POLS 3930 Introduction to Chinese Politics
Tue/Thu 2:15 PM–3:30 PM, Room: MCG 121
Department of Political Science
Saint Louis University
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Instructor

Dr. Hui Zhou
Department of Political Science
Email: hui.zhou@slu.edu
Office: McGannon Hall (MCG) 124
Office hours: Wednesday 10:00 AM–11:00 AM or by appointment

Course Description

The 21st century is witnessing China’s rapid rise as a global superpower. China’s politics and policies have widespread influence on other countries and regions. This course is designed to help students gain a thorough understanding of China against the backdrop of its growing global influence. Students will learn about China’s transition experience from a socialist state to a market-based hybrid system; its political institutions including the ruling party, the People’s Congress and the judiciary; and its contemporary challenges such as corruption, population aging and environmental governance. Students are expected to acquire substantive knowledge and analytical skills so that they can make sense of China’s political, economic and social phenomena.

Course Objectives

After absorbing lectures, discussions and assigned readings/videos, students should

- get familiar with the modern history of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) since its founding in 1949
- understand China’s economic transition from a centrally planned socialist state to a market-based hybrid system
- develop a thorough understanding of the politics of China, with a particular emphasis on its political institutions and political economy
- gain analytical skills to evaluate challenges and opportunities facing the country as well as its implications for the rest of the world
This course will draw on a number of journal articles and book chapters to familiarize you with core topics in Chinese politics. Each lecture requires two to three journal articles or book chapters, and additional readings are recommended to satisfy diverse interests. All required journal articles and book chapters will be posted on Canvas prior to the class meetings. If there are too many chapters drawn from a book, then the book is required for the sake of copyright protection. Otherwise, I will share scanned chapters with the class, and students need not buy the book. Below are the required and recommended books for the course.


**Course Requirements**

Students’ overall performance in this course depends on the following assignments.

1. **Attendance (10%)**
   - A student is unlikely to learn anything without attending a class. Whereas absences can be excused under some circumstances such as illness or family emergencies, those missing a class without a legitimate reason will see a loss to their attendance credit. I will take attendance randomly throughout the semester.

2. **Participation (10%)**
   - Active participation is expected in this course. Students will be encouraged to get engaged in the course by asking and answering questions in class. Additionally, coming to my office hours to discuss any confusion or the research paper is also considered active participation.

3. **Presentations (10%)**
   - Being able to digest, synthesize and present academic research is an important goal of this course. Each student will present twice throughout this semester, with each presentation constituting 5% of the final grade. Students are sup-
posed to choose articles or chapters of interest at the beginning of the semester. Ideally, a presenter should summarize the gist, illustrate the reasoning and share his or her critiques of the article. The presentation slides should be sent to me the day prior to the presentation.

4. Midterm Exam (30%)

- The midterm exam is close-book and close-notes. It consists of multiple choice questions and short essay questions. Students are supposed to remember some factual knowledge and demonstrate a fair understanding of the required readings. The exam will last 90 minutes in the computer lab in McGannon Hall 118. Students are supposed to complete the exam on a computer. I will proctor the exam, and no one is allowed to use a computer/laptop/cellphone to cheat.

5. Research Paper (40%)

- This is an upper-level political science course, and there is no final exam. Instead, students will be expected to complete a research paper in which they will empirically explore a question related to China. Writing guidelines will be offered throughout the semester. Materials cited in the paper should follow an academic citation style, which is detailed below.

Citation Style

Students should follow the Style Manual for Political Science, which was created by the American Political Science Association and revised in 2018. Within the main text of the paper, they should use two types of formats, Author (Year) and (Author Year).

1. Arena (2014) argues that extant literature is largely based on descriptive analysis.

2. This finding is consistent with other research that adopts a different analytic approach (Arena 2014).

At the end of the paper, however, students should compile a list of references in accordance with the following formats, depending on the type of cited documents.

1. Books and book chapters


2. Journal articles


3. Newspapers and magazines


4. Websites, blogs and social media


5. Thesis or dissertation


6. Conference papers


Deadlines and Grading

• February 13th: decide the topic of the policy paper.
• March 7th: the midterm exam is scheduled between 2:15–3:45 PM in MCG 118.
• March 26th: complete a preliminary literature review of the research question.
• April 16th: decide how to empirically examine the research question.
• May 14th: the full paper is due at midnight.

I will round final grades. Letter grades are determined by the grading scale below.
Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors. The mission of Saint Louis University is “the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity.” Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care, and community service through which SLU fulfills its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern. The full University-level Academic Integrity Policy can be found on the Provost’s Office website at: https://www.slu.edu/provost/policies/academic-and-course/academic-integrity-policy.pdf. Additionally, each SLU College, School, and Center has its own academic integrity policies, available on their respective websites.

Most importantly, copying and pasting content generated by AI-powered tools such as ChatGPT is considered as plagiarism.

Disability Accommodations

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations must formally register their disability with the University. Once successfully registered, students also must notify their course instructor that they wish to use their approved accommodations in the course.

Please contact the Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources (CADR) to schedule an appointment to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Most students on the St. Louis campus will contact CADR, located in the Student Success Center and available by email at accessibility_disability@slu.edu or by phone at 314.977.3484. Once approved, information about a student’s eligibility for academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors by email from CADR and within the instructor’s official course roster. Students who do not have a documented disability but who think they may have one also are encouraged to contact CADR. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries.
Title IX

Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual harassment, including sexual assault, stalking, domestic or dating violence, we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident that involves a Title IX matter, that faculty member must notify SLU’s Title IX Coordinator that you shared an experience relating to Title IX. This is true even if you ask the faculty member not to disclose the incident. The Title IX Coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

Anna Kratky is the Title IX Coordinator at Saint Louis University (DuBourg Hall, room 36; anna.kratky@slu.edu; 314-977-3886). If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the University Counseling Center at 314-977-TALK or make an anonymous report through SLU’s Integrity Hotline by calling 1-877-525-5669 or online at http://www.lighthouse-services.com/slu. To view SLU’s policies and for resources, please visit the following web address: https://www.slu.edu/about/safety/sexual-assault-resources/index.php.

Student Support Resources

University Counseling Center

The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers free, short-term, solution-focused counseling to Saint Louis University undergraduate and graduate students. UCC counselors are highly trained clinicians who can assist with a variety of issues, such as adjustment to college life, troubling changes in mood, and chronic psychological conditions. To make an appointment, call 314-977-8255 (TALK), or visit the clinic on the second floor of Wuller Hall. For after hours needs, please press #9 after dialing the clinic number.

Wellness

All students experience stressors and challenges at some point, and seeking support is beneficial. Such challenges may be the result of academic concerns (e.g., those related to particular assignments or content in a course), or they may be more personal in nature (e.g., concerns related to relationships, mental health, loss, identities, alcohol or drugs, housing or food security, or finances, among other things). If you experience these or other difficulties, please consider seeking support from the resources available
to you.

- For concerns related to this course, please contact me. I am invested in your success and will support your success in the ways I can.

- Additionally, you have access to the many resources SLU provides in support of your personal wellness. You will find a list of available resources on the Well-being page of the SLU website.

If you or someone you know is experiencing a crisis, please consult the Crisis Support and Warning Signs on the University Counseling Center website. In the spirit of cura personalis, the University sees your academic success as connected to your health and well-being and provides resources to support your holistic wellness.

Basic Needs Security

Students experiencing food insecurity, housing insecurity, and any other challenges that are impacting their personal and/or academic wellbeing are encouraged to contact the Dean of Students Office for support. Students can submit an intake form, email deanofstudents@slu.edu, or call 314-977-9378 to connect with their office. Students may also communicate directly with their instructors about any challenges they are experiencing to receive support and resource referrals.

Course Schedule

Week 1 Introduction

1. Jan 16 (Tue) Course Overview
   - No readings.

2. Jan 18 (Thu) Culture and History

Week 2 Chinese Revolution

1. Jan 23 (Tue) The End of the Dynasty

2. Jan 25 (Thu) The Rise of the CCP


• China: A Century of Revolution 1911–1949 (First Half). [Documentary]

Week 3 China Amid and Post the World War II

1. Jan 30 (Tue) The Second Sino-Japanese War and Chinese Civil War


2. Feb 1 (Thu) The Takeover of the Chinese Communist Party


Week 4 From Revolution to Reform

1. Feb 6 (Tue) Cultural Revolution


2. Feb 8 (Thu) Reform and Opening Up
   - China: A Century of Revolution Part III. [Documentary]
   - (Recommended) “Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party Since the Founding of the People’s Republic of China.” [Official Document]

Week 5 Political Institutions I

1. Feb 13 (Tue) The Chinese Communist Party

2. Feb 15 (Thu) The Executive Branch

Week 6 Political Institutions II

1. Feb 20 (Tue) The People’s Congress


2. *Feb 22 (Thu) The Judiciary*


**Week 7 Political Economy**

1. *Feb 27 (Tue) Economic Development*


2. *Feb 29 (Thu) Explaining China’s Growth*


Week 8 Midterm Exams

1. Mar 5 (Tue) Exam Review
2. Mar 7 (Thu) Midterm Exam

Week 9 Spring Break (No Class)

Week 10 Contentious Politics

1. Mar 19 (Tue) Stability Maintenance

2. Mar 21 (Thu) Prospect of Democratization

Week 11 Public Opinion

1. Mar 26 (Tue) Regime Resilience
Week 12 Corruption and Anti-Corruption Campaigns

1. Apr 2 (Tue) The Scope of Corruption

2. Apr 4 (Thu) Effects of Anti-Corruption Campaigns

Week 13 Information Control

1. Apr 9 (Tue) Media Censorship

2. Apr 11 (Thu) Data Credibility and Availability


**Week 14 Social Policy**

1. **Apr 16 (Tue) Social Policy Reforms**

2. **Apr 18 (Thu) Poverty Reduction**

**Week 15 Environment and Population**

1. **Apr 23 (Tue) Environmental Governance**
   - Chai, Jing. 2015. *Under the Dome*. [Documentary]
2. Apr 25 (Thu) Population Crisis


Week 16 China and Global Politics

1. Apr 30 (Tue) Global South Politics


2. May 2 (Thu) A China Model?


Week 17 Wrap Up

1. May 7 (Tue) Study Day (No Class)

2. May 9 (Thu) Q&A

Caveat: This syllabus might be subject to change in the future. If a change is made, I will notify the class by email.