The University of Oklahoma
School of International and Area Studies

Fall 2008 IAS 3003-001:
The Politics of Mao’s China

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Monday, Wednesday 3-4:15 pm, Burton Hall Rm. 205
Office Hours: Tues., Thurs. 3-4pm in 120 Hester Hall

Course Description

This course provides a comprehensive introduction to Chinese politics under the leadership of Mao Zedong, from “Liberation” and the establishment of the People’s Republic in 1949, to Mao’s death in 1976. It will focus on Marxism, Maoism, and two of the most astounding political campaigns of the 20th century, the “Great Leap Forward” of the late 1950s, and the “Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution” of the late 1960s.

The purpose of the class is twofold. First, to truly understand today’s China, it is necessary to first engage Mao’s China and the legacy it has left for 21st century China and the world. Thus, this class seeks to introduce students to an important period in China’s recent past that can help them to better understand China today. Second, one of the primary goals of this course is to develop critical thinking skills. Therefore, you will not just passively learn about Chinese politics, but will also actively do research and writing on Chinese politics.

Readings

Students are expected to attend class having completed the readings assigned for that day. Random pop quizzes will test whether you have read them. Lectures will not cover the same ground as the readings, and are no substitute for them. One book is available for purchase at the OU bookstore and online, and will be held on reserve at Bizzell Library:


Reading is required; purchasing the book is not. Additional readings will be available on the course website, and from “LORA” at the OU library webpage. Search the EBSCO database. There is a significant amount of reading for this course, and you are expected to read critically. What are the author’s arguments? Are they persuasive? Why do you think that the authors take the positions that they do? Do you agree or not?
Grading

Your final grade will be based upon data collection, class participation & pop quizzes, two papers, and a final exam:

- 5% Survey research/data collection
- 15% Class participation, pop quizzes, and homework
- 25% Paper I (10/22)
- 25% Paper II (11/12)
- 30% Final exam (12/19)

1. You will administer about a dozen online surveys about China.
2. The class participation grade will be based upon the quality, not quantity, of your contributions to group discussions, as well as short homework assignments, and pass/fail pop quizzes on the readings given at the beginning of class on random days throughout the semester.
3. A hardcopy of your first paper will be due at the beginning of class on October 22. Late papers will not be accepted.
4. A hardcopy of your second paper will be due at the beginning of class on November 12. Late papers will not be accepted.
5. The final exam will be held on Friday, December 19th from 4:30-6:30pm. It will be comprehensive. Anyone with a scheduling conflict should inform me no later than November 19.

Papers

Two five page analytic papers will be due on October 22 and November 12. Late papers will not be accepted. The first paper should address the question, “Why did the ‘Great Leap Forward’ fail?” The second paper will address the question, “What best explains the intensity of Red Guard factionalism during the Cultural Revolution?”

Classroom Policies

Respect is required. While the discreet consumption of coffee and other beverages is permitted, eating, which might disrupt your classmates, is not. Please turn off all cell phones, laptops, and other devices that might disrupt class. Disparaging comments or behaviors towards your classmates will not be permitted. Anyone disrupting the educational atmosphere of the classroom will be asked to leave.

Sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Anyone experiencing harassment in the classroom should contact the instructor immediately. Harassment anywhere on the OU campus should be reported to the OU Office of Equal Opportunity.

Plagiarism & Cheating

Academic honesty is presumed and required of all students at OU. Use of the work of others is positively encouraged and is central to scholarship, but it must always be properly credited. When it is not credited, and when the thoughts/words/ideas of others are passed off as your own, that is PLAGIARISM. Plagiarism is serious academic misconduct and will be reported to the appropriate
university office; penalties are severe. Visit [www.ou.edu/provost/integrity-rights/](http://www.ou.edu/provost/integrity-rights/) for details of the university’s academic honesty code. If you are in doubt about how to handle quotations or citations, please consult the instructor.

**Disabilities**

Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent her from fully demonstrating her abilities should contact me personally within the first two weeks of class.

**Lecture and Reading Schedule**

**WEEK 1. INTRODUCTION: CHINA THROUGH AMERICAN EYES**
1. Monday 8/25: Intro and course overview
   - CR images
   - “Chasing The Dragon,” Rob Riggle on the *Daily Show*
   - *China A Century Of Revolution: Born Under the Red Flag*
2. Wednesday 8/27: China through American Eyes
   - Jeffrey Wasserstrom, Preface, Intro, & Ch. 1 in *China: Beyond the Headlines.*
   - HBO’s “Strip Search”

**WEEK 2. MARX AND MARXISM**
3. Monday 9/1. No class LABOR DAY
   - Labor, slide show: *The human cost of the Beijing Games, Human Rights Watch*

**WEEK 3. MAO ZEDONG**
5. Monday 9/8. Do leaders matter?
   - Mao on Mao from *Red Star over China*
   - Oksenberg, Michel. “Mao Zedong: The Political Leader” (skim)
6. Wednesday 9/10. The Many Maos
   - Wakeman, Frederic. “Mao Zedong: The Patriot” (skim)

**WEEK 4. MAOISM**
7. Monday 9/15. Mao the Theorist
   - Schwartz, Benjamin. “Mao Zedong: The Philosopher”
   - “Classes and Class Struggle” from *Quotations from Chairman Mao (The Little Red Book).*
8. Wednesday 9/17. Peasant Voluntarism
   - Schram, Stuart. “Mao Zedong: The Marxist”
   - “Political Work,” in *The Little Red Book*

**WEEK 5. THE REVOLUTIONARY HERITAGE (pre-1949)**
9. Monday 9/22. The Fall of the Qing and the Republican Revolution
- *Mao’s China and After* Part I: The Rev. Heritage (pp. 3-19)

- *Mao’s China and After* Part I: The Rev. Heritage (pp. 20-54)
- Lu Xun, “Preface to A Call to Arms” and “A Diary of a Madman.”

**WEEK 6. ESTABLISHING A NEW CHINA, 1949-55**
- *Mao’s China and After* Part II: The New Order (pp. 55-102)
- China, A Century Of Revolution 2 The Mao Years 1-12

11. Wednesday 10/1. Moving Towards Socialism
- *Mao’s China and After* Part II: The New Order (pp. 103-154)

**WEEK 7. TOWARDS COMMUNISM?**
12. Monday 10/6. The “Hundred Flowers Movement”
- *Mao’s China and After* Part III: Utopianism (pp. 155-190)
- “On The Correct Handling of Contradictions Among The People”

- *Mao’s China and After* Part III: Utopianism (pp. 191-244)

**WEEK 8. EXPLAINING THE GLF**
- Chen Jian, “Beijing and the Taiwan Strait Crisis of 1958”

15. Wednesday 10/15. Consequences of the GLF: Famine
- Jasper Becker, Hungry Ghosts

**WEEK 9. EXPERTS IN COMMAND**
- Conference website

- *Mao’s China and After* Part IV: Thermidorian Reaction (pp. 245-290)

**WEEK 10. THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION I: WHO, WHAT, WHEN**
- *Mao’s China and After* Part V: The CR and its Aftermath (pp. 291-351)

- *Mao’s China and After* Part V: The CR and its Aftermath (pp. 352-412)

**WEEK 11. THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION II: WHY?**
- Chan, Rosen, Unger

- Qiao. D. “The Blank Steele”

**WEEK 12. THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION III: REMEMBERING**
22. Monday 11/10. The literature of the wounded
23. Wednesday 11/12. Remembering today
   •  *Mao’s Children in the New China*

**WEEK 13. THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION IV: FORGETTING**

   •  “Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party Since the Founding of the PRC.” CCP. 1981.

25. Wednesday 11/19.

**WEEK 14. THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION V: LEGACIES**

   •  Gries, “China’s ‘New Thinking’ on Japan”

   Wednesday 11/26. NO CLASS THANKSGIVING

**WEEK 15. MAO’S CHINA TODAY**

27. Monday 12/1. *Maoist Melancholy*
   •  “Li Shunda Builds a House”

   •  Barmé, Geremie. *Shades of Mao*
   •  “Mao’s Influence On China,” *PBS Newshour*, 2005

**WEEK 16. ASSESSING MAO’S CHINA**


30. Wednesday 12/10. *Review Session*

**FINAL EXAM: Friday, 12/19, 4:30-6:30pm.**