

Modern China

Fall 2017
21:510:353

Monday, 4:00 - 5:20 pm
Wednesday, 4:00 - 5:20 pm
Conklin Hall 446

Instructor: Daniel Asen
Office hours: Wednesday 11:40am - 12:40pm, and by appointment, Conklin Hall 328

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1. Course Description

This course examines the process through which China has become a rising superpower at the start of the 21st century and the consequences of this historic development on Chinese politics, society, economy, and culture. Specifically, we will examine the collapse of the Qing empire in 1911, the political fragmentation and warfare of the Republican period (1912-49), the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949 and Maoist era, and the profound transformations that have characterized the period of reform that began in 1978 and continue into the present. We will also proceed thematically, exploring issues such as changing patterns of everyday life, gender relations, cultural change, nationalism, reform and revolution, state-society relations, and urban and rural change. Students will critically read a range of primary source documents and works of historical scholarship. This course requires no previous knowledge of Chinese history.

2. Learning Goals

1. Develop an understanding of the major events, institutions, and figures that have defined China's modern period (mid-1800s to present).
2. Develop critical reading skills. In this class you will be exposed to a range of sources, including memoirs, political essays and speeches, law codes, propaganda posters, works of fiction, and films. We will pay particularly close attention to how we read primary sources (primary sources = the historical documents that historians use as evidence when making claims about the past). We will do this by placing documents into historical context, thinking about the background and agenda of the authors, and identifying the key concerns and concepts that appear in a given text.
3. Use our understanding of Chinese history to analyze the country's current trajectory in the 21st century. Much as in the case of any other society or country, history shapes where China is today, where it is going in the future, and the challenges that it faces and will face. We will also think about the ways in which China's long history has been

appropriated to serve the needs of the present. For example, how does the notion of the “century of humiliation” continue to inform China’s foreign policy? How has Confucianism been used to explain East Asian success in creating advanced industrial economies? These are only some of the examples that we will use to explore the appropriation of history in the present.

3. Assignments and Grading

Class participation and attendance – 10%

Writing assignments (2) – 40%

Map quizzes (2) – 10%

Midterm – 20%

Final – 20%

Class participation and attendance (10%). I expect you to ask questions and make informed observations on course material during class and to participate in discussions and activities, all while being respectful of your classmates and maintaining a positive learning environment in our class. I will record attendance in each class session. If you cannot come to class because of an emergency, please try to contact me in advance.

Writing assignments (40% total). This course has two writing assignments: Paper #1 (3-4 pages, 20%), and Paper #2 (4-5 pages, 20%). For each paper you will be asked to do a close reading and analysis of primary source documents drawn from modern Chinese history. I will give you a handout for each paper that includes a detailed explanation of the topic. Papers should be written in size 12 type and double spaced. We will discuss paper writing in class as well as how I will grade them. If you have any questions at all about the papers or writing in general, feel free to raise them in class, send me an email, or meet with me during my office hours.

Map Quizzes (10% total, 5% each). Over the semester, there will be two map quizzes. For each quiz, you will be asked to identify important places and geographical features on a map of China. You will be provided with a list of the places/features in advance as well as a map with the place names already filled in. For the quiz, you will be given this same map, and will have to identify the places from memory.

Midterm (20%) and Final (20%). You will receive a detailed handout explaining the format of the midterm and final exams and how they will be graded.

4. Course Readings

Weekly reading assignments will usually include two parts – a selection from our textbook and a couple of historical documents or other readings, which are posted on Blackboard.

We will be using the following textbook:

Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China*. Third Edition. New York: Norton, 2013 (“Spence”). ISBN: 9780393934519

You will be required to read significant portions of this book for weekly homework readings and class writing assignments. It will be made available on reserve at Dana Library, at the campus bookstore, and can be purchased from other sources as well (i.e. Amazon.com).

Note: This book has several editions. For this class we are going to be using the Third Edition (2013), which is different from earlier editions in its contents and page numbering.

5. Course Policies

1. Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>.

If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

For more information please contact Kate Torres at (973) 353-5375 or in the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219 or by contacting odsnewark@rutgers.edu.

2. Academic dishonesty in this class will not be tolerated. Period. This includes plagiarism, cheating, and any other behavior described in the Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy. **For this reason it is absolutely crucial that you familiarize yourself with this policy, which describes the actions that will be counted as violations of academic integrity:** <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>

You must include the following Rutgers Honor Code Pledge statement on every assignment which you turn in: “On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this assignment. (Name) (Signature – typing your name is fine) (Date)”.

If anyone has any questions at all about this policy, what counts as a violation of academic integrity, or even simply how to cite sources on a paper (a topic which we will cover in class), I am always willing to discuss these issues with you. Students who

plagiarize assignments or otherwise violate academic integrity will receive serious penalties, ranging from a failing grade in the class to suspension.

6. Schedule

Sept. 6 Welcome to Modern China!

- Introduction / overview of class

Sept. 11 Industrialization, Imperialism, and the Western Powers in 19th-century East Asia

- Pankaj Mishra, *From the Ruins of Empire: The Revolt Against the West and the Remaking of Asia* (New York: Picador, 2012), 22-45.

Sept. 13 Opium War and the Unequal Treaties

- Spence 147-163, 175-178, 186-196
- Document: "Letter of Commissioner Lin to Queen Victoria" (3 pages)
- **Map Quiz #1**

Sept. 18 Reform and Revolution

- Spence, 208-249
- Documents: "Memorial of Kang Youwei to the Guangxu Emperor" (2 pages) and "Manifesto of the Revolutionary Alliance" (2 pages)

Sept. 20 Yuan Shikai and the Warlord Period

- Spence 249-254, 261-278
- Document: "Twenty-One Demands" (5 pages, stop at "Rice Riots")

Sept. 25 The New Culture Movement and May Fourth

- Spence 279-295
- Document: "Chen Duxiu's editorial in *New Youth*, 1915" (2 pages)

Sept. 27 Power, Ideology, and the Nationalist Party-State

- Spence 301-309
- Document: "Sun Yat-sen opens the Whampoa Academy, 1924" (3 pages)
- Document: "Guomindang 'Emergency Laws,' 1931" (2 pages)

Oct. 2 Chiang Kai-shek and the Northern Expedition

- Spence 310-321, 327-341
- Document: "Generalissimo Jiang [Chiang] on National Identity" (6 pages)

Oct. 4 Marxism, the CCP, and the Ascent of Mao Zedong

- Spence 295-300, 365-381
- Document: “Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan” (2 pages)

Oct. 9 From the Asia-Pacific War to the Chinese Civil War

- Spence 348-355, 397-432
- Document: “Zhu De’s speech to CCP Seventh Congress, 1945” (3 pages)

Oct. 11 Communist Revolution

- Spence 433-439, 445-459
- **Paper #1 Due**

Oct. 16 Remaking Society

- Spence 460-483
- Document: “Half of China,” from William Hinton, *Fanshen* (1966) (4 pages)
- Document: “The Marriage Law of the People’s Republic of China” (3 pages)

Oct. 18 Party, Politics, and the Structure of the State

- Spence 484-493, 505-513
- Mao Zedong: “The Chinese People Cannot Be Cowed by the Atom Bomb” (1955) and “U.S. Imperialism Is a Paper Tiger” (1956) (4 pages)

Oct. 23 Review Session (Attendance required)

- Bring questions that you have about anything that we have covered so far
- We will spend the class session reviewing material and discussing larger themes and connections

Oct. 25 Midterm

Oct. 30 The Great Leap Forward and the Great Famine

- Spence 514-534
- Documents: “Peng Dehuai’s Letter To Chairman Mao, July 14, 1959” (2 pages)

Nov. 1 Cultural Revolution

- Spence 535-555
- Documents: “Red Guards” (9 pages) and “Introduction to the Mao Badge” (6 pages)

Nov. 6 Watch To Live (1994) in Class

- Spence 565-586 (We will cover this material on Nov. 8th)
- Read “Translator’s afterword” (237-245), in Yu Hua, *To Live* (1993), the book on which the film is based.

Nov. 8 Deng Xiaoping and the post-1978 “Reform and Opening”

- Spence 587-593, 599-614
- Documents: “Building Socialism with a Specifically Chinese Character, June 30, 1984” (2 pages) and “Deng Xiaoping Talks on the Importance of Special Economic Zones, 1992” (2 pages)

Nov. 13 Society, Economy, and Culture under Deng’s Reforms

- Spence 615-638
- Document: Take a look at “Tables and Figures on Trends and Developments” (15 pages). What patterns can you discern from the figures? What do they tell you about how everyday life changed under the reforms?

Nov. 15 1989 and the Question of Political Reform

- Spence 593-599, 639-665
- Document: “Posters Calling for Democracy” (5 pages)

Nov. 20 Economic Reform Accelerated: the 1990s, 2000s, and Beyond

- Spence 666-689
- Document: “Main points of Deng Xiaoping’s talks in Shenzhen” (2 pages)

Nov. 22 No Class

- **Note: Wednesday Nov. 22 follows a Friday class schedule. For more information, see the RU-N Fall 2017 Academic Calendar.**

Nov. 27 Social and Environmental Consequences of Reform

- Spence 690-699
- Document: “‘Life on the Outside’: An Interview with an Itinerant Worker, Lu Naihong” (4 pages)
- **Map Quiz #2**

Nov. 29 Watch China on Four Wheels (2012) in Class

- Document: “The Three Gorges” (11 pages)

Dec. 4 Capitalism, Socialism, and 21st-century China

- Document: “Contradiction, Systemic Crisis and Direction for Change: An Interview with Wang Hui” (10 pages)

Dec. 6 Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Political Legitimacy

- James Leibold, "The *minzu* net: China's fragmented national form," *Nations and Nationalism* 22, no. 3 (2016): 423-28.

Dec. 11 Confucianism and/as Globalism

- Arif Dirlik, "Confucius in the Borderlands: Global Capitalism and the Reinvention of Confucianism," *boundary 2* 22, no. 3 (1995): 229-73 (Focus mainly on 229-242).

Dec. 13 Review Session (Attendance required)

- We will spend the class reviewing material that will be on the final exam and thinking about the larger themes and questions of the class
- **Paper #2 due**

Final Exam: Wednesday December 20th, 3-6pm, Conklin Hall 446 (Our regular classroom)