

Contemporary (Post-1949) China

Professor Michael Chang

Horizon Hall 3151

Office Hours: MW 12 – 1 pm; and by appt on Zoom

Course time and location:

10:30-11:45 am ET on Mondays and Wednesdays

Sandbridge Hall 107

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:

1. *Linda Benson. *China Since 1949*. 3rd edition. Routledge, 2016.
2. *E. Friedman, P. Pickowicz, M. Selden. *Chinese Village, Socialist State*. [CVSS] Yale Univ. Press, 1991.
3. *Ye Weili (with Ma Xiaodong). *Growing Up in the People's Republic*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
4. Hsiao-Hung Pai. *Scattered Sand: The Story of China's Rural Migrants*. Verso, 2012.

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/>

All other required titles above are available for purchase at the campus bookstore (Barnes & Noble).

Used copies may be found on <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 thus 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 (25%): Students are expected to attend all class meetings and to be prepared. This means finishing assigned readings before coming to class. Your presence and the quality of your contributions in class will be taken as indicators of engagement and participation. All opportunities to earn "extra credit" (five [5] in total) will count towards participation.

2. Online Assignments (21%): Students are responsible for completing **six (6) online assignments**. Details may be found in the weekly folders on the Blackboard course site. Each assignment will count as 3.5% of your overall course grade. Completion of any of the optional online assignments (four [4] in total) will count towards this part of one's grade.

3. Papers (30%): Students are required to complete **two (2) short (5-7 pg.) papers, due on Sun. 3/5/2023 and Sun. 4/2/2023**. Each paper will count as 15% of your overall course grade. Detailed instructions available on Blackboard.

4. Final Exam (24%): essays; due via Blackboard by **12:00 pm (noon) ET, Thu. 5/11/2023**. *No late work accepted.*

Grading Scale:

97-100	A+	87-89	B+	77-79	C+	67-69	D+	59 and below	F
94-96	A	83-86	B	73-76	C	63-66	D		
90-93	A-	80-82	B-	70-72	C-	60-62	D-		

Course Policies, Reminders, and Helpful Tips

- a) Basic technology requirements:** This is 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 contents 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 on 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 **HALF A LETTER GRADE (5 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 or other class activities is allowed only under terms and conditions as approved by the 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. Such a recordings 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: M 1/30/2023 | Last day to drop (50% tuition refund): M 2/13/2023 |
| Last day to drop w/out tuition penalty: M 2/6/2023 | Unrestricted withdraw period (no tuition refund): T 2/14/2023 – M 2/27/2023 |
- 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.
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COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 0 (Sun. 1/15/2023 – Sat. 1/21/2023): 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

Week 1 (Sun. 1/22/2023 – Sat. 1/28/2023): Course Introduction and Crisis of Authority, 1912-1949

Read: *Benson, *China Since 1949*, Ch. 1-2 (1-16)

Watch: **China in Revolution, Part 1: Battle for Survival, 1911-1936* (1989, 56 min.)

**China in Revolution, Part 2: Fighting for the Future, 1936-1949* (1989, 55 min.)

Do: **Post a brief self-introduction** to the “HIST 358 Self-Introductions” forum **by 11:59 pm ET, Mon. 1/23/2023**.

Attend: class meetings at 10:30 am ET, Mon. 1/23/2023 and Wed. 1/25/2023

Week 2 (Sun. 1/29/2023 – Sat. 2/4/2023): 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. 1/29/2023**

Extra credit opportunity: Respond to a classmate’s initial post **by 11:59 pm ET, Tue. 1/31/2023**

Attend: class meetings at 10:30 am ET, Mon. 1/30/2023 and Wed. 2/1/2023

Week 3 (Sun. 2/5/2023 – Sat. 2/11/2023): Recovery and Reorganization of Urban Society, 1949-1952

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. 2/5/2023**

Extra credit opportunity: Respond to a classmate’s initial post **by 11:59 pm ET, Tue. 2/7/2023**

Attend: class meetings at 10:30 am ET, Mon. 2/6/2023 and Wed. 2/8/2023

Week 4 (Sun. 2/12/2023 – Sat. 2/18/2023): 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. 2/12/2023**

Extra credit opportunity: Respond to a fellow group member’s initial post **by 11:59 pm ET, Tue. 2/14/2023**

Attend: class meetings at 10:30 am ET, Mon. 2/13/2023 and Wed. 2/15/2023

Week 5 (Sun. 2/19/2023 – Sat. 2/25/2023): Following the Soviet Model, 1953-1957

Read: **CVSS*, Ch. 7-9 (160-245)

Do: **Optional Online Assignment (Week 05)** (on Blackboard)

Submit post (to your group’s thread) **by 11:59 pm ET, Sun. 2/19/2023**

Attend: class meetings at 10:30 am ET, Mon. 2/20/2023 and Wed. 2/22/2023

Week 6 (Sun. 2/26/2023 – Sat. 3/4/2023): The Great Leap Forward, 1958-1960

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: **Optional Online Assignment (Week 06)** (on Blackboard)

Post draft of “thesis statement” for Paper #1 **by 11:59 pm ET, Sun. 2/26/2023**

Provide feedback on a classmate’s thesis statement **by 11:59 pm ET, Tue. 2/28/2023**

Attend: class meetings at 10:30 am ET, Mon. 2/27/2023 and Wed. 3/1/2023

Week 7 (Sun. 3/5/2023 – Sat. 3/11/2023): Aftermath of the Great Leap Forward, 1960-1965

Do: **Submit Paper #1** (via Blackboard) **by 11:59 pm ET, Sun. 3/5/2023**

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)

Watch: [optional: *1958-1969: Not a Dinner Party* (2006, 61 min)]

Attend: class meetings at 10:30 am ET, Mon. 3/6/2023 and Wed. 3/8/2023

Week 8 (Mon. 3/13/2023 – Sat. 3/18/2023) – 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).
Watch: **The Mao Years, Part 2: It's Right to Rebel!, 1960-1976* (1994, 56 min. [00:56:12 – 01:52:30])

Week 9 (Sun. 3/19/2023 – Sat. 3/26/2023): The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, 1966-1976

- Read:** **Growing Up in the People's Republic*, Ch. 3-5 (51-136)
 *Benson, *China Since 1949*, Ch.4 (44-46)
Do: **Online Assignment #4** (on Blackboard)
Submit an **initial post** (create new thread) **by 11:59 pm ET, Sun. 3/19/2023**
Extra credit opportunity: Respond to a classmate's initial post **by 11:59 pm ET, Tue. 3/21/2023**
Attend: class meetings at 10:30 am ET, Mon. 3/20/2023 and Wed. 3/22/2023

Week 10 (Sun. 3/26/2023 – Sat. 4/1/2023): Early Economic Reforms, 1978-1989

- 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: **Optional Online Assignment (Week 10)** (on Blackboard)
Post draft of “thesis statement” for Paper #2 **by 11:59 pm ET, Sun. 3/26/2023**
Provide feedback on a classmate's thesis statement **by 11:59 pm ET, Tue. 3/28/2023**
Attend: class meetings at 10:30 am ET, Mon. 3/27/2023 and Wed. 3/29/2023

Week 11 (Sun. 4/2/2023 – Sat. 4/8/2023): Calls for “Democracy,” 1978-1989

- Do:** **Submit Paper #2** (via Blackboard) **by 11:59 pm ET, Sun. 4/2/2023**
Read: *Benson, *China Since 1949*, Ch.5 (51-59)
Watch: [optional: *Assignment: China—Tiananmen Square* (2014, 90 min.) and *The Gate of Heavenly Peace* (1995, 141 min.)]
Attend: class meetings at 10:30 am ET, Mon. 4/3/2023 and Wed. 4/5/2023

Week 12 (Sun. 4/9/2023 – Sat. 4/15/2023): Economic Take-Off, 1990s

- Read:** *Benson, *China Since 1949*, Ch.6-7 (60-77)
 *Tamara Jacka, Andrew Kipnis, and Sally Sargenson, “Citizenship, Household Registration and Migration” in *Contemporary China: Society and Social Change* (Cambridge, 2013): 65-81.
 *Tamara Jacka, “Inside Work: The Hidden Exploitation of Rural Women in Modern China,” in *Dog Days: Made In China Yearbook 2018* (ANU Press, 2019): 98-103.
 Pai, *Scattered Sand*, Forward (ix-xiii), Preface (xiv-xvii), Introduction (1-13)
Do: **Online Assignment #5** (on Blackboard)
Submit an **initial post** (create new thread) **by 11:59 pm ET, Sun. 4/9/2023**
Attend: class meetings at 10:30 am ET, Mon. 4/10/2023 and Wed. 4/12/2023

Week 13 (Sun. 4/16/2023 – Sat. 4/22/2023): 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)
Attend: class meetings at 10:30 am ET, Mon. 4/17/2023 and Wed. 4/19/2023

Week 14 (Sun. 4/23/2023 – Sat. 4/29/2023): 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 #6** (on Blackboard)
Submit an **initial post** (new thread) **by 11:59 pm ET, Sun 4/23/2023**
Extra credit opportunity: Respond to a classmate's initial post **by 11:59 pm ET, Tue. 4/25/2023**
Attend: class meetings at 10:30 am ET, Mon. 4/24/2023 and Wed. 4/26/2023

Week 15 (Sun. 4/30/2023 – Sat. 5/6/2023): Ethnic Tensions and Territorial Sovereignty

Read: Pai, *Scattered Sand*, Epilogue (282-292)

*Guidelines for Final Exam

*Benson, *China Since 1949*, Ch.11-12 (119-142)

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

Do: **Optional Online Assignment (Week 15)** (on Blackboard)

Post draft of “thesis statement” for Final Exam (Part A) **by 11:59 pm ET, Sun 4/30/2023**

Provide feedback on a classmate’s thesis statement **by 11:59 pm ET, Tue. 5/2/2023**

Attend: class meetings at 10:30 am ET, Mon. 5/1/2023 and Wed. 5/3/2023

Exam Period (Wed. 5/10/2023 – Wed. 5/17/2023)

Do: **Submit Final Exam** (via “Exam Period” folder on Blackboard) **by 12:00 pm (noon) ET, Thu. 5/11/2023**

No late work will be accepted for the Final Exam.