GOVT 341: Chinese Foreign Policy

Spring 2020

Room: TBD
Professor: Ketian (Vivian) Zhang
Time: MW: 1:30-2:45 pm
Office: TBD
Office hours: TBD
E-mail: kzhang20@gmu.edu

Course Description

This undergraduate lecture course provides a comprehensive introduction to Chinese foreign policy, with a focus on the People's Republic of China (PRC). In particular, this course will investigate the sources of conflict and cooperation in China’s behavior, assessing competing explanations for key events and policies. Readings will be drawn from political science, history, and international relations theory.

When does the PRC use force against other states? When does it refrain from using force? What explains PRC’s alliance behavior during the Cold War, when it first allied with the Soviet Union and yet later, cooperated with the United States against the Soviet Union? When and how does China use its growing economic power for foreign policy aims? What explains China’s assertiveness in the South and East China Seas? What is the trajectory of a rising China, and what are the implications for international relations theories and U.S.-China relations? Will China’s rise be peaceful or conflict-prone, and why? Has the personality of China’s leaders or its domestic institutions affected its international behavior? To what extent has the world changed China and to what extent does it seek to change the world? These are some of the questions that we will be examining and discussing in this course.

We begin first with an overall introduction of China’s exposure to the world, the international relations theories informing states’ foreign policy behavior, and then move on to examine Chinese foreign policy behavior during the Cold War, when the PRC was ruled by Mao. The latter half of the course looks at PRC foreign policy in the reform and opening up period, starting from Deng Xiaoping. We will survey China’s use of force, territorial disputes, foreign economic policies, and approach to international institutions, while analyzing China’s relations with various parts of the world.

Course Objectives

This course meshes theoretical discussions of international relations with empirical analyses of Chinese foreign policy. This course aims both to teach students theoretical perspectives on international relations and to critically evaluate whether these theories
explain past and present Chinese foreign policy. Moreover, students are expected to improve their analytical skills through term papers.

Course requirements

• Active participation and attendance (10%)
• Final exam (55%)
  o There will be a two-hour final exam during the exam period. The exam will draw equally on material from the readings and lectures. The exam consists of short answer questions as well as a longer essay question. There is a study sheet for the final exam.
• Final paper (35%)
  o Write an analytical research paper of 12-15 pages. The paper is due on the last day of class.
  o Students are encouraged to discuss with the instructor in advance about the topic of the research paper.
    ▪ The paper can be aimed at explaining the origins of particular parts of Chinese foreign policy, for example, China’s behavior in the South China Sea or approaches to the U.S.-China trade conflict. Please feel free to come to chat with me about the sources and discuss your paper.
    ▪ Or the paper can evaluate current or past Chinese foreign policy, as well as U.S. policies towards China. If you choose the evaluation paper, in offering your evaluation, please consider (a) the validity or falsehood of the factual and theoretical assumptions that produced the strategy; and/or (b) the results the policy produced: were they those that policymakers sought to produce? Were they good or bad? If you argue that a policy was mistaken, identify the alternative policy that you prefer.
• Bonus: 5% (if you ask questions and contribute to discussion during the course). This is a lecture, but I will set aside at least 15 minutes each lecture for questions and discussion.

Grading

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper (12-15 pages)</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Participation (extra point)</td>
<td>5</td>
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Total 100-105 (note that I will not curve the grades.)

A: 95-100 (or more)
A-: 90-94.99
B+: 87-89.99
B: 83-86.99
B-: 80-82.99
C+: 77-79.99
Course textbooks

The following books are available for purchase at the GMU bookstore:


Useful resources

Stay Current. Stay abreast of current developments through the Asia sections of the Washington Post, New York Times, and the BBC. For the latest developments in China, see Pacific Forum: Comparative Connections, China Leadership Monitor, and China Brief. Major news outlets in China have English editions, including the *People’s Daily, People’s Liberation Army Daily*, and *Xinhua*, and the central news agency. Also, scan the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and State Council web sites. Note that news outlets or the websites of Chinese government agencies are meant for students to gather primary official Chinese statements and documents, not to justify PRC foreign policies.

If you use twitter, it might be useful to follow some of the scholars and policy practitioners focusing on China (please do not check their tweets during lectures), e.g.,

- M. Taylor Fravel: @fravel
- Oriana Skylar Mastro: @osmastro
- Xiaoyu Pu: @pu_xiaoyu
- Evan Feigenbaum: @EvanFeigenbaum
- Victor Shih: @vshih2
- Jessica Chen Weiss: @jessicacweiss

Policies

**Scheduling:** Students are responsible for the accuracy of their own schedules. You should check PatriotWeb regularly to verify that you are registered for the classes that you think you are. I will not allow a student who is not registered to continue to attend class and not grade the work of students who do not appear on the official class roster.

**Incomplete:** An incomplete grade (IN) is given only if the student requests it in writing (not email although email attachment is acceptable) at least 48 hours before exam or paper is due. With approval, the student is responsible for completing the exam or the paper. An IN counts as a failing grade until completed, and it automatically turns into an F if a grade is not turned in by the deadline in the Schedule of Classes. As a college policy, instructors are not ever obligated to give an IN.
I will assign an IN only if the student has a very limited amount of work to complete and there is a non-academic reason they cannot do so within the semester. Typical situations for giving incompletes involve a final exam (missed due to illness) or a final paper (not completed because of a family emergency). I will not assign incompletes to give a student time to improve on work already completed.

Special accommodations: Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.

Academic integrity policy: The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Faculty in the Schar School has zero tolerance for academic dishonesty and will strictly enforce Mason's honor code. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification.

Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and Interpersonal Violence: As a faculty member and designated “Responsible Employee,” I am required to report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per university policy 1412. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact the Student Support and Advocacy Center (703-380-1434), Counseling and Psychological Services (703-993-2380), Student Health Services, or Mason’s Title IX Coordinator (703-993-8730; cde@gmu.edu).

Suicide prevention: we are here to help. Please come see me if you are in stress. Also, Mason has resources that you can utilize:
- Stress relief: https://caps.gmu.edu/resources-and-self-help/mood/
- Suicide prevention: https://caps.gmu.edu/resources-and-self-help/suicide-prevention/
Tentative Class Schedule

Week 1, Jan 22: INTRODUCTION


Week 2, Jan 27: HISTORICAL LEGACIES

• (Skim) Michael D. Swaine and Ashley Tellis, *Interpreting China’s Grand Strategy* (Santa Monica: RAND Corp, 2000), pp. 21-95

Recommended reading:
• Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: WW Norton, 2001)

Week 2, Jan 29: SOURCES OF FOREIGN POLICY


Recommended reading:

Week 3, Feb 3: 1949-1969 – ALLIANCE WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND ITS COLLAPSE

• Chen Jian, *Mao’s China and the Cold War*, pp. 38-84, 163-205 (Chs. 2, 3, and 7)

Recommended reading:

• Chen Jian, *Mao’s China and the Cold War*, pp. 238-276
• (Skim) James Mann, *About Face*, pp. 13-114

Recommended reading:
• James Mann, *About Face*, pp. 115-155
• Deng Xiaoping, “Peace And Development Are The Two Outstanding Issues In The World Today,” March 4, 1985
• Deng Xiaoping, “Speech At An Enlarged Meeting Of The Military Commission Of The Central Committee Of The Communist Party Of China,” June 4, 1985

Week 4, Feb 10: MAKING FOREIGN POLICY: STRUCTURE AND PROCESS
• Alice L. Miller, “The Politburo Standing Committee under Hu Jintao,” *China Leadership Monitor*, No. 35 (2011)

Week 4, Feb 12: MAKING FOREIGN POLICY: NATIONALISM AND DOMESTIC POLITICS
• Susan Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 79-104 (Ch. 4: “The Echo Chamber of Nationalism: Media and the Internet”)

Week 5, Feb 17: CHINA’S GRAND STRATEGY
• Avery Goldstein, “An Emerging China’s Emerging Grand Strategy: A Neo-Bismarckian Turn?” in G. John Ikenberry and Michael Mastanduno, eds.,

- Evan S. Medeiros, China's International Behavior: Activism, Opportunism, and Diversification (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2009), pp. 7-92

Week 6, Feb 24: INTEGRATION INTO THE GLOBAL ECONOMY


Recommended reading:
- For how provincial actors are involved, see Audrey Wong, “More than Peripheral: How Provinces Influence China’s Foreign Policy,” The China Quarterly, 235 (September 2018).

Week 6, Feb 26: CHINA AND INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS


Recommended:
Week 7, Mar 2: CHINA'S USE OF FORCE


Recommended reading:

Week 7, Mar 4: MILITARY MODERNIZATION

- Aaron L. Friedberg and Robert S. Ross, "Here be Dragons: Is China a Military Threat?" *National Interest* (September-October 2009), pp. 19-34

Recommended reading:

Week 8, Mar 9-15: Spring Recess, no class

Week 9, Mar 16: RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES

- For Chinese perspectives (note these are Chinese scholars who have ties with the Chinese government):

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**Week 9, Mar 18: RELATIONS WITH TAIWAN**

- James Mann, *About Face*, pp. 315-338

**Week 10, Mar 23: RELATIONS WITH JAPAN**


**Week 10, Mar 25: RELATIONS WITH SOUTHEAST ASIA**

- Donald K. Emmerson, “China’s ‘Frown Diplomacy’ in Southeast Asia,” *Asia Times*, October 5, 2010

Recommended:

- For an update on China’s BRI, listen to the podcast by Mike Lampton with CSIS: [https://www.csis.org/podcasts/chinapower/one-belt-one-road-one-asia-conversation-david-m-lampton](https://www.csis.org/podcasts/chinapower/one-belt-one-road-one-asia-conversation-david-m-lampton)

**Week 11, Mar 30: RELATIONS WITH SOUTH ASIA**


**Week 11, Apr 1: RELATIONS WITH MIDDLE EAST, AFRICA, AND LATIN AMERICA**

• Eric Farnsworth, “The New Mercantilism: China’s Emerging Role in the Americas,” *Current History* (February 2011)

Recommended reading:

**Week 12, Apr 6: REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT AND MULTILATERALISM**

• Thomas G. Moore, "Racing to Integrate, or Cooperating to Compete?: Liberal and Realist Interpretations of China’s New Multilateralism,” in Guoguang W. and Helen Landsdowne, eds., *China Turns to Multilateralism: Foreign Policy and Regional Security* (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 35-50

**Week 12, Apr 8: ASSERTIVENESS?**

• Daniel Blumenthal, “What Happened to China’s Peaceful Rise?,” Foreign Policy, October 21, 2010

**Week 13, Apr 13: KOREAN PENINSULA**

• International Crisis Group, *Shades of Red: China’s Debate over North Korea* (International Crisis Group, 2009)
Recommended reading:


**Week 13, Apr 15: THE ROLE OF XI JINPING**


**Week 14, Apr 20: THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY**


**Week 14, Apr 22: MIDDLE EAST, AFRICA, AND LATIN AMERICA**

- Eric Farnsworth, "The New Mercantilism: China's Emerging Role in the Americas," Current History (February 2011)

**Week 15, Apr 27: Conclusion**

Week 15, Apr 29: Discussion of recent/omitted topics (TBD)

Week 16, May 4: Review and discussion session