

## CHES5143 Comparative Politics and China

2020-2021, Term 2

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**Teaching Assistant:**

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 discuss within their small project groups about the issues, theories, arguments included in the lecture, then they will present their opinions and ideas to the whole class, and in the end each student will write a very short reflection note (inkshedding) on anything that interests him or her during the lecture and discussion.

### Assessment Scheme

Assessment Activities	Weights
10 short "inkshedding" notes	20%
Group presentation	20%
Reflection essay	20%
Term paper	40%

In selected weeks, students will be asked to write a short in-class reflection note about the issues, arguments, ideas rising from lecture, group and class discussion. Each "inkshedding" note is worth 2%.

Students will form project groups to prepare for group presentation on the topic of their choice. They can choose to work on any topic about China discussed in this course. Each group will explore literature on that specific topic and identify puzzles and debates, and provide analysis in their presentation. Each group have 20 minutes to present their ideas, and 10 minutes for Q and A. Both individual performance and group performance will be evaluated. The group presentation accounts for 20% of the total score.

Each student is required to write a reflection essay (~1,500 words, 20%) on one theory or a group of theories in comparative politics and discuss the extent to which this theory or group of theories apply to the case of China and the implications to the field of comparative politics.

At the end of the term, students will submit a final paper (2,000-2,500 words, 40%), in which they will apply the knowledge obtained in the course to analyze a topic of Chinese politics which is different from the topic of his or her group presentation.

*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

[PDF versions of all readings and assignments 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	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	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 3	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 4	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 5	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 6	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?
Class 7	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 8	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 9	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 10	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 11	Political Actors II	Individuals & Political culture: What is political culture? What is citizenship? How can individuals do to affect the political process?  <u>Reflection Essay Due</u>
Class 12	Conclusion	Comparative Politics and China

**Readings (Required and Recommended) [more readings may be assigned in due course]**

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).

*Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*, by Juan Linz. Lynne Rienner Publishers. 2000 (will be referred as Linz).

*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*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. by Tony Saich. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011 (will be referred as Saich).

*China Dreams : China's new leadership and future impacts*, edited by Chih-shian Liou, Arthur S. Ding. Singapore : World Scientific 2015 (will be referred as Liou and Ding).

**Class 1: Introduction**

Required Readings:

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

### **Class 2: Political System**

Required Readings:

Chap. 1 from Lijphart  
Preface and Chap 1 from Linz  
Chap. 1 from Przeworski et al.  
Chap. 2 & 3 from Saich

Recommended Readings:

Chap. 2-4 from Lijphart  
Chap. 2 & 4 from Linz

### **Class 3: Political Structure I.**

Required Readings:

*The Quantity and the Quality of Party Systems*, by Dalton  
*Why Parties and Elections in Authoritarian Regimes?* By Geddes  
Chap. 5 from Saich

Recommended Readings:

Chap. 5 from Lijphart  
Chap. 2 & 4 from *Red Capitalists in China* by Bruce Dickson.

### **Class 4: Political Structure II**

Required Readings:

Chap. 7 from Lijphart  
*China's National People's Congress* by Kevin O'Brien

Recommended Readings:

Chap. 8 & 11 from Lijphart  
Chap. 1, 2, 7, 8 from *Local people's congresses in China : development and transition* by Cho, Young Nam

### **Class 5: Political Structure III**

Required Readings:

Chap. 6 & 10 from Lijphart  
Chap. 6 & 7 from Saich

Recommended Readings:

Chap. 4 & 5 from Liou and Ding.

### **Class 6: Political Structure IV**

Required Readings:

Chap. 12 from Lijphart

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

Recommended Readings:

“Separation of Powers” from Boix and Stokes  
“Comparative Judicial Politics” from Boix and Stokes

### **Class 7: Political Process I**

Required Readings:

Chap. 2 & 3 from Przeworski  
*Development and Democracy*, by Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and George W. Downs. Foreign Affairs Vol. 84, No. 5 (Sep. - Oct., 2005), pp. 77-86.

Recommended Readings:

Chap. 7 from Liou and Ding.

### **Class 8: Political Process II**

Required Readings:

Chap. 9 & 10 from Lijphart  
Chap. 8 from Liou and Ding.  
Chap. 2 from Saich

Recommended Readings:

“Introduction”, Chap. 1, 6 from *Red Swan: How Unorthodox Policy-Making Facilitated China’s Rise*, by Sebastian Heilmann. The Chinese University Press, 2018.  
Chap. 10 & 11 from Saich

### **Class 9: 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. 2 & 3 from Liou and Ding

Recommended Readings:

Chap. 12 from Saich  
Chap. 2 from *Essentials of international relations*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, by Karen A. Mingst and Ivan M. Arreguín-Toft. New York : W.W. Norton & Company, 2017.

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### **Class 10: Political Actors I**

Required Readings:

Chap. 1, 2 from *Polyarchy*, by Robert A Dahl. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1971.  
Chap. 9 from Saich

Recommended Readings:

“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.

## **Class 11: 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.

Chap. 8 from Saich

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

### Recommended Readings:

“Democracy and Civic Culture” from Boix and Stokes

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

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

Chap. 2, 6 from *Rightful Resistance in Rural China* by Kevin O'Brien and Lianjiang Li.

## **Class 12: Conclusion**

### Required Readings:

Chap. 13 from Saich

### Recommended Readings:

Chap. 1 from Liou and Ding.