

CHINESE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REFORM

The Beijing Center for Chinese Studies

Spring 2010

Wednesdays, 915-1215, TBC Classroom 434

Dr. Russell Leigh Moses

Dean and Dean of the TBC Faculty, Professor of Political Science

r.moses@thebeijingcenter.org

Office phone: 6449-6060

Office hours: By mutual arrangement

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an examination of the political, economic, and social forces that led to and sustain China's contemporary drive towards modernization. The purpose of this course is to begin to comprehend and to start to speak about the composition, course and conduct of Chinese reform in a more sophisticated way. The course is also meant to compel you to rethink the ways in which China is organized, managed, and reformed.

The time frame is from 1978 to the present day. Aside from such areas as the political causes of and ideological changes in economic reform, relations between government and enterprises, and the interactions between the central government and local authority, our efforts will also look at the debates raging here about the direction and destination of China.

This course then is an examination of what Chinese reform is and why it is. As China's power has risen, so have the expectations of leaders and the public here about the sort of system—the type of state and the character of the society--that China should strive for. There have fascinating debates taking place in government and intellectual circles about what sort of country China should be and how to get there. Along with these deliberations is a shift in the balance of power within the Chinese government, such that the ways in which policy is made here is also being transformed.

We will proceed through a mix of discussions and lectures, focusing on the assigned reading. Please note that all of the readings listed are to be read by the class meeting for which they are assigned. For those interested in exploring particular issues in more detail, I will be happy to provide suggestions and recommendations for further materials.

Kindly be aware that the readings are extensive: they are also not meant to be inclusive. Use the assigned materials as leverage to open more doors and wedges to hold them open for further inspection. I will also augment the readings as time goes on, and you should expect to receive emails containing additional material I have culled from my readings of Chinese and other sources. You should also keep abreast of news of China.

COURSE OUTCOMES

The purpose of this course is to begin to comprehend and to start to speak about the Chinese political and economic systems--as well as reform in China--in a more sophisticated way. As the course progresses, students will become more familiar with the structure and process of Chinese attitudes and policies of reform, as well as be more deeply acquainted with the complexities and obstacles in creating and sustaining reform. Because there will be Chinese vocabulary terms distributed weekly, students will also expand their understanding of Chinese and be able to see the meanings and connections between language, the government, the society, policies, and reform.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT

Grading rests on two pillars: active, engaged, and informed class participation (20% of your final grade); and a midterm and final examination (80% as a whole, though the assessment of each will vary depending upon your

performance, with the likely distribution being weighted more heavily towards the final—giving you ample opportunity to improve as the semester proceeds).

A substantial portion of your grade then is informed, insightful, and provocative contributions to the dialogue with each other and with the readings in class. I expect you to be prepared to speak in class: to answer questions that I and your colleagues pose; to offer comments on the readings and musings of others inside and outside class; and to begin to comprehend the complexities of reform in China.

Depending upon the level and quality of the sorts of participation outlined above, there may be other measures used to evaluate this portion of your grade, possibly of a written nature or a presentation that might expand the points made in class. A continuing controversy or an unresolved debate might spur me to ask you to expand upon your notions in a written format. Contributions in that regard would be assessed under the category of class participation.

Please note that the examinations will largely be take-home essay exercises, but there may be an in-class component involved that would be required.

For those students concerned about what may seem to be an open-ended character in some of the assignments and responsibilities, kindly be aware that we are studying a fast-moving set of objects called “China”. Events here tend to subvert and sometimes upend the best-laid plans of observation and analysis.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Being in class also means participating in the lectures and discussions throughout the course. Attendance in my courses is mandatory and a timely appearance is required, unless exceptional circumstances intervene. We will speak of what these “exceptional circumstances” entail during the first week of the course but, in the main, they involve a severe health emergency or family crisis. I trust that the material and the discussions that it inspires will serve as more than adequate justification for you attending the class for every session.

ACADEMIC HONESTY STATEMENT

Please see the following link, and read the text carefully:

http://www.luc.edu/cas/pdfs/CAS_Academic_Integrity_Statement_December_07.pdf

REQUIRED TEXTS

Philip Pan, *Out of Mao's Shadow*

Zhao Ziyang, *Prisoner of the State*

John Pomfret, *Chinese Lessons*

Victor C. Shih, *Factions and Finance in China*

David Wank, *Commodifying Communism*

Chaohua Wang, *One China, Many Paths*

CLASS SCHEDULE

January 13: Introduction, outline and beginnings

This week, we will look at the structure and direction of the course. We will also begin to talk about the different ways in which to conceive and pursue the study of Chinese reform, as seen through the political and administrative structure of China. Our focus this week will be on the organization and operation of the Chinese political system.

January 20th

Zhao Ziyang, *Prisoner of the State*, Part 1 and 2

Philip Pan, *Out of Mao's Shadow*, chapter 1.

Regina Abrami and Zhang Weiqi, China: The Political System (Harvard Business School, N9-308-063), November 2007. I will have this reading sent to you electronically, once you contact me via email. The paper is not for further distribution.)

Personal accounts can be very revealing of the ways in which China has evolved in recent decades. John Pomfret's *Chinese Lessons: Five Classmates and the Story of the New China* is a case in point. I think you will find this book a straightforward and engaging read, and you will probably wish to skip ahead. As the course proceeds, please read at your own pace, though I would ask, for the purposes of this week, you will need to read chapter 1, and chapters 17-19. The remainder of the book should be completed by the time of the midterm examination.

January 27th

Zhao Ziyang, *Prisoner of the State*, Part 3

Philip Pan, *Out of Mao's Shadow*, chapters 2-4, inclusive.

February 4th

Zhao Ziyang, *Prisoner of the State*, Parts 4 and 5

TRIP TO YUNNAN

February 24th

Victor C. Shih, *Factions and Finance in China*, chapters 1-5

Philip Pan, *Out of Mao's Shadow*, Part II

March 3rd

Victor C. Shih, *Factions and Finance in China*, chapters 6-9

March 10th

M. Francis Johnston, "Elites and Agencies: Forging Labor Policy at China's Central Level," *MODERN CHINA*, Vol. 28 No. 2, April 2002 147-176. (I will provide a copy of this article to you.)

Philip Pan, *Out of Mao's Shadow*, Part III

Other readings may also be distributed

March 17th

We begin our reading of David L. Wank, *Commodifying Communism: Business, Trust, and Politics in a Chinese City*, by covering pages 3-67. This book is dense, theoretical, and focused on a case study of a single city. We will look to draw conclusions from his work, as well as evaluate the means by which he conducted his research.

The midterm examination will be due this week.

TRIP TO SICHUAN

March 31st

The second section from Wank's book—pages 67-149---might be seen as an effort to capture the details of commercial development as they affect (and are directed by) political considerations. Or would that be the other way around?

April 7th

Please finish the remainder of the Wank book. Other ways to frame the matters he confronts and concludes from will also be tossed about in our discussion, so kindly be prepared accordingly.

April 14th

Wang Chaohua, *One China, Many Paths*, Introduction, and chapter 1

April 21th

Wang Chaohua, *One China, Many Paths*, chapters 4-8, inclusive

April 28th

Wang Chaohua, *One China, Many Paths*, chapters 11 and 13

Zhao Ziyang, *Prisoner of the State*, Part 6

Final Examination due the week of May 9/10