HIST 358 (Spring 2022)

HIST 358 (001): Contemporary (Post-1949) China

Professor Michael Chang
Horizon Hall 3151
Virtual office hrs on Zoom by appt

Course time and location:
1:30-2:45 pm ET on Mondays and Wednesdays
Krug Hall 210

Course Description: In this course we will attempt to put recent and ongoing developments in contemporary China (the People's Republic of China or PRC) into broader historical context by exploring the historical legacies—the successes and failures—of China's socialist revolution (1949-1976) as well as its era of post-socialist market reforms (1978-present). Themes to be explored include: the revolutionary heritage of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the goals and agendas of China's socialist state; the ideologies and policies that have shaped urban and rural development; as well as individual experiences of both revolutionary mass mobilizations and market reforms.

This course fulfills the Mason Core requirement for Global Understanding. As such, students will be encouraged to develop and demonstrate their capacities for intercultural empathy and understanding. Assignments throughout the semester will provide opportunities for students to identify and articulate their own values (especially in regard to issues of industrialization and development as well as problems of poverty and inequality) and to identify how these values might shape their interactions with others in both local and global contexts. Students will also have occasion to reflect upon how their studies of contemporary China might broaden and/or complicate their understanding of the issues and events unfolding in the contemporary world.

Required Texts:

Note: Titles (above) and readings in the course schedule (below) marked by a single blue asterisk (*) are accessible online through the Blackboard course site or the University Libraries catalog (JSTOR, etc.). [http://library.gmu.edu/](http://library.gmu.edu/)

All required titles listed above are available for online purchase at the campus bookstore (Barnes & Noble). Used copies may also be found on [http://bookfinder.com](http://bookfinder.com)

Requirements & Grading: Students must demonstrate serious engagement with every requirement in order to pass the course. The instructor reserves the final right to determine what constitutes "serious engagement." **Note: Calculations of cumulative course grades that appear in Blackboard are not necessarily correctly "weighted" and do not accurately reflect one's overall standing in the course. If you would like to know your overall course grade at any point in the semester, please contact the instructor via e-mail.**

1. Participation (20%): Students are expected to attend all class meetings and to be prepared. This means finishing assigned readings before coming to class. The quality of your verbal contributions both in class and online will be taken as indicators of engagement and participation. All opportunities to earn "extra credit" will count towards your participation grade.

2. Weekly Online Assignments (27%): Students are responsible for completing ten (10) online assignments. Details may be found in the weekly folders on the Blackboard course site. Your grade for this component of the course will be based on your nine (9) highest grades for the weekly online assignments (i.e., your lowest grade will be dropped). Each assignment will count as 3% of your overall course grade.

3. Papers (30%): Students are required to complete two (2) short (5-7 pg.) papers, due on Sun. 3/6/2022 and Sun. 4/3/2022. Each paper will count as 15% of your overall course grade. Detailed instructions available on Blackboard.

4. Final Exam (23%): Essays submitted via Blackboard by **12:00 pm (noon) ET, Fri 5/13/2022. No late work accepted.**

Grading Scale:

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Course Policies, Reminders, and Helpful Tips

a) Basic technology requirements: This is a face-to-face course. However, asynchronous work will take place primarily on Blackboard, while live (in-person) classes will meet twice weekly on MW (and, if necessary, on the Zoom platform). For more details please see “What Technologies Do I Need?” on the “Start Here: Welcome” page of the Blackboard course site.

b) Class absences: Students are expected to attend all meetings of the course. In the event that you must miss class, you are responsible for the content of the lecture or discussion. Students are expected to come to class on time. Late arrivals are disruptive, and late-comers may miss important information.

c) Cell phones and laptop computers: During class all phones must be switched off and put away. Neither students nor instructors should compose, read, or respond to text messages during class. Students who wish to use a laptop computer for note-taking are welcome to do so. However, students who use laptops for purposes other than taking notes (i.e., email, instant messaging, internet browsing unrelated to the course) will be asked to leave and will no longer be permitted to use a computer in class. Violation of these policies will result in a significant reduction in your course participation grade.

d) Submission of written work: All written work is due at the time(s) and on the day(s) indicated in the syllabus. All written assignments should be typed, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins and in a 12-point font. Your name should be on the paper, and all pages should be numbered. You should retain electronic copies of all written work, and your instructor may ask for an electronic copy of your paper in order to use it as an example in teaching or to submit to a plagiarism detection site like Turnitin.com.

e) Late policy: All students are responsible for knowing and adhering to the deadlines for course assignments. Late work will be penalized ONE FULL LETTER GRADE (10 pts.) per day (including weekends & holidays). The only exceptions will be when you have explicit, advance permission from your instructor. If you anticipate a problem in completing or submitting your work on time, you must contact the instructor in a timely manner. If you do not hear back from your instructor, you should assume that your work is due on the original date. Regardless of whether or not you have been granted an extension, you must contact your instructor for how to submit late work. Late assignments will not be considered as “received” until a copy is in the instructor’s hands. No late work will be accepted for the final assignment.

f) Plagiarism: Don’t do it. It’s easy to spot & can result in expulsion from the University and loss of degree. What is plagiarism? As noted by the American Historical Association (AHA), “Writers plagiarize… when they fail to use quotation marks around borrowed material and to cite the source, use an inadequate paraphrase that makes only superficial changes to a text, or neglect to cite the source of a paraphrase.” For details see pgs. 3-4 of this document: http://www.historians.org/Documents/Plagiarism/Curriculum_Plagiarism.pdf If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, or about when or how to properly cite a source, talk to your instructor before you write!

g) Academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented condition that warrants academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through ODS (http://ods.gmu.edu/). Additional support may be obtained through Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS): http://caps.gmu.edu/

h) Recording and distribution of class materials: Any audio or visual recording by students of class meetings, lectures, discussions or other class activities is allowed only under terms and conditions as approved by George Mason University’s Office of Disability Services (ODS). If you are entitled to audio or visual recording through ODS, please communicate with me before any recording occurs. The results of a recording may only be used for personal use, unless I authorize use by other students in the course. Recordings and course material may not be reproduced or exchanged or distributed. At the end of the semester, you are required to destroy any recordings made in this course.

i) Electronic communication. It is best to contact me at mchang5[at]gmu[dot]edu. I usually check email during normal business hours, namely M-F. 9 am-5 pm. Please allow 24-48 hours for a reply to an email request or inquiry (excluding weekends). Please sure to indicate your course number in your email subject line and include both your first and last name in your signature. For general advice on the best way to communicate via email, see: http://web.wellesley.edu/SocialComputing/Netiquette/netiquetteprofessor.html

j) Academic integrity: All George Mason University students have agreed to abide by the letter and the spirit of the Honor Code (http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/) All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee for review.

k) Administrative deadlines
   Last day to add classes: Mon. 1/31/2022  Last day to drop (w/ no tuition penalty): Mon. 2/7/2022

l) Final disclaimer: This syllabus is subject to revision as the semester proceeds. Announcements of changes will be made online and during class meetings. Students are responsible for being aware of any changes.
COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 0 (Sun. 1/16/2022 – Sat. 1/22/2022): Course Orientation
Read: “Start Here: Welcome” and “Syllabus” pages on Blackboard course site
Do: Check basic tech set-up, activate your Zoom Basic account, and verify access to required books

Read: *Benson, China Since 1949, Ch. 1-2 (1-16)
Do: Post a brief self-introduction to the “HIST 358 Self-Introductions” forum by 12:00 pm (noon) ET, Mon. 1/24/2022.
Attend: class meetings at 1:30 pm ET, Mon. 1/24/2022 and Wed. 1/26/2022

Week 2 (Sun. 1/30/2022 – Sat. 2/5/2022): The Ideology of State Power
Read: *Reading Guide for Chinese Village, Socialist State and *Guidelines for Paper #1
*Schrag, “How to Read a History Book”
*Chinese Village, Socialist State [CVSS], Introduction (xiii-xxiv) and Conclusion (267-288, esp. 268 and 278-288)
Do: Online Assignment #1 (on Blackboard)
   Submit an initial post (create new thread) by 11:59 pm ET, Sun. 1/30/2022
   Respond to a classmate’s initial post by 11:59 pm ET, Tue. 2/1/2022
Attend: class meetings at 1:30 pm ET, Mon. 1/31/2022 and Wed. 2/2/2022

Read: CVSS, Ch. 1-3 (1-79).
Watch: *The Mao Years, Part 1: Catching the Stars and Moon, 1949-1960 (1994, 56 min. [00:00 - 56:11])
Do: Online Assignment #2 (on Blackboard)
   Submit an initial post (create new thread) by 11:59 pm ET, Sun. 2/6/2022
   Respond to a classmate’s initial post by 11:59 pm ET, Tue. 2/8/2022
Attend: class meetings at 1:30 pm ET, Mon. 2/7/2022 and Wed. 2/9/2022

Week 4 (Sun. 2/13/2022 – Sat. 2/19/2022): Recovery and Reorganization of Rural Society, 1949-1952
Read: CVSS, Ch. 4-6 (80-159)
   *Benson, China Since 1949, Ch. 3 (19-32)
Do: Online Assignment #3 (on Blackboard)
   Submit an initial post (to your group’s thread) by 11:59 pm ET, Sun. 2/13/2022
   Respond to a fellow group member’s initial post by 11:59 pm ET, Tue. 2/15/2022
Attend: class meetings at 1:30 pm ET, Mon. 2/14/2022 and Wed. 2/16/2022

Week 5 (Sun. 2/20/2022 – Sat. 2/26/2022): Following the Soviet Model, 1953-1957
Read: CVSS, Ch. 7-9 (160-245)
Do: Online Assignment #4 (on Blackboard)
   Submit an initial post (to your group’s thread) by 11:59 pm ET, Sun. 2/20/2022
   Respond to a fellow group member’s initial post by 11:59 pm ET, Tue. 2/22/2022
Attend: class meetings at 1:30 pm ET, Mon. 2/21/2022 and Wed. 2/23/2022

Read: CVSS, Ch. 10 (246-266) and re-read Introduction (xiii-xxiv) and Conclusion (267-288)
   *Benson, China Since 1949, Ch.4 (33-36);
Watch: *Mao’s Great Famine (2012, 53 min.)
Do: Online Assignment #5 (on Blackboard)
   Post draft of “thesis statement” for Paper #1 by 11:59 pm ET, Sun. 2/27/2022
   Extra credit opportunity: Provide feedback on a classmate’s thesis statement by 11:59 pm ET, Tue. 2/29/2022
Attend: class meetings at 1:30 pm ET, Mon. 2/28/2022 and Wed. 3/2/2022

Week 7 (Sun. 3/6/2022 – Sat. 3/12/2022): Aftermath of the Great Leap Forward, 1960-1965
Do: Submit Paper #1 (via Blackboard) by 11:59 pm ET, Sun. 3/6/2022
Read: Benson, China Since 1949, Ch.4 (37-44)
   *Reading Guide for Growing Up in the People’s Republic and *Guidelines for Paper #2
   *Growing Up in the People’s Rep., Series Editors’ Forward, Forward, Chronology, and Acknowledgements (ix-xxiv)
Attend: class meetings at 1:30 pm ET, Mon. 3/7/2022 and Wed. 3/9/2022
Week 8 (Mon. 3/14/2022 – Sat. 3/19/2022) – SPRING RECESS – NO CLASSES

Read: *Reading Guide for Growing Up in the People’s Republic and *Guidelines for Paper #2
*Growing Up in the People’s Republic, Introduction (1-8) and Afterword (147-153); as well as Chapters 1-2 (9-50).


Read: *Growing Up in the People’s Republic, Ch. 6 (137-146); and re-read Introduction (1-8) and Afterword (147-153)
*Benson, China Since 1949, Ch.5 (47-51)

Do: Online Assignment #6 (on Blackboard)
Submit an initial post (create new thread) by 11:59 pm ET, Sun. 3/20/2022
Respond to a classmate’s initial post by 11:59 pm ET, Tue. 3/22/2022

Attend: class meetings at 1:30 pm ET, Mon. 3/21/2022 and Wed. 3/23/2022


Read: *Growing Up in the People’s Republic, Ch. 6 (137-146); and re-read Introduction (1-8) and Afterword (147-153)
*Benson, China Since 1949, Ch.5 (47-51)

Watch: [optional, Assignment: China—Opening Up (2011, 54 min.) and The 1980s (2015, 62 min.)]

Do: Online Assignment #7 (on Blackboard)
Extra credit opportunity: Provide feedback on a classmate’s thesis statement by 11:59 pm ET, Tue. 3/29/2022

Attend: class meetings at 1:30 pm ET, Mon. 3/28/2022 and Wed. 3/30/2022


Do: Submit Paper #2 (via Blackboard) by 11:59 pm ET, Sun. 4/3/2022
Read: *Benson, China Since 1949, Ch.5 (51-59)


Attend: class meetings at 1:30 pm ET, Mon. 4/4/2022 and Wed. 4/6/2022

Week 12 (Sun. 4/10/2021 – Sat. 4/16/2022): Economic Take-Off, 1990s

Read: *Benson, China Since 1949, Ch.6-7 (60-77)
Pai, Scattered Sand, Forward (ix-xiii), Preface (xiv-xvii), Introduction (1-13)

Do: Online Assignment #8 (on Blackboard)
Submit an initial post (create new thread) by 11:59 pm ET, Sun. 4/10/2022
Respond to a classmate’s initial post by 11:59 pm ET, Tue. 4/12/2022

Attend: class meetings at 1:30 pm ET, Mon. 4/11/2022 and Wed. 4/13/2022

Week 13 (Sun. 4/17/2022 – Sat. 4/23/2022): Demographic and Environmental Issues

Read: *Benson, China Since 1949, Ch. 8-9 (78-104)
*Reading guide for Scattered Sand
*Guidelines for Final Exam
Pai, Scattered Sand, Ch. 1-6 (15-206)

Do: Extra credit opportunity (on Blackboard; see Week 13 folder)
Read *Background information for China in the Red
Watch *Frontline: China in the Red (2003, 120 min.)
Submit Viewing Chart for China in the Red by 11:59 pm ET, Sun. 4/17/2022

Attend: class meetings at 1:30 pm ET, Mon. 4/18/2022 and Wed. 4/20/2022

Week 14 (Sun. 4/24/2021 – Sat. 4/30/2022): Social Inequalities and the Urban-Rural Gap

Read: Pai, Scattered Sand, Ch. 7-8 (207-281)
*Benson, China Since 1949, Ch.10 (105-118)

Do: Online Assignment #9 in Week 14 Discussion
Submit an initial post (new thread) by 11:59 pm ET, Sun 4/24/2022
Extra credit opportunity: Respond to a classmate’s initial post by 11:59 pm ET, Tue. 4/26/2022

Attend: class meetings at 1:30 pm ET, Mon. 4/25/2022 and Wed. 4/27/2022
Week 15 (Sun. 5/1/2022 – Sat. 5/7/2022): Ethnic Tensions and Territorial Sovereignty

Read:  
*Guidelines for Final Exam*  
*Benson, *China Since 1949*, Ch.11-12 (119-142)

Watch:  
*Frontline: China Undercover* (7 April 2020, 53 min.)

Do:  
**Online Assignment #10** (on Blackboard)  

- Post “thesis statement” for Final Exam (Part A) **by 11:59 pm ET, Sun 5/1/2022**  
- **Extra credit opportunity**: Provide feedback on a classmate’s thesis statement **by 11:59 pm ET, Tue. 5/3/2022**

Attend:  
class meetings at 1:30 pm ET, Mon. 5/2/2022 and Wed. 5/4/2022

Exam Period (Wed. 5/11/2022 – Wed. 5/18/2022)

Do:  
**Submit Final Exam** (via “Exam Period” folder on Blackboard) **by 12:00 pm (noon) ET, Fri. 5/13/2022**  

*No late work will be accepted for the Final Exam.*