Course Content and Format

This course will examine China’s efforts to reconstitute its political institutions following the collapse of the imperial system in 1911. Particular attention will be paid to the clash between competing conceptions of political development and the rival political movements and forces that espoused them. The search for an effective and stable political order in the face of external pressures and internal fragmentation will receive extended discussion. The failed effort to create legitimate and popularly grounded political institutions will be a major focus of the course. A secondary focus will explore the impact of rapid economic, social and cultural change on the political system. The course will be organized in a lecture format, though class discussion will be encouraged.

Grades will be based on two term tests (takehome), weighted equally at 50% each. Test # 1 will be posted on May 25, due June 1. Test # 2 TBA.

All readings will be posted on Quercus in Modules by date and topic.

Topics and Readings:

May 9  The Rise of China: Historical Perspectives and the Problem of Change

2. Lieberthal, Governing China, Chapter 1, pp.3-19.

May 11  Revolution and Reform

1. Bianco, Origins of the Chinese Revolution, Chapters 1 and 2..
2. Lieberthal, Governing China, pp.19-31
3. Chen Duxiu, “Call to Youth”

May 16  The CCP and the KMT (GMD): 1921-1949
2. Kenneth Lieberthal, Governing China, 31-39

May 18  The CCP in Power: The Mao Years: I
2. Maurice Meisner, Mao’s China and After, Selections.
4. Video (“The Mao Years: I”)

May 23  The Cultural Revolution and the End of the Mao Era: II
1. Maurice Meisner, Mao’s China and After, Chapters 17, 19.
3. Phillip Pan, “The Cemetery”

May 25  The Deng Era: Economic Reform and Market Authoritarianism
1. Maurice Meisner, Mao’s China, Chapter 23-25.
4. Video (‘Born Under the Red Flag’)

May 30  The Xi Jinping Era: Back to the Future ?

June 1  Party and State Institutions in Flux
3. Daniel Bell, “Chinese Democracy isn’t Inevitable,” Atlantic, 2018

### June 6  Political Leadership in Flux

3. Daniel Bell and Eric Li “Meritocracy”

### June 8  State and Society in Flux

2. Gilboy and Read, “Political and Social Reform in China,” 2008
3. Andrew Nathan, “The Puzzle of the Chinese Middle Class.” Video (China from the Inside)

### June 13  Ideology and Value Change in Contemporary China

2. Anne Marie Brady, Marketing Dictatorship, Chapter 1.
4. Timothy Cheek, “Xi Jinping’s Counter Reformation” (2021)

### June 15  China Challenges the World

1. Ian Johnson, “Will China Become Supreme?”
2. Frank Pieleke, Knowing China, Chapter 6
5. Video (China from the Outside)