

CHES5143 Comparative Politics and China

2021-2022, Term 2
Fridays 6:30pm – 9:15pm, Wu Ho Man Yuen Building WMY 502

Lecturer: Dr. Shiru WANG (shiruw@gmail.com)

Teaching Assistant: TBA

This course will introduce fundamental issues and approaches in comparative politics and systematically map out the political system of China in these perspectives. Specifically, we will discuss the characteristics of different political systems in the world, investigate the key elements in governance, examine various political and policy processes, and explore the role of societal actors in different political systems. In each section, we will understand China by comparing it with other systems in the world. Students will be asked to reflect on the status of Chinese political system in the world from each of these particular perspectives.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, you should:

- have a basic grasp of core theories and approaches in comparative politics
- be able to understand China from a comparative perspective
- be able to critically analyze some of salient issues regarding Chinese politics using a comparative framework

Learning Activities

Each class time will be divided into two sections, lecture and group/class discussion. In addition to lecture, students are required to join the discussion about the issues, theories, arguments included in the lecture. In 10 class sessions, students will be required to write a short reflection note on one specific issue/topic debated or discussed in the class, then they will present their ideas to the whole class.

Assessment Scheme

Assessment Activities	Weights
Presentation and Discussion	20%
Reflection essays	40%
Term paper	40%

In selected weeks, students will be asked to present their understandings of assigned readings and host the class discussion (20%). Details will be announced in due course.

Each student is required to write two essays (1000-1500 words, 20% each) reflecting upon the readings and theories in comparative politics. Details will be announced in due course.

At the end of the term, students will submit a final term paper (2000-2500 words, 40%), in which they will apply the knowledge obtained in the course to analyze a topic of Chinese politics in a comparative perspective.

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>. With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of the policies, regulations and procedures.

Course Schedule

[Readings can be found on the CUHK Blackboard. Registered students may access the CHES5143 page by using their Student ID and OnePass password]

Class	Themes	Contents
Class 1- Jan.14	Introduction	Politics, Comparative Politics, and China: What is the comparative politics study? How to approach China in a comparative framework? Is China comparable to other countries or is China an outlier?
Class 2- Jan. 21	Themes and Methodologies in Comparative Politics	Main themes and methodologies in comparative politics will be introduced and discussed.
Class 3- Jan. 28	Political System	Political System/Regimes: How to define political system/regimes in the world? How to find China along the autocracy-democracy, authoritarian-hybrid-democratic regimes lines, etc.?
Class 4- Feb. 11	Political Structure I	Party system: What is a political party? Why political parties? How to describe a political system using the party system? How about China?
Class 5- Feb. 18	Political Structure II	Legislature: What is a legislature? How to understand the relationship between the Chief Executive and the Parliament? What are the functions of the National People's Congress of China? How different the NPC is from other legislative branches in the world?
Class 6- Feb. 25	Political Structure III	Executive/administrators: What are the responsibilities of the executive branch? How to understand leadership? The relationship between the central and local in different systems? And in China? Technocrats? Bureaucrats?
Class 7- Mar. 4	Political Structure IV	Judicial/legal system: How important is the independence of judicial branch and check and balance? How to understand the Chinese legal system and its anticorruption campaigns? Reflection Essay #1 Due!!!
Class 8- Mar. 11	Political Process I	Development and Democracy: What is the relationship between economic development and political transition? What is democratization? How to understand and evaluate the economic and social development, and political situations in China?
Class 9- Mar. 18	Political Process II	Policy Making Process: How are public policies made? Who are players in the policy process? How to understand some key social and economic policies in China?

Class 10- Mar. 25	Political Process III	Globalization and International Relations: How to understand the international world, the role of international organizations? How has globalization shaped domestic politics? What is the Belt and Road Initiative in China and what to expect in the future?
Class 11- Apr. 1	Political Actors I	Civil Society: What is the civil society and pressure groups? What can the civil society do? What is the relationship between the state and society in different regime types? And in China?
Class 12- Apr. 8	Political Actors II	Individuals & Political culture: What is political culture? What is citizenship? How can individuals do to affect the political process? Reflection Essay #2 Due!!!
Class 13- Apr. 22	Conclusion	Comparative Politics and China
Apr. 30		Final Term Paper Due!!!

Readings [additional readings may be assigned as the instructor sees fit]

Most readings come from the following books:

The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics, edited by Carles Boix and Susan C. Stokes. Oxford University Press. 2009 (will be referred as Boix-Stokes).

Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-six Countries, by Arend Lijphart. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1999 (will be referred as Lijphart).

Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990, by Adam Przeworski, Michael E. Alvarez, Jose Cheibub, and Fernando Limongi. Cambridge University Press, 2000 (will be referred as Przeworski et al.).

Governance and Politics of China, 4th ed. by Tony Saich. Palgrave Macmillan, 2015 (will be referred as Saich).

The Third Revolution: Xi Jinping and the New Chinese State, by Elizabeth C. Economy. Oxford University Press 2018 (will be referred as Economy)

The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions
Edited by Sarah A. Binder, R. A. W. Rhodes, and Bert A. Rockman

Class 1: Introduction

Required Readings:

“Introduction” from Boix-Stokes
 Chap. 1 from Saich
 Chap. 1 from Economy

Class 2: Comparative Politics

Required Readings:

Please skim the methods used in comparative politics introduced in Part II: Theory and Methodology by Boix-Stokes
Chap. 1 from Przeworski et al.

Class 3: Political System

Required Readings:

Preface and Chap 1 from Linz
Chap. 2 from Saich
Chap. 2 from Economy

Class 4: Political Structure I.

Required Readings:

Why Parties and Elections in Authoritarian Regimes? By Geddes
Party systems by Boix-Stokes
Chap. 3 & 4 from Saich

Class 5: Political Structure II

Required Readings:

Chap. 7 from Lijphart
China's National People's Congress by Kevin O'Brien
Please also skim Chap. 1, 2, 7, 8 from *Local people's congresses in China: development and transition* by Cho, Young Nam

Class 6: Political Structure III

Required Readings:

Chap. 6 & 10 from Lijphart
Chap. 5 & 6 from Saich

Class 7: Political Structure IV

Required Readings:

Chap. 12 from Lijphart
"Comparative Judicial Politics" from Boix and Stokes
Chap. 1 & 8 from *Embedded Courts: Judicial Decision-Making in China* by Kwai Hang Ng and Xin He.
Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Class 8: Political Process I

Required Readings:

Chap. 2 & 3 from Przeworski
Reilly, B. (2017). An elephant's graveyard? democracy and development in East Asia. *Government and Opposition*, 52(1), 162-183. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/easyaccess2.lib.cuhk.edu.hk/10.1017/gov.2016.24>
Chap. 4, 5, 6 from Economy

Class 9: Political Process II

Required Readings:

Separation of Powers from Boix and Stokes

“Introduction”, Chap. 1, 6 from *Red Swan: How Unorthodox Policy-Making Facilitated China’s Rise*, by Sebastian Heilmann. The Chinese University Press, 2018.

Chap. 9 & 10 from Saich

Class 10: Political Process III

Required Readings:

W. I. Robinson, “Theories of Globalization,” in *The Blackwell Companion to Globalization*, ed. by G. Ritzer. London: Blackwell, 2008.

Chap. 11 from Saich

Chap 7 from Economy

.

Class 11: Political Actors I

Required Readings:

“Political Activism: New Challenges, New Opportunities” from Boix and Stokes

“Contentious Politics and Social Movements” from Boix and Stokes

“Introduction”, Chap. 1, 2 from *The Power of the Internet*, by Guobin Yang, Columbia University Press, 2011.

Chap. 3 from Economy

Class 12: Political Actors II

Required Readings:

“An Economic Theory of Democracy” by Anthony Downs, from *Classic Readings in American Politics*, by Nivola and Rosenbloom. Worth Publishers, 1999.

“Democracy and Civic Culture” from Boix and Stokes

Chap. 1 from *Rightful Resistance in Rural China* by Kevin O’Brien and Lianjiang Li.

Please skim Chap. 2, 3, 4 from *Political Participation in Beijing*, by Tianjian Shi. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1997.

Class 13: Conclusion

Required Readings:

Chap. 12 from Saich

Chap 8 from Economy