the people of China? And when has politics been used to ensure leaders and the Chinese Communist Party stay in power? Why do political ideas that are decades old still matter for the Chinese people today and why are they important for the world?**

I would like all of you to consider throughout the class, why China and its people matter for all of us today. What aspects of China and its recent history you find most important, interesting, and relevant. And I would like all of you consider how modern China will affect your future lives and how you might continue to engage with China long after we finish this term and after you graduate from the University of Montana.

This course will help you understand:

- What are the core ideas and ideologies that define Chinese politics and how they have affected its development until today
- Who Mao Zedong is and why he is so important to politics in China even today
- What is the nature of the relationship between the Chinese Communist Party and the people of China
- What are the main institutions and policy tools of Chinese politics
- How ideology and institutions, including the Chinese Communist Party, hold back necessary reforms today in China and hinder its future economic development
- What are factional, elite, and regional politics in China
- Who was Deng Xiaoping and what his economic reforms have meant for China's people, companies, and economy
- The precarious role of private enterprise in the Chinese political system

- Who is Xi Jinping and how he wants to change China's place in the world
- How China's ethnic minorities, including Tibetans and Uighur Muslims are treated in the Chinese political system
- Why China cares so much about controlling Hong Kong and Taiwan and how that puts their futures in jeopardy
- How the Internet in China has evolved to become a tool of political control
- Why the U.S.-China relationship is so fractured
- How China intends to use the pandemic and recent U.S. electoral chaos in its bid for superpower status
- The potential challenges to China's future

Main textbook:

William A. Joseph, *Politics in China: An Introduction, Third Edition* (Oxford University Press, 2019). Available now in the bookstore (also [available from publisher's website](#) or via Amazon.)

Supplemental Readings:

A number of other media articles, commentaries, and readings will be provided via Moodle. They will be drawn from a book recently wrote as well as well as many other sources.

Liang Heng & Judith Shapiro, *Son of the Revolution* (Vintage Books, 1984). All assigned chapters will be on Moodle.

Dexter Roberts, *The Myth of Chinese Capitalism: The Worker, the Factory, and the Future of the World* (St. Martin's Press, 2020). All assigned chapters will be on Moodle.

I also recommend you follow the contemporary news about China given that we will be examining how its political institutions and development affect the world today. One source worth following is the free weekly newsletter I publish called [Trade War](#) as well as my Twitter feed at [@dtiffroberts](#). For information on speeches or media appearances on Chinese politics, business, and economics I may be doing this spring, please refer to my personal website at www.dexterroberts.com.

Grading:

*class participation: one-quarter**

*midterm examination: one-quarter

*presentation: one-quarter

*final take-home paper: one-quarter

**This class has a relatively heavy reading and discussion format. This puts a burden on all students not only do the reading but to come to class having thought about it and prepared to discuss it. In-class participation thus represents a significant part of the class grade.

--The Moodle will be updated periodically during the term (at which point the topics will be unlocked). The Moodle version of topics and readings will always take precedence over the schedule as described in the syllabus below--

Covid precautions:

- Mask use is required within the classroom.
- If you feel sick and/or are exhibiting COVID symptoms, please don't come to class and contact the Curry Health Center at (406) 243-4330.
- If you are required to isolate or quarantine, you will receive support in the class to ensure continued academic progress.
- UM recommends students get the COVID vaccine and booster. Please direct your questions or concerns about vaccines to the Curry Health Center.
- Drinking liquids and eating food is discouraged within the classroom.

Schedule of Meetings and Topics:

(week's readings highlighted by *)

Week 1: Introductions & expectations/Ways of looking at China and why politics matter

Tuesday, Jan. 18: Introductions & expectations

Thursday, Jan. 20: Ways of looking at China and why politics matter

* Joseph, "Studying Chinese Politics," p. 3 - 19

*Yueqi Yang, "Marriott suspends donations to senators who opposed vote results," *Bloomberg*, Jan. 10, 2021

*"Statement from Arne Sorenson, president and CEO, Marriott International, Inc.," Jan. 11, 2018

*Matthew Hansen, "Omaha man 'liked' a tweet, and then he lost his dream job," *Omaha World-Herald*, March 21, 2018

Week 2: Approaches to Chinese politics and the primacy of Mao

Tuesday, Jan. 25:

*Joseph, "Studying Chinese Politics," p. 20 - 35

Thursday, Jan. 27:

*Joseph, (Frederick C. Teiwes), "Mao Zedong in Power (1949 - 1976), p. 76 - 120

Week 3: Ideology: Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought

Readings:

Tuesday, Feb. 1:

*Joseph, "Ideology and China's Political Development," p. 157 - 182

guest lecture - *Being Mao Zedong: What Does It Take to Become Top Dog in China?*

by Professor Steven Levine:

Born in New York City, lived in Italy and Czechoslovakia as a young child. Graduate from the Bronx High School of Science in New York, B.A. from Brandeis University, Ph.D. in Government and Far Eastern Languages from Harvard University. More or less fluent in Russian and Chinese, with a smattering of French, Polish, Japanese,. Taught at many universities, including Columbia, American University, Duke, UNC-Chapel Hill, University of Michigan, and, of course, University of Montana. Author, co-author, editor of ca. ten books, translator of half a dozen books from Chinese and Russian, published scores of chapters, review essays, book reviews..

Lived in Montana 1998-2002, 2007-20017, in Ravalli County. Loved going to Missoula Osprey games, but hates the name Paddleheads. Go Griz!

Thursday, Feb. 3:

*Joseph, "Ideology and China's Political Development," p. 182 - 197

*James Carter, "Bombard the headquarters: Echoes of Maoism in the storming of Capitol Hill," *SupChina*, Jan. 13, 2021

Week 4: Politics, the Party, and the people

Readings

Tuesday, Feb. 8:

*Liang Heng and Judith Shapiro, *Son of the Revolution*, "Foreword," (Jerome Alan Cohen), vii - x, "Chairman Mao's Good Little Boy" and "Hard Times" p. 3 - 29

Thursday, Feb. 10

*Liang Heng and Judith Shapiro, *Son of the Revolution*, "Our New Mother" and "Are You a Bloodsucker?" p. 30 - 60

Week 5: The Party and the people continued/The Communist Party-State structure

Readings:

Tuesday, Feb. 15

*Ya-Wen Lei, "What Should We Know about Public Opinion in China?" (from "The China Questions: Critical Insights into a Rising Power"

Roberts, "The Party," p. 88 - 110

Made in China Journal, "Workers and Change in China: A Conversation with Manfred Elfstrom," January 18, 2021

Thursday, Feb. 17

Joseph, (Cheng Li), "China's Communist Party-State: The Structure and Dynamics of Power," p. 201 - 214

Week 6: Factional, elite, and regional politics

Readings

Tuesday, Feb. 22:

*Joseph, (Cheng Li), "China's Communist Party-State: The Structure and Dynamics of Power," p. 214 - 234

*Neil Thomas, "[Eye on 2022 \(Part 1\): Rising Stars in the Provinces](#)," *MacroPolo*, January 26, 2021

Thursday, Feb. 24:

*Dexter Roberts, "*China's Dueling Economic Theories- One strengthens the state. The other favors the private sector*," Bloomberg Businessweek, March 22, 2012

*Dexter Roberts, "*A Political Shocker in China Has Implications for the Economy*," Bloomberg Businessweek, March 15, 2012

*Zhang Yueran, "*The Chongqing Model One Decade On*," *Made in China Journal*, January 11, 2021

Week 7: China's political economy, Deng Xiaoping, and the battle for reform

Readings

Tuesday, March 1:

*Joseph (Bruce Gilley), "Deng Xiaoping and His Successors (1976 to the Present)," p. 124 - 143

*Joseph, (David Zweig), "China's Political Economy," p. 274 - 290, p. 293 - 297

Thursday, March 3:

*Roberts, "Introduction," p. XIX - XXXIV, "The Factory," p. 1 - 26

Week 8: Politics and the private entrepreneur

Readings:

Tuesday, March 8:

- *Roberts, *BusinessWeek*, "China's New Entrepreneurs," Sept. 27, 1999
- *Neil Thomas, "The Industrial Dream," *The Wire*, January 11, 2021
- *Neil Thomas, "[Party Committees in the Private Sector: Rising Presence, Moderate Influence](#)," *MacroPolo*, December 16, 2020

Thursday, March 10:

- *Lingling Wei, "China blocked Jack Ma's Ant IPO after investigation revealed likely beneficiaries," *The Wall Street Journal*, February 16, 2021
- *Tom Mitchell, Yuan Yang, and Ryan McMorrow, "Jack Ma vs. Xi Jinping," *Financial Times*
- *John Pomfret, "China's Leader Attacks His Greatest Threat," *The Atlantic*, January 25, 2021

Week 9: Xi Jinping and the rise of power politics

Readings

Tuesday, March 15:

- *Joseph (Bruce Gilley), "Deng Xiaoping and His Successors (1976 to the Present)," p. 143 - 150
- *Joseph, (David Zweig), "China's Political Economy," p. 290 - 292, p. 297 - 307
- *Evan Osnos, "Born Red: How Xi Jinping, an unremarkable provincial administrator, became China's most authoritarian leader since Mao," *The New Yorker*, March 30, 2015
- *Demetri Sevastopulo, "'This is a guy who is a thug': how US elite became hawks on Xi's China," *Financial Times*, Oct. 7, 2020

Watch first part:

PBS NewsHour, China: Power and Prosperity

China: Power and Prosperity -- Watch the full documentary

Thursday, March 17:

- *"Why Are There No Biographies of Xi Jinping?" Jeffrey Wasserstrom, *The Atlantic*, JANUARY 30, 2021
- *Eyck Freymann, "Elizabeth Perry on the Secrets to the CCP's Resilience," *The Wire China*, February 7, 2021

Watch second part:

PBS NewsHour, China: Power and Prosperity: Power and Prosperity -- Watch the full documentary

Spring break, no classes: March 21 - 25

Week 10: Politics over economics: the future of Hong Kong

Readings

Tuesday, March 29:

- *Joseph, (Sonny Shiu-Hing Lo), "Hong Kong," p. 517 - 536

Thursday, March 31:

- *Kimberly Jin, "Friday Song: Ai Jing's yearning for Hong Kong in 'My 1997,'" *SupChina*, July 13, 2019
- *Dexter Roberts, "Jittery Dragon: China's leaders, while eager to gain from the takeover, see Hong Kong's destabilizing potential," *Bloomberg Businessweek*, June 8, 1997
- *Wenxin Fan, "China's Campaign to Crush Democracy in Hong Kong Is Working," *The Wall Street Journal*, Feb. 25, 2021

Week 11: Taiwan, unfinished history, and Xi's China Dream

Readings

Tuesday, April 5:

- *Joseph, (Shelley Rigger), "Taiwan," p. 538 - 553
- *Karen M. Sutter, "U.S.-Taiwan Trade Relations," Congressional Research Service, December 23, 2020
- *Dexter Roberts, "Uneasy Collaborators," *Businessweek*, August 13, 2000

Thursday, April 7:

Readings

- *Chris Horton, "Taiwan's Status Is a Geopolitical Absurdity," *The Atlantic*, July 7, 2019
- *Amy Chang Chien and Amy Qin, "With Pig Parades, Once-Feared Opposition Party in Taiwan Tries a Revamp," *New York Times*, February 12, 2021
- * Kat Devlin and Christine Huang, "[In Taiwan, Views of Mainland China Mostly Negative](#)," Pew Research Center, May 12, 2020

Week 12: Politics of the periphery: Tibet, Xinjiang and sinicization

Readings

Tuesday, April 12:

- *Joseph, (Robert Barnett), "Tibet", p. 457-482
- *Mark Elliott, "What is the Source of Ethnic Tension in China?" from *The China Questions: Critical Insights into a Rising Power*
- *Dexter Roberts, "Tibet: Caught in China's 'Two Hands'," *Bloomberg Businessweek*, September 18, 2003
- *Dexter Roberts, "Tibet Can't Kick Its Subsidy Habit," *Bloomberg Businessweek*, December 16, 2015

Thursday, April 14:

- *Joseph, (Gardner Bovingdon), "Xinjiang", p. 487-510
- *Shanil Verjee, "James Leibold on China's Assimilationist Turn in Xi Jinping's China," *Asian Experts Forum*, March 18, 2021
- *Dexter Roberts, "Beijing Stokes the Fires of Ethnic Tensions," *Bloomberg Businessweek*, March 28, 2002
- *Dexter Roberts, "China Tries to Bring Growth to Its Restless Xinjiang Region," *Bloomberg Businessweek*, December 11, 2014
- *Gulbahar Haitiwaji with Rozenn Morgat, "'Our souls are dead': how I survived a Chinese 're-education' camp for Uighurs," *The Guardian*, Jan 12. 2021

Week 13: Political control and technology

Readings

Tuesday, April 19:

- *Joseph, (Guo Binyang), "Policy Case Study: Internet Politics," p. 440 - 451
- *Li Yuan, "China Persecutes Those Who Question 'Heroes.' A Sleuth Keeps Track," *The New York Times*, Feb. 26, 2021
- *Avi Asher-Schapiro, "China found using surveillance firms to help write ethnic-tracking specs," *Thomson Reuters Foundation*, March 30, 2021

Thursday, April 21:

Readings

- *Raymond Zhong and Paul Mozur, "How China's Outrage Machine Kicked Up a Storm Over H&M," *New York Times*, March 29, 2021
- *Manya Koetse, "'Support Xinjiang MianHua!' – China's Social Media Storm over Xinjiang Cotton Ban," *What's on Weibo*, March 28, 2021
- *Dexter Roberts, "China's Disinformation Strategy: Its Dimensions and Future," Atlantic Council, December 2020

Week 14: China's push for superpower status and the fractured Sino-U.S. relationship

Readings

Tuesday, April 26:

*Alastair Iain Johnston, "Is Chinese Exceptionalism Undermining China's Foreign Policy Interests?" *The China Questions: Critical Insights into a Rising Power*, Harvard 2018

*James Kynge, "America's big China question," *Financial Times*, Jan. 20, 2021

*Isaac Stone Fish, "Beijing wants U.S. business leaders to plead its case. Here's why they shouldn't," *The Washington Post*, Jan. 18, 2021

*Michael Beckley and Hal Brands, "Competition With China Could Be Short and Sharp: The Risk of War Is Greatest in the Next Decade," *Foreign Affairs*, December 17, 2020

Thursday, April 28:

*The Economist's Chaguan, "China's Communist Party turns 100 this year. Expect mixed signals," Jan.23, 2021 edition

*Maria Repnikova, "No, the Chaos in America Is Not a Gift to China and Russia Autocrats around the world won't gain from the United States' pain," *New York Times*, January 15, 2021

*Ryan Haas, "China Is Not Ten Feet Tall: How Alarmism Undermines American Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, March 3, 2021

Week 15: Future challenges to China

Readings

Tuesday, May 3:

*Dexter Tiff Roberts, "How much support does the Chinese Communist Party really have?" Atlantic Council, April 14, 2021

*Roberts, "The Future", p. 168-193; "Epilogue": p. 194-198

Thursday, May 5: Last day of class

*Jean-Pierre Cabestan, "China's Future: Toward an Authoritarian and Imperial Political System," "Conclusion: A Regime on an Extended Reprieve," *China Tomorrow: Democracy or Dictatorship*, Rowman & Littlefield, 2019