

# IR 340: The Political Economy of China

University of Southern California  
Spring 2017

Instructor: Erin Baggott Carter  
Office: VKC 355  
Email: [baggott@usc.edu](mailto:baggott@usc.edu)

Course meetings: TuTh 5:00pm–6:20pm  
Location: TBD  
Course website: [blackboard.usc.edu](http://blackboard.usc.edu)  
Office hours: Thursday 11:00am–12:00pm and by appointment

Version: November 28, 2016

## Description

This course surveys the political economy of China. It begins with China's political institutions and its economic history from pre-revolutionary times to the present. It then explores China's rural and urban economies, private sector, local governments, income inequality, social welfare provision, and macroeconomic planning. It next turns to China's international trade and foreign investment. It concludes with a review of China's demographic trends and environmental issues. Throughout the course, we will focus on the changing role of state-society relations. To what degree has political reform accompanied economic reform? Is the state increasingly accountable to citizens? Or has China become trapped in a partial reform equilibrium in which elite interests impede further liberalization? An introductory economics course is a helpful, but not required, precursor to this course.

## Requirements

The course has six requirements. They are enumerated for simplicity:

1. Participation, 10%
2. Quiz, 10%
3. Crisis simulation, 10%
4. Midterm, 20%
5. Final, 25%
6. Presentation, 25%

First, students are expected to have read all assigned materials prior to class and contribute substantially to class discussions. Weekly reading assignments will average roughly 150 pages and will be available via Blackboard. This will constitute 10% of final grades. The instructor reserves

the right to calculate class participation through performance on pop quizzes, if necessary. Second, a quiz on regional geography will be given on Thursday, January 26, which will constitute 10% of final grades.

Third, students will participate in an international crisis simulation on Thursday, April 6. Students will be assigned to countries involved in the crisis and will prepare a three-minute presentation and a one-page memorandum on their country's position. They will then attempt to resolve the crisis during the emergency international meeting convened during class. This will constitute 10% of final grades.

Finally, students will complete midterm and final exams; they constitute 20% and 25% of final grades, respectively. The exams will require students to skillfully synthesize the course's themes and draw on relevant scholarship. The midterm will be administered in class on Thursday, March 9; the final exam will be scheduled later.

The final course requirement is a presentation during the final week of class, which will constitute 25% of final grades. Working in groups, students will give 15 minute "briefings" to the class. These "briefings" should introduce the class to pressing issues in China's political economy, and may focus upon any topic that, due to time constraints, I have neglected during previous weeks. Prior to class presentations, each group will submit a 2,000 word written brief of the topic, which will anticipate the presentation and provide a foundation for discussion afterwards. Student groups will meet with me prior to Week 8 to discuss preliminary ideas. Possible topics include China's engagement with Latin America or its policies on rare earth exports, among countless others.

## **Technology Policy**

Please make sure that your cell phones are silenced and put away before class starts. I leave it to students to decide whether they will use laptops to take notes. Before making this decision please consult recent research that shows that students take better notes by hand<sup>1</sup> and learn less, both individually and collectively, when laptops are in the classroom.<sup>2</sup>

## **Statement on Academic Conduct and Support**

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards.<sup>3</sup> Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct.<sup>4</sup> If you engage in plagiarism or any other form of academic misconduct, you will fail the course. If you aid someone else's misconduct, you will fail the course.

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<sup>1</sup><http://pss.sagepub.com/content/25/6/1159>

<sup>2</sup><http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0360131512002254?np=y>

<sup>3</sup><https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions>

<sup>4</sup><http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity<sup>5</sup> or to the Department of Public Safety.<sup>6</sup> This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men<sup>7</sup> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage<sup>8</sup> describes reporting options and other resources.

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute,<sup>9</sup> which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs<sup>10</sup> provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information<sup>11</sup> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

Students requesting academic accommodations based on disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open Monday-Friday, 8:30am–5:00pm. The office is in Student Union 301 and their phone number is 213.740.0776.

### **Required for Purchase**

Barry Naughton (2007). *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Yasheng Huang (2008). *Capitalism with Chinese Characteristics: Entrepreneurship and the State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

## **Lecture 1: Introduction and Course Overview**

Date: Tuesday, January 10

The introductory lecture provides an overview of the course.

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<sup>5</sup><http://equity.usc.edu>

<sup>6</sup><http://adminopsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety>

<sup>7</sup><http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/>

<sup>8</sup><http://sarc.usc.edu>

<sup>9</sup><http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>

<sup>10</sup>[http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home\\_index.html](http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html)

<sup>11</sup><http://emergency.usc.edu>

## **Lecture 2: Political Institutions of China**

Date: Thursday, January 12

This lecture introduces Chinese political and economic institutions. Which institutions enable policy generation and execution? Has authority over policymaking become fragmented over time? More broadly, what is an institution and why is it important for economic growth?

Susan V. Lawrence and Michael F. Martin (2013). "Understanding China's Political System." Congressional Research Service Report, March.

Chenggang Xu (2011). "The Fundamental Institutions of China's Reforms and Development." *Journal of Economic Literature* 49(4): 1076-1151.

Douglas North (1990). *Institutions, Institutional Change, and Economic Performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1.

## **Lecture 3: Economic History of the Pre-Revolutionary Era and Mao's Communism**

Date: Tuesday, January 17

This lecture describes the economic history of China during the pre-Revolutionary era and the Mao era. What role does geography play in China's economic development? What are China's factor endowments? Why did the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward claim so much economic output and so many lives?

Barry Naughton (2007). *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 15-82.

Frank Dikotter (2008). *The Age of Openness: China before Mao*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 81-98, 99-102.

James Kai-sing Kung and Shuo Chen (2011). "The Tragedy of the Nomenklatura: Career Incentives and Political Radicalism during China's Great Leap Famine." *American Political Science Review* 105: 27-45.

## **Lecture 4: Economic Reform under Deng**

Date: Thursday, January 19

This lecture introduces Deng's economic liberalization policies. Who benefited from economic reform? How did the development of private property rights in China differ from that in England?

Barry Naughton (2007). *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 85-110.

Yasheng Huang (2008). *Capitalism with Chinese Characteristics: Entrepreneurship and the State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, ix-xviii, 50-108.

Douglas North and Barry Weingast (1989). "Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England." *The Journal of Economic History* 49(4): 803-832.

## **Lecture 5: Contemporary Economic Policies**

Date: Tuesday, January 24

This lecture reviews the economic policies pursued by Jiang, Hu, and Xi. How have development priorities changed with each leader? Were Chinese economic policies in this period captured by elites, as in the post-Soviet states? Does China today exist in a partial reform equilibrium?

Yasheng Huang (2008). *Capitalism with Chinese Characteristics: Entrepreneurship and the State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, ix-xviii, 109-174.

Barry Naughton (2005). "The New Common Economic Program: China's Eleventh Five Year Plan and What It Means." *China Leadership Monitor* 16.

Elizabeth Economy (2014). "China's Imperial President: Xi Jinping Tightens His Grip." *Foreign Affairs* 93, 80-91.

Kevin M. Murphy, Andrei Shleifer and Robert W. Vishny (1992). "The Transition to a Market Economy: Pitfalls of Partial Reform." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 107(3): 889-906.

### **Quiz**

Date: Thursday, January 26

## **Lecture 6: Leadership Selection, Incentives in the Party-State, and Returns to Office**

Date: Tuesday, January 31

This lecture explores how cadres get ahead in the communist party. How do incentives for advancement affect economic outcomes?

Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson (2006). "Economic Backwardness in Political Perspective." *American Political Science Review* 100(1).

Richard MacGregor (2010). *The Party: The Secret World of China's Communist Rulers*. Harper. Chapter 1.

Victor Shih, Christopher Adolph, and Mingxing Liu (2012). "Getting Ahead in the Communist Party: Explaining the Advancement of Central Committee Members in China." *American Political Science Review* 106(1): 166-187.

Rory Truex (2014). "The Returns to Office in a 'Rubber-Stamp' Parliament." *American Political Science Review* 108(2): 235-251.

## **Lecture 7: The Rural Economy**

Date: Thursday, February 2

This lecture introduces the rural economy.

Barry Naughton (2007). *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 229-293.

## **Lecture 8: The Urban Economy**

Date: Tuesday, February 7

This lecture introduces China's urban economy.

Barry Naughton (2007). *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 295-326.

## **Lecture 9: The Private Sector and Entrepreneurs**

Date: Thursday, February 9

This lecture introduces the private sector and entrepreneurship in China.

Richard MacGregor (2010). *The Party: The Secret World of China's Communist Rulers*. HarperCollins, 34-69.

Scott Kennedy (2011). "Fragmented Influence: Business Lobbying in China." In Kennedy, ed., *Beyond the Middle Kingdom: Comparative Perspectives on China's Capitalist Transformation*. Stanford University Press.

## **Lecture 10: Provincial Governments**

Date: Tuesday, February 14

This lecture focuses on China's provinces.

Cheung, Peter T.Y. (1998). "Introduction: Provincial Leadership and Economic Reform in Post-Mao China." In Cheung, Chung and Li (eds.), *Provincial Strategies of Economic Reform in Post-Mao China. Leadership, Politics and Implementation*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 3-46.

Chung, Jae Ho, Hongyi Lai and Jang-Hwan Joo (2009). "Assessing the 'Revive the Northeast' (zhenxing dongbei) Programme: Origins, Policies and Implementation." *The China Quarterly* 197: 108-25.

## **Lecture 11: Local Governments**

Date: Thursday, February 16

This lecture focuses on the role of China's local governments in setting and executing economic development policies.

Barry Naughton (2007). *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth*. MIT Press. Chapter 16.

Susan H. Whiting (2004). "The Cadre Evaluation System at the Grassroots: The Paradox of Party Rule." in Barry Naughton and Dali Yang, eds., *Holding China Together*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Thornton, Patricia M. (2013). "The Advance of the Party: Transformation or takeover of Urban Grassroots Society?" *The China Quarterly* 213: 1-18.

## **Lecture 12: Migrant Workers**

Date: Tuesday, February 21

This lecture focuses on the state of migrant workers in China.

Barry Naughton (2007). *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 114-135.

Jeffrey Becker (2012). "The Knowledge to Act: Chinese Migrant Labor Protests in Comparative Perspective." *Comparative Political Studies* 45(11): 1379-1404.

Li Zhang (2001). *Strangers in the City: Reconfigurations of Space, Power and Social Networks within China's Floating Population*. Stanford University Press. Chapters TBD.

## **Lecture 13: Income Inequality**

Date: Thursday, February 23

This lecture reviews income inequality in China. Does China have a Kuznets Curve? What does the Elephant Curve mean for China? What are the economic origins of dictatorship and democracy, and can those factors explain China's politics since 1949?

Barry Naughton (2007). *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 209-227.

Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson (2002). "The Political Economy of the Kuznets Curve." *Review of Development Economics* 6(2): 183-203.

Branko Milanovic (2016). *Global Inequality: A New Approach for the Age of Globalization*. Harvard University Press. Chapters TBD.

Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson (2009). *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. 15-47.

## **Lecture 14: Public Goods and Welfare Provision**

Date: Tuesday, February 28

This lecture introduces social welfare provision in China.

Lily L. Tsai, *Accountability without Democracy: Solidary Groups and Public Goods Provision in Rural China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Chapters TBD.

Jean C. Oi, Kim Singer Babiarz, Linxiu Zhang, Renfu Luo and Scott Rozelle (2012). "Shifting Fiscal Control to Limit Cadre Power in China's Townships and Villages." *China Quarterly* 211: 649-675.

Renfu Luo, Linxiu Zhang, Jikun Huang and Scott Rozelle (2010). "Village Elections, Public Goods Investments and Pork Barrel Politics, Chinese Style." *Journal of Development Studies* 46(4): 662-84.

## **Lecture 15: Class Consciousness**

Date: Thursday, March 2

This lecture introduces class issues in contemporary China.

Minglu Chen (2012). "Being Elite, 1931-2011: Three Generations of Social Change." *Journal of Contemporary China* 21(77), 741-756.

Dorothy J. Solinger (2012). "The New Urban Underclass and Its Consciousness: Is It a Class?" *Journal of Contemporary China*, 21(78), 1011-1028.

## **Lecture 16: Social and Political Contestation**

Date: Tuesday, March 7

This lecture reviews how Chinese citizens contest social and political authority and how the state, in turn, responds. Why is the state concerned about collective action and internet commentary? What is preference falsification and why is dangerous for autocrats?

Timur Kuran (1989). "Sparks and Prairie Fires: A Theory of Unanticipated Political Revolution." *Public Choice* 16: 41-74.

Perry Link and Xiao Qiang (2013). "From Grass-Mud Equestrians to Rights-Conscious Citizens: Language and Thought on the Chinese Internet." In Perry Link, Richard P. Madsen and Paul G. Pickowicz (eds.), *Restless China*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 83-108.

Karrie J. Koesel and Valerie J. Bunce (2013). "Diffusion-Proofing: Russian and Chinese Responses to Wave of Popular Mobilizations against Authoritarian Rulers." *Perspective on Politics* 11(3): 753-768.

## **Midterm Exam**

Date: Thursday, March 9

## **Spring Break**

## **Lecture 17: The Financial System**

Date: Tuesday, March 21

This lecture introduces China's financial system.

Barry Naughton (2007). *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 449-481.

Erin Baggott Carter (2016). "Diversionary Aggression and Elite Welfare Shocks in Autocracies: Evidence from China." Manuscript.

Victor Shih (2008). *Factions and Finance in China: Elite Conflict and Inflation*. Chapter 4: 47-63.



## **Lecture 18: The Housing Market**

Date: Thursday, March 23

This lecture reviews data on China's housing market. To what extent does a real estate bubble threaten China's economic development?

Yongheng Deng, Randall Morck, Jing Wu, Bernard Yeung (2011). "Monetary and Fiscal Stimuli, Ownership Structure, and China's Housing Market." NBER working paper.

## **Lecture 19: International Trade**

Date: Tuesday, March 28

This lecture reviews evidence on China's international trade.

Barry Naughton (2007). *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 377-399.

K.C. Fung and Sarah Y. Tong (2015). "Foreign Trade of China." In Gregory C. Chow and Dwight H. Perkins, eds., *Routledge Handbook of the Chinese Economy*. New York: Routledge.

Gustavo A. Flores-Macías and Sarah E. Kreps (2013). "The Foreign Policy Consequences of Trade: China's Commercial Relations with Africa and Latin America, 1992-2006." *Journal of Politics* 75(2): 357-371.

## **Lecture 20: Inward FDI**

Date: Thursday, March 30

This lecture reviews the contributions of inward FDI to China's economic development.

Barry Naughton (2007). *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 401-423.

Yasheng Huang (2015). "China's Inbound and Outbound Foreign Direct Investment." In Gregory C. Chow and Dwight H. Perkins, eds., *Routledge Handbook of the Chinese Economy*. New York: Routledge.

## **No Class: Simulation Preparation**

Date: Tuesday, April 4

## **Crisis Simulation**

Date: Thursday, April 6

In this class, students will participate in an international crisis simulation. The crisis scenario will be announced in lecture on March 30; students will be assigned to countries then. In lieu of reading assignments for April 4, students will meet before class to write a one page brief on their

country's position on the crisis. In class on April 6, groups will present their nation's position in a 3-minute statement. Groups will employ the rest of the emergency meeting to attempt to resolve the crisis through official and unofficial channels.

### **Lecture 21: Outward FDI**

Date: Tuesday, April 11

This lecture reviews data on China's outward FDI flows.

William J. Norris (2016). *Chinese Economic Statecraft*. Chapters TBD.

Robert Rotberg, ed. (2009). *China into Africa: Trade, Aid, and Influence*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press. Chapters TBD.

### **Lecture 22: Demographics, the One Child Policy, and Human Capital**

Date: Thursday, April 13

This class reviews China's demographic trends.

Barry Naughton (2007). *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 161-206.

Vanessa Fong (2004). *Only Hope: Coming of Age under China's One-child Policy*. Stanford University Press, Ch 3.

### **Lecture 23: The Environment and Energy**

Date: Tuesday, April 18

This class reviews issues in China's environmental and energy situation.

Barry Naughton (2007). *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 487-503.

Elizabeth C. Economy (2007). "The Great Leap Backward? The Costs of China's Environmental Crisis." *Foreign Affairs* 86(5), 38-59.

### **Lecture 24: Conclusion**

Date: Thursday, April 20

This lecture offers concluding remarks.

Dani Rodrik (2014). "The Past, Present, and Future of Economic Growth." *Challenge* 57(3), 5-39.

Jane Haltmaier (2013). "Challenges for the Future of Chinese Economic Growth." US Federal Reserve, International Finance Discussion Paper, January.

## **Lecture 25, 26: Student Presentations**

Date: Tuesday, April 25 and Thursday, April 27