Course Description

This course focuses on emerging issues in the field of Chinese politics, and books (and articles) published mainly in the last decade. Material covered will include: the state, state capacity, policy implementation, socialist legality, environmental litigation, local people’s congresses, NGOS, village elections, protest, rights consciousness, and experimental research on authoritarian responsiveness.

The course is designed, and will be conducted, like a graduate seminar. Students who enroll must be ready to do all the reading in advance of seminar meetings and to participate actively in class discussions.

Prerequisites: Political science majors with junior or senior status, or other juniors and seniors who are very highly motivated to learn about Chinese politics. Some prior study of Chinese politics, economics, or society is strongly recommended.

Course Materials


7) Scott Kennedy (ed.), *Beyond the Middle Kingdom: Comparative Perspectives on China’s Capitalist Transformation* (Stanford, 2011) (paperback)

8) Articles on the web, available at the UC library website. Look under “E-Journal Titles A-Z.” Also, if you don’t find a piece right away, search by the article’s title or be enterprising and check with your classmates to see where they located it.

All the assigned books are on two-hour reserve at the Main Library.
Course Requirements

15-20 page research paper (50% of final grade). Due Wednesday, December 14, 2pm via e-mail (kobrien@berkeley.edu)

1-2 page research proposal (10% of final grade) -- Due Wednesday November 16, 2pm via e-mail (kobrien@berkeley.edu). Unsatisfactory research proposals must be re-written.

5-7 minute class presentation (10% of course grade) -- November 30

Class participation (30% of course grade) -- All students will be expected to participate in class discussions and to come to class prepared every week.

Academic Honesty

All the work you do in this course is expected to be your own. Absolutely no cheating or plagiarism (using someone else’s words or ideas without proper citation) will be tolerated. Any cases of cheating or plagiarism will be reported to the university and handled according to university policy.

“The Dog ate it”

Please keep a copy of your research paper until the instructor has returned it. Also, to sidestep easily avoidable problems related to computer failures, keep a copy of all your drafts on a flash drive or in the cloud.

Disabilities

Students with disabilities are responsible for making their needs known to the instructor, and seeking available assistance, in a timely manner. All efforts will be made to facilitate the learning of students with any sort of disability.

Week 1  (8/24)  Introduction

Week 2  (8/31) Understanding the Chinese State and Authoritarian Resilience

Teresa Wright,  Party and State in Post-Mao China

Week 3 (9/7) Predation or Developmentalism? Local Cadres and Policy Implementation


Week 4 (9/14) **Socialist Rule of Law?**

Yuhua Wang, *Tying the Autocrat’s Hands*

Week 5 (9/21) **Experiments and Authoritarian Responsiveness**


Rory Truex, “Consultative Authoritarianism and Its Limits,” *Comparative Political Studies*, forthcoming, 33pp. (available at “online first” at the journal’s website, or perhaps in the August or September 2016 issue)


Week 6 (9/28) **Legislatures, Information and Representation**

Melanie Manion, *Information for Autocrats*


Week 7 (10/5) **Village Elections -- Democratic Breakthrough, Sham, or State-Building?**


Kevin O’Brien and Rongbin Han, “Path to Democracy? Assessing Elections in Rural China,” *Journal of Contemporary China* (June 2009): 359-78

Week 8 (10/12) **NGOs and the State**
Jessica Teets, Civil Society under Authoritarianism

Week 9 (10/19) **Law, the State and Everyday Justice**

Rachel Stern, Environmental Litigation in China

Week 10 (10/26) **Protest**

Kevin O’Brien and Lianjiang Li, Rightful Resistance in Rural China

Week 11 (11/2) **Critiques of Rightful Resistance**


Week 12 (11/9) **Rights vs. Rules Consciousness**


Lianjiang Li, “Rights Consciousness and Rules Consciousness in Contemporary China,” *China Journal* 64 (July 2010): 47-68

Peter Lorentzen and Suzanne Scoggins, “Understanding China’s Rising Rights Consciousness,” *China Quarterly* 223 (September 2015): 638-57


Week 13 (11/16) **China in Comparative Perspective**

Scott Kennedy (ed.), *Beyond the Middle Kingdom*

1-2 page research proposal due

11/23 Off for the Thanksgiving Holiday
Week 14 (11/30) **Presentations**

Five to seven minute presentations of each student's research

12/14  2pm,  *Final Paper Due! (e-mail to kobrien@berkeley.edu)*