World Cultures: China, V55.0512

Introduction
It is no longer controversial to state that China has now emerged as one of the most powerful economies in the world. Understanding China’s role in the global economy is absolutely crucial for understanding the shifting balance of power that is currently underway in the world. However, while the fact of China’s emergence as a global economic superpower is widely recognized, how the process has occurred is less well understood. In order to examine China’s current place in the world, this course is divided into three parts. In the first part of the course, we look at some crucial aspects of Chinese history and culture that must form the backdrop for an analysis of Chinese society today. Following that, we will delve into the logic of the economic reforms that have unfolded there over the last 25 years. In the final part of the course, we will consider what these changes mean for several key issues that China and the world face—from the fate of communism in China, to the prospects for democracy, to issues of human rights and China’s military strength.

Texts

There is also a reader for the course, which can be purchased at Unique Copy on Greene Street. Books can be found at the University Bookstore. An asterisk (*) beside an author indicates an article in the Reader. A double asterisk (**) indicates an article accessible through Blackboard.

Lecture
Attendance at lecture is required. You are responsible for material covered in the lecture as well as the material covered in all assigned readings. In other words: anything in lecture or the readings is fair game for the mid-term and final exams.

Discussion Section
Discussion section will be divided into two parts. In the first few minutes of section, your preceptor will lead a (short) class discussion, the goal of which is to answer any questions you have from the readings or the lectures. The remainder of the time will be occupied by small
group discussions on specific issues. These discussions will cover an issue your group has
selected, developing research strategies for learning more about the issue and developing
arguments that will help you formulate an educated opinion on the issue. These issues are broad
and deep, so it should take multiple class periods to fully explore a given issue. In the first
module, your group work will focus on the topic upon which you will write your midterm paper.
Groups will work collectively on how to approach the midterm paper, though papers will be
written individually. Module 2 will focus on a group-written opinion article on an important
debate issue that is relevant in Chinese society today. These papers will be handed in during
section on the week of XX/XX; in addition, during section in the weeks of XX/XX and XX/XX,
each group will be responsible for one presentation during the class. Your group will present
your analysis and findings in a formal, professional 10-minute presentation, with a 5-minute
Q&A session to follow. The third section module of the semester will be organized around the
essay for your final exam. Attendance in section is required. Failure to attend section will result
is a low participation grade, which will have a significant impact on your grade overall.

Grading
The final grade is based strictly on a distribution curve. This means that final grades are
calculated relative to the performance of the rest of the class. Thus, grades have no meaning
independent of the performance of the rest of the class. Note that this means that there is no
inherent grade attached to a given percentage score on a given exam or paper. Two different
distribution curves are employed in the calculation of your grades: first, for in-class exams where
there is no subjective component to the grading (i.e., the in-class midterm and final), I use a
class-wide distribution curve; second for grades for which there is a subjective component (i.e.,
those grades that are judged by your TA), I use an intra-section distribution curve. The
distribution curve I employ is the following: 10% of the class will receive a grade of A; 15% will
receive A-; 20% will receive B+; 25% will receive B; 20% will receive B-; 10% C+ or lower.

Grading for the course will be based on the following criteria:

1. Section (1/3 of grade), comprised of:
   ✓ Attendance
   ✓ Participation in group work
   ✓ Written work from week 3/27
   ✓ Group presentation from weeks 3/27, 4/3

2. Mid-term (1/3 of grade), comprised of:
   ✓ Mid-term paper (1/6 of grade)
   ✓ In-class mid-term exam (1/6 of grade)

3. Final exam (1/3 of grade), comprised of:
   ✓ Take-home final essay (1/6 of grade)
   ✓ In-class final exam (1/6 of grade)
Reading Schedule

I. Introduction
1. Tuesday, 1/17: Introduction to the study of history, culture, politics, and economic reform China

II. Historical Context: Cultural Forces and Institutional Change
2. Thursday, 1/19: Classical Background: Confucianism

3. Tuesday 1/24: Classical Background: Daoism and Beyond
   Readings: Morton and Lewis, Chapters 4-5.

4. Thursday, 1/26: The Western Encroachment and the Opium War
   Readings: Morton and Lewis, Chapters 11-12.

5. Tuesday 1/31: The Crisis Within
   Readings: Lu Xun*.

6. Thursday 2/2: Fifty Years of Upheaval and War
   Readings: Morton and Lewis, Chapter 13.

7. Tuesday 2/7: Chinese Society under Mao
   Readings: Morton and Lewis, Chapter 14.

8. Thursday 2/9: The Cultural Revolution
   Readings: Morton and Lewis, Chapter 15; Min*.

9. Tuesday 2/14: Movie: To Live, Part I

10. Thursday 2/16: Movie: To Live, Part II

Week of 2/13 Midterm papers are due in section

III. The Era of Economic Reform
10. Tuesday 2/21: Transforming the Rural Economy
    Readings: Spar*; Guthrie Chapters 1-2.

11. Thursday 2/23: China in the Global Economy
    Readings: Guthrie, Chapter 4.

12. Tuesday 2/28: The Transformation of Labor Relations
    Readings: Guthrie, Chapter 6.

13. Thursday 3/2: China’s Entrepreneurs
    Readings: Sull*.

14. Tuesday, 3/7: Private Interests and the New Middle Class
    Readings: Goodman* Parris*.

15. Thursday 3/9: Midterm Exam

In-class midterm exam

Spring Recess March 13-18

IV. The Changing Structure of Chinese Society
16. Tuesday 3/21: The State and the Military
    Readings: Morton and Lewis, Chapter 17.
17. Thursday 3/23: Population Changes
Readings: Ogden, pp. 114-130; Davis*; Gates*.

Section Week of 3/27: Hand in group debate essay in section week 3/27; group presentations section weeks 3/27 and 4/3

18. Tuesday 3/28: Guanxi and Corruption
Readings: Guthrie, Chapter 3.

Readings: Guthrie, Chapter 5; Walder*.

Section Week 3/27: Group presentations

20. Tuesday 4/4: Economic Change and New Freedoms
Readings: Morton and Lewis, Chapter 18.

21. Thursday 4/6: Tiananmen
Readings: Guthrie*.
Movie: The Gate of Heavenly Peace (excerpts)

Section Week 4/3: Continue group presentations

22. Tuesday 4/11: Prospects for Democracy
Readings: Guthrie, Chapter 7.

23. Thursday 4/13: Second Midterm
In-class midterm exam

23. Tuesday 4/18: Energy, Oil, and the Environment
Readings: Ogden, pp. 131-143.

24. Thursday 4/20: Religious freedom
Readings: TBA.

25. Tuesday 4/25: Sovereignty: Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Tibet
Readings: Hessler*; Hsing*.

Readings: Guthrie, Chapter 8.

27. Tuesday 5/1: Review for final exam

Final exam:
Essay question will be posted on Blackboard 48 hours before in-class final
LIST OF READINGS

Books

*Articles in Reader*
Anchee Min, *Becoming Madame Mao*. {excerpts}

Midterm Paper Topics:

- **Midterm Paper**
  - Topic I: Confucian and Daoist Roots in Chinese Culture
  - Topic II: Comparative Developmental Trajectories
  - Topic III: Confronting the West in Late Imperial China

Debate Essay Topics

- **Section Week 9**
  - Topic I: Debate: One-Child Policy
  - Topic II: Debate: Environment, Development, and the Three-Gorges Project
  - Topic III: Debate: Taiwan Independence

Take-Home Final Exam Questions

- **Topic I: Debate: Engagement and Human Rights in China**
- **Topic II: Debate: Economic Development, Stability, and Democracy**
- **Topic III: Debate: Religious freedom in China**