Description
This class is for more advanced UG students and PG students who want to increase their theoretical and historical understanding of Chinese politics. It presents conceptual frameworks and theories about Chinese politics, analyzes key events in the post-1949 period, and looks at many important issues related to contemporary Chinese politics. The purpose, above all, is to try to explain why events occur the way they do in the PRC.

The syllabus has a list of questions for each class. Each student will pick two questions and will be responsible for leading off the discussion in class on that question. The lead to the discussion should be no longer than 3-5 minutes.

Assessment
30% Leading a discussion in class on TWO questions during the semester. Students will present their argument in TEN minutes and are NOT expected to make a PPT or present any lecture. The 30% assessment will also be based on overall participation.
40% Research Paper (UG students will write a 20 page paper, PGs will write 25 pages).
30% Final Exam

Intended Learning Outcomes
Upon successfully completing the course, students should be able to:
1. Know the major events in Chinese politics since the establishment of the PRC;
2. Develop the skills to conceptualize possible explanations for major events in Chinese politics and apply empirical data to support or reject those interpretations;
3. Organize their ideas coherently and present them to a group of 30 people.
4. Understand how Chinese politics affects Hong Kong and be better prepared to work on, or work with, the mainland;
5. Develop the skills to design and write a research paper; to deepen their understanding and improve writing skills.

Readings:
Each class comprises two sessions and there are separate readings for each session. There are separate readings for PG and UG students, but PG students are expected to read BOTH the PG and the UG reading for each class.

Each week also has Suggested Readings which are the key readings upon which students should rely for their in-class presentation. In this way, other students will also become familiar with more arguments that the ones in the assigned readings.
Reference Reading:


As there is soon to be a Third Edition of *Politics in China: An Introduction* (2019), Professor Joseph has been kind enough to share several of the updated chapters with us for this class. Those readings will be available on canvas.

李谷城, 中国大陆政治术语 (中文大学出版社, 第二版, 1992).
This book explains phrases used in Chinese politics through the late 1980s.

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Make-up Class: It will be necessary to schedule one make-up class sometime in late March or early April. I will decide on the date after the drop-add period is over and we are able to find a time convenient for most, if not all, students

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Meet with the instructor: Each student will meet with Professor Zweig to discuss his/her paper. This meeting will facilitate your paper preparation. Students are encouraged to begin to think about their paper as soon as possible. Office hours are Mon. 3:00-5:00 or by appointment.

No make-up exams will be granted.
Only exception is with an officially documented surgical procedure or emergency room visit. (A visit to a doctor/Student Health Center because you feel sick is not enough.)

Exchange students should not book flights home before May 29 to insure that they are present for the final exam. We will not know the final exam date until April.

No cheating and no plagiarism allowed.
You can find the University’s regulations on cheating and plagiarism from the following website: http://tl.ust.hk/integrity/student-1.html

Use of Canvas (https://canvas.ust.hk)
Prof Zweig or Jingyang will make course announcements and post lecture slides and sample exam questions on the course website on Canvas. Make sure you receive all course-related posts. All readings will also be on Canvas.

Respect your fellow classmates and the professor by:
- Arriving punctually. Drinking is allowed in class, but no eating.
- Do not chat with your neighbours during class. If you have any questions or do not understand the point being made, please ask the professor. There are NO silly questions.
- notify the TA if you will not be able to attend class. Please do not miss the classes for which you have made a prior commitment to make a presentation.
Class Schedule and Readings

PART 1. INTRODUCTION

Class 1: Introduction to the Study of Chinese Politics and to the Course (Jan 30)

Key Questions to Consider:

a. In what way is China’s political and economic system different or similar to other developing countries? Which ones, and why? Why is it important to compare China to other countries?
b. What heritages of the past resonate strongly with contemporary Chinese politics?
c. What are the key perspectives of the Chinese system that Joseph emphasizes?
d. What theories of political and economic development does the rise of China challenge?

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Class 2: Models and Methods in the Study of Chinese Politics (Jan 30)

Key Questions to Consider:

a. What difference does it make which model of Chinese politics we select as our lens for analysing China?
b. How do different methodologies (qualitative, quantitative, field work) lead to different findings in the study of Chinese politics?
c. What aspects of the totalitarian system are still valid to explain Chinese politics? What aspects are not?

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6 February, No Class

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PART 2. CONCEPTUAL ISSUES IN THE STUDY OF CHINESE POLITICS

Class 3. Ideology and Beliefs in Chinese Politics (Feb 13)
UG Joseph, Politics in China, pp. 149-188.

Suggested Reading
Peter Hays Gries, China’s New Nationalism: Pride, Politics, and Diplomacy (University of California Press, 2004), pp. 116-134.
David Zweig, “What will China’s New Era mean for the world?” South China Morning Post, 26 October 2017.

**Key Questions to Consider:**

a. What are the key concepts of Marxism-Leninism, and how did Mao alter them?

b. Why was Mao's strategy of peasant revolution a “heresy” to Marxism-Leninism?

c. How did ideology affect the policies of the CCP, in terms of privatization, organizations, political leadership, foreign policy, etc.?

d. Zheng Yongnian differentiates between “official” and “popular” nationalism. What problem do these two types of nationalism cause for the Chinese state?

e. How has Xi Jinping intensified the role of ideology in the Chinese political system?

Class 4. Perspectives on the Power of the State (Feb 13)


**Recommended Reading:**


**Key Questions:**

a. How autonomous is the Chinese state today? How can we measure the concept of state autonomy?

b. Why did the CCP decline as an organization in the 2000s?

c. Recently, how has the CCP tried to strengthen itself? Can these measures sustain the CCP’s rule in the long run?

d. Why and in what way have the security forces become more powerful in the last 15 years?

Class 5. Political Economy and China’s Model of Development (Feb 20)


**Recommended Reading:**


**Key Questions to Consider:**

a. How does politics affect economics in China?
b. Why does China continue to grow despite such terrible corruption?
c. What is “rent seeking” and why is it so prevalent in Chinese economy?
d. Why has privatization been successful in China? What problems does it face today?
e. Discuss the weakening and strengthening of the state sector between 1994 and 2014.

Class 6. Elite Politics (Flipping the Classroom)¹ (Feb 20)

Recommended Readings:
Chien-wen Kou and Xiaowei Zang, eds., Choosing China’s Leaders (Routledge, 2014)

Key Questions to Consider:
a. Who are the top leaders in China, how do we find them?
b. Where does real power lie in the political system?
c. How has the background of the leaders changed over time?
d. What do we know about the rules of succession and why do we care?

Class 7. Decisions, Policy and Policy Implementation (Feb 27)

Recommended Readings:

Key Questions:
a. What do we know (and not know) about the decision making system in China?
b. To what extent does the “locus of decision making” change in China?
c. Why has the CCP been relatively successful in devising and introducing new policies?
d. What are the key difficulties in implementing policy in China and why?
e. How does policy “innovation” emerge in China?

¹ For this class, students will watch Prof Zweig’s online MOOC lecture on Chinese Political Elites and come to class prepared to discuss the issues. Zweig will not make a presentation during this class.
Class 8. Society and Participation in Chinese Politics (Feb. 27)


**Recommended Readings:**


**Key Questions:**
- a. Is Chinese society active or passive? What are the key indicators of the attitude of society?
- b. What are the major modes of participation in Chinese politics? Have they changed in the post-Mao era?
- c. How has the State been able to control society in Chinese politics?

Class 9. Gender, Youth and Class in Chinese Politics (March 6)


**Suggested Readings:**


**Key Questions:**
- a. How have Chinese youth changed since 1949?
- b. Does social revolution help women? Has the impact of the Chinese revolution on women changed over time? How have women responded to these changes?
- c. What are the major patterns of participation and activism that characterize entrepreneurs?

Part 3. Explaining Major Historical Events

Class 10. Adopting and Rejecting the Soviet Model, 1949-1965 (March 6)


Suggested Reading:

Key Question to Consider:

a. Why did China adopt the Soviet Model of Development?
b. What were the political implications of that decision? How did it affect the CCP’s relations with society and relations among leaders within the CCP?
c. What were the reasons for the Sino-Soviet split? Why did China move away from the Soviet model?
d. What were the key disputes among the Chinese leaders in the early-mid-1960s and how did the Sino-Soviet Split feed into those conflicts?
e. Is Grow’s argument about Soviet “Imperialism” convincing?

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Class 11. Understanding the Great Famine, 1957-1962 (March 13)

Suggested Reading:

Key Questions to Consider:

a. How can we explain the famine?
b. What was the role of the Great Leap Forward in triggering the famine?
c. To what extent were China’s leaders, especially Mao, responsible for the famine?
d. Why was it so difficult to stop the famine?

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Class 12. Explaining the Cultural Revolution, 1966-1971 (March 13)
UG Andrew Walder, China under Mao: a revolution derailed (Harvard University Press, 2015), chapters on the Cultural Revolution

**Suggested Reading:**

**Key Questions:**
a. Assess the role of ideology versus elite ‘power struggle’ in launching the Cultural Revolution?
b. Was the Cultural Revolution manipulated from above or the result of spontaneous political activity? What was the role of the Red Guards in the Cultural Revolution?
c. Why and how did the Gang of Four come to power?
d. How can we evaluate the Maoist era? What were its successes and failures?


**Suggested Reading**

**Key Questions to Consider:**
a. What are the key issues that split the leadership in the 1980s?
b. How do we explain the cycle of politics in the 1980s?
c. Why did the struggle over these issues become so intense?
d. Where did Deng stand in terms of “left” and “right”?
e. Why is it important to listen to the “left” in China?


**Suggested Readings:**


**Key Questions:**

a. Who made decollectivization happen: cadres, villagers or elite reformers?

b. How did the interaction between political context and policy content affect the policy process on decollectivization?

c. Impact of ideology on rural policy and village politics

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**Class 15. Understanding June 4th (March 27)**


Suggested Reading


Video available: “Gate of Heavenly Peace,” by Carmelita Hinton. To be arranged.

**Key Questions to Consider:**

a. How did political and economic changes in the 1980s contribute to the crisis of 1989?

b. What role did international events and Chinese foreign policy play in the crisis?

c. Why did the government not react sooner to solve the crisis?

d. What are the long-term impacts of June 4th, both domestically and internationally?

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**Class 16. Understanding the Rebirth of Reform, 1991-2000 (March 27)**


Suggested Readings:


**Key Questions to Consider:**

a. Why was Deng able to mobilize support for a renewal of reform in 1992?

b. What are the long-term political and economic impacts of the reform in 1997-1998?
c. How was the Chinese Communist Party able to lay-off 65 million workers peacefully?
d. Why was Jiang Zemin able to stabilize his leadership?

Part IV: Key Issues in Chinese Politics

Class 17. Central-Local Relations and Bureaucratic Interests in China (April 3)

Suggested Readings:

Key Questions:
a. What is the relative power of the central and local governments? How can we measure the power balance?
b. What are the different instruments that the central government has to induce the local state to conform to its policies?
c. How has power shifted between the centre and localities during the reform era?

Class 18. Local Governance and Politics (April 3)

Suggested Readings:
Thomas Bernstein and Xiaobo Lu, Taxation without Representation in Contemporary Rural China (Cambridge University Press, 2003).

Questions:
a. What are the key sources of local government wealth and how does that effect the ties between the local government and society?
b. Who holds the power in rural villages in China?
c. To what extent did village election transform politics and governance in China?

Class 19. The Politics of Environmental Reform (April 10)


Suggested Readings

Key Questions to Consider:
  a. Why has China had such a hard time preventing environmental degradation? How does this relate to central-local relations?
  b. In what ways have problems in the environment become political issues and why?
  c. To what extent have NGOs been able to influence policy on the environment?

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PART IV: CHINA AND THE WORLD

Class 20. Transnational Politics: The Domestic Impact of External Openings (April 10)

Readings:


Suggested Readings:

Key Questions to Consider:
  a. What does it mean to say that an issue is transnational? How does politics differ from issues of domestic or foreign policy?
  b. To what extent can the outside world affect domestic politics in China?
  c. In what way do international norms affect Chinese domestic politics?
d. How has China’s opening to the outside world affected domestic political economy?

21. China’s Global Search for Talent and Technology: The Role of the State (April 17)

Suggested Readings:
David Zweig, Kang Siqin and Henry Wang, draft.

Key Questions:
a. Is state involvement in China’s search for talent a positive or negative force?
b. Why did the 1000 Talents Plan become an issue in US-China relations?

Class 22. Mainland-Hong Kong Relations: Politics on the Periphery (April 17)

April 24 and May 1, NO CLASS

PART IV: Current and Future Politics

Class 25. The Xi Jinping Phenomenon (May 8)

Suggested Readings:
Class 26: China’s Future (May 8)

*Suggested Readings:*

*Key Questions to Consider:*
   a. What are the sources of political and social stability and instability in China?
   b. How is China? How can we measure this?
   c. Why does Whyte think that “distributive injustice” is not an active volcano?

*Suggested Readings:*
Kellee Tsai, *Capitalism without democracy: The private sector in contemporary China* (Cornell University Press, 2007), pp. 72-104.

*Key Questions to Consider:*
   a. What political reforms are necessary for successful economic reform? How does economic reform affect political reform?
   b. What are the key factors likely to affect political, economic and social developments on the mainland in the medium- and long-term?

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**Make-up Class**

**Make-up Class A.** Rural Industrialization and Urban-Rural Relations (date to be determined)

*Suggested Readings:*

Key Questions to Consider:
   a. What have been the major changes in urban-rural relations since 1978?
   b. Why were the TVEs able to develop? Why did they eventually decline?
   c. How does the “hukou” system help or hinder the Chinese economy? Why have they not given up this system yet?
   d. How does the Chinese system discriminate against the farmers?

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Makeup Class B. The Politics of the Media: Journalism, Internet and Control (t.b.d.)

UG   Document No. 9, 2013


Suggested Reading:
Fincher, Betraying Big Brother (“The Internet and Feminist Awakening”), pp. 33-57.

Key Questions to Consider:
   a. Has the internet been a ‘game changer” in terms of Chinese politics?
   b. What role has it played in the mobilization of women and NGOs in China?
   c. How do journalists find the space to do their work?
   d. Can people express their views on the internet?

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Appendix:

RESEARCH MATERIALS
There are an enormous number of books, statistical yearbooks, and other articles at the Universities Services Centre for China Research at the Chinese University of Hong Kong where you can get information for your papers. This is the best collection of documents and journals on China outside of the Chinese mainland. The library is open to our students, but books, magazines and journals cannot be taken out.

OTHER USEFUL READINGS
China Information, vol. xxviii, no. 2 (July 2014), special issue on Cyber Politics.

The Economist Intelligence Unit, “China Going Global Investment Index, 2017,”


The “Going Out” Strategy: China Searches for Resources