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PSC 395.01: Revolution and Reform in China

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History/ POLS/MANS 395: Revolution and Reform in China
Fall 2007

2:10-5:00 pm Mondays; Room: Liberal Arts Room 138

Professor: Terry M. Weidner

Office: Mansfield Center, 4th Floor, Mansfield Library

phone: x2281; e-mail: terry.weidner@umontana.edu

Office hours: 3-5 Tuesday. You should also feel free to drop by or to email or call to make an appointment for other times @ either x2281 (my direct line) or x2988

Course Description:

After a quick overview of key trends affecting China before Mao Zedong came to power, this course will use a lecture and discussion format to examine the Maoist revolution and the Dengist reform that virtually destroyed it. The material on Mao's rule will largely involve study of China's departure from a Soviet style model of economic development in favor of a Maoist revolutionary model that produced the disastrous Great Leap and Cultural Revolution. The subsequent examination of post-Mao China will focus in large part on Deng Xiaoping's epochal economic reform, and its social and political impact (good and bad). The course will also explore key aspects of China's new assertiveness in foreign relations, including its political and trade relations with the U.S., diverse aspects of the Taiwan sovereignty issue, and a new global strategic initiative that is reflected in China playing a much stronger role in Asia and has it reaching to Africa, Latin America, and Central Asia. We will end by evaluating the forces that promote and constrain China's ability to be a global power, and how both China's new strength and key Chinese and U.S. domestic trends have affected bilateral relations. A previous course on China is helpful, but by no means mandatory.

What this course will help you understand:

- Key historical trends that impacted China in the 20th Century
- Some of the reasons for the rise of Maoism
- The nature of Maoist rule, and the reasons for its collapse
- The complex nature of Dengist and post-Dengist economic reform and its impact on China's domestic political scene and foreign policy
- How Tiananmen occurred, why it failed, and its residual impact
- Key aspects of contemporary Chinese culture and society
- Basic forces influencing U.S.-China political and economic relations
- China's emergence as an economic and political power
- The complex challenges China faces in the 21st century

Required Readings:

Liang Heng and Judith Shapiro, *Son of the Revolution*. Random House, 1984 (paperback)

Tony Saich, *Governance and Politics in China*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2004 (paperback)

Weidner: China Since Mao – 2

Ian Johnson, *Wild Grass: Three Stories of Change in Modern China*, Random House, 2004 (paperback)

Rob Gifford, *China Road: A Journey Into the Future of a Rising Power*, Random House, 2007 (hardback)

Plus a number of current media articles on contemporary issues

GRADING:

class preparation, class participation, and attendance at East Asia-related UM events: one-third

mid-term examination: one-third

final take-home project: one-third

Students must successfully complete *both* written assignments to receive a grade in the course.

You will note that a relatively high percentage of the grade in this course depends in-class activity and attendance at relevant UM events on E. Asia. There are an extraordinary number of interesting issues that pop up in the history of contemporary China and its relations with the US, and this class explores them to the extent possible *through discussion*, including a series of informal in-class debates. That means one needs not only show up for every class (particularly as we meet only once a week) but to come having done the reading and prepared to discuss it.

SPECIAL NOTE: Please note that everyone in class must attend (and write a simple one-paragraph synopsis of) three events on East Asia that occur on campus during the semester as part of their course requirement, with extra credit given for any additional events attended and reported upon. We have a special opportunity this semester in that the Mansfield Conference (Sept. 19-20) is dedicated to “The China Threat: Myth or Reality” – a topic we will explore in depth at the end of the class. Attendance at the key note address or any individual panel can count as one of your three required external events. If special circumstances make it difficult for you to meet the outside attendance requirement, I am happy to propose an alternative assignment.

Schedule of Class Topics:

August 27: Deep background on 19th and early 20th Century reform; The Struggle between the Guomindang and Communist Parties and America’s policy dilemma;

Assignment: Saich, p. 25-43, begin reading *Son of the Revolution*

September 3: Labor Day – No Class

September 10: The Maoist victory and the Soviet economic model; The Early Years and the Great Leap Forward

Assignment: continue reading *Son of the Revolution*.

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September 17: Recovery and the Cultural Revolution

Assignment: Read Saich, p. 43-56; finish *Son of the Revolution* for discussion.

September 24: Deng's rise to power and the nature and pace of early reform

Assignment: Saich, p. 57-64, skim chapters 4 and 5

October 1: Party division and swings in reform:

Assignment: Saich, p. 213-267

October 8: Politics & Power: party structure; economic and political contradictions on the eve of Tiananmen

Assignment: Saich, p. 64-75, chapter 6.

October 15: The Tiananmen Movement: Origins and the Reason of its Suppression

Assignment: Saich, chapter 7; Weidner article, "Protest and Suppression in China" (sent via email)

October 22: Backlash and Deng's last gasp; Party rule in China. Part of Video "Gate of Heavenly Peace."

Assignment: Saich, p. 75-80, skim 121-179; 192-212

October 29: **MID-TERM EXAMINATION**

Assignment: prepare for exam

November 5: "The Final Solution" for Reform: The Asian Financial Crisis and WTO; Trade, and other issues in U.S.- China Relations

Assignment: Saich, p. 155-212; handouts, TBA

November 12: Veterans Day (no class)

Assignment: Start *Leaves of Grass*; handouts, TBA

November 19: Issues in U.S.-China Relations (cont): Human Rights; Neo-Nationalism and China's assertive new foreign policy: Taiwan, Central Asia, and beyond

Assignment: Saich, p. 305-328; come ready to discuss *Leaves of Grass*.

November 26: Current conditions in China

Assignment: Saich, p. 80-90, 268-304, and 329-347; handouts, TBA; Begin Rob Gifford book.

December 3: Future Chinese Challenges and the Future of Sino-U.S. Relations

Assignment: Come ready to discuss Rob Gifford book; begin working on Final Take Home Project

December 10: **Take Home project due electronically**