University of Toronto  
Department of Political Science  

Pol. 431Y/2416Y       Summer, 2021  
Politics and Society in Contemporary China       Mr. Falkenheim  

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Course Outline  

This course will explore the dynamics of political change in post-Mao China through an examination of selected systemic challenges and regime responses. The primary focus will be on processes of institutional development and decay as the Party-State regime alternates between hard and soft authoritarianism. A secondary theme will deal with evolving state-society relations, exploring the regime’s efforts to manage an increasingly diverse and restive society. An important goal of the course will be to introduce students to the major scholarly debates within the contemporary China studies field, as well as to the primary and secondary materials available for empirical research on these questions.  

Course Format and Requirements  

The course will be organized as a colloquium/seminar centered on class readings. Responsibility for summarizing and commenting on the readings will be rotated among seminar participants. Grades will be based on the following:  

(1) Participation: 25%;  
(2) 3 reading summary/critiques (5-7 pages)  45%  
(3) Research Exercise 5-7 pages,  30%  

Readings: Posted on Quercus by topic and date.  

Topics and Readings:  

May 3 Course Introduction/Historical Overview  

May 4  

Problematics, Paradigms, and Hunches: Pekingology Revisited

4. Alice Miller, ‘Valedictory’, China Leadership Monitor, # 57
9. William Overholt, China’s Crisis of Success, Chapter 1.

May 5  

China: ‘Resilient Authoritarianism’ or “Trapped Transition”?

2. Minxin Pei, “Is China’s Transition Trapped and What should the West do about it?” Centre for Social and Legal Studies, University of Oxford, 2007/
5. Vivienne Shue and Patricia Thornton, To Govern China, Introduction.

May 6  

Chinese Perspectives on Systemic Challenges


May 10

**Change as Process: Three Models**

2. Kellee S. Tsai, *Capitalism Without Democracy*, Chapters 2 & 7, (pp. 17-43; 200-221)
5. Yun Yun Ang *How China Escaped Poverty*, Selected sections.

May 11

**Village Democracy and Health Policy: Case Studies of Process**

4. Kornreich, Vertinsky and Potter, “Consultation and Deliberation in the making of China’s Health Care Reform”

May 12

**Can the Party Reinvent itself?**


May 13

Ideology and Legitimacy: Restoring Orthodoxy?


4. “Internet Commentator”


May 17

Elite Conflict and Institutionalization

1. Susan Shirk, (The Political Logic of Economic Reform, (1993), Chapter 4 (“Leadership Incentives.”))


May 18

The Xi Jinping Difference

1. Tony Saich, “What Does Xi Jinping Dream About?”


3. Cheng Li, “Leadership Politics in the Xi Jinping Era”
May 19

The China Model: Governance Innovation


May 20

Managing Protest

5. Zhen Jianghua, “The Perilous Life of a Young Activist in China.”
6. Xu Zhiyong, “Dear Chairman Xi, It’s Time for You to Go,” (2021)

May 25

The ‘Puzzle’ of Popular Support


May 26

Making Law Work

1. Randall Perenboom, China’s Long March to the Rule of Law, preface, PP. 1-23; 558-589.
6. Mary Gallagher,

May 27

Civil Society and Political Change


**May 31**

**Combating Corruption**

4. Carolyn Kautz, “Power Struggle or Strengthening the Party” Perspectives on Xi Jinping’s Anti-Corruption Campaign,” *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, July 2020

**June 1**

**China’s Rising Middle Class: Force for Change?**


**June 2**

**Media and Political Change**

6. Interview with Chang Ping (5 Parts) in China Change, (2020)

June 3

Social Media and the Public Sphere


June 7

China’s Political Economy at the Crossroad

2. Daniel Lynch, China’s Futures, Chapter 3.(The Economists)

June 8

Ethnic Politics in the PRC

1. Dru Gladney, Dislocating China, Chapter 2.
2. Barnett, ‘Thunder from Tibet.’ NYRB
4. James Leibold, “Xinjiang” China Leadership Monitor 59
6. Conversation with Ilham Tohti

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<tr>
<th>June 9</th>
<th><strong>Chinese Foreign Policy</strong></th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Daniel Lynch, <em>China’s Futures</em>, Chapter 4.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Ian Johnson, “Will China become Supreme?” <em>NYRB</em>.</td>
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<td>Frank Pieke, <em>Knowing China</em>, Chapter 6</td>
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<th>June 10</th>
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<td>Nathan and Scobell, <em>China’s Search for Security</em>.</td>
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<td>Christopher Hughes, “National Identity,” in <em>Taiwan Handbook</em>.</td>
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<th>June 14</th>
<th><strong>China’s Future</strong></th>
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<td>William Overholt, <em>China’s Crisis of Success</em>, Conclusion.</td>
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