

Political Science 244c  
Chinese Politics: New Voices and Issues for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century  
Kevin J. O'Brien

Wednesday, 4pm-6pm, 791 Barrows  
Fall 2015  
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712 Barrows

### Course Description

This course focuses on emerging issues in the field of Chinese politics, and (mostly) younger authors who have published books (and articles) since 2005. The early weeks emphasize the Chinese state and state-society relations at a high level of abstraction; later weeks turn toward state-society relations nearer the grassroots. Topics covered include: regime change, state capacity, bureaucratic politics, village elections, social capital, private entrepreneurs, banking, local cadres, adaptive governance, policy implementation, protest, rights consciousness, cross-national comparison and recent experimental research on authoritarian responsiveness. For political science graduate students preparing for the East Asian politics exam, this syllabi should be read in conjunction with the 2006 Political Science 244c syllabus available at my website.

### Books to be purchased

- 1) Allen Carlson, Mary Gallagher, Kenneth Lieberthal and Melanie Manion, Chinese Politics: New Sources, Methods, and Field Strategies (Cambridge, 2010), paperback
- 2) Sebastian Heilmann and Elizabeth Perry (ed.), Mao's Invisible Hand: The Political Foundations of Adaptive Governance in China (Harvard, 2011), paperback
- 3) Yasheng Huang, Capitalism with Chinese Characteristics: Entrepreneurship and the State (Cambridge, 2008), hardcover
- 4) Scott Kennedy, The Business of Lobbying in China (Harvard, 2005), paperback
- 5) Scott Kennedy (ed.), Beyond the Middle Kingdom: Comparative Perspectives on China's Capitalist Transformation (Stanford, 2011), paperback
- 6) Andrew Mertha, Water Warriors: Political Pluralization in China's Hydropower Policy (Cornell, 2008), paperback
- 7) Victor Shih, Factions and Finance in China: Elite Conflict and Inflation (Cambridge, 2009), paperback
- 8) Kelly Tsai, Capitalism Without Democracy: The Private Sector in Contemporary China (Cornell, 2007), paperback
- 9) Lily Tsai, Accountability Without Democracy: Solidary Groups and Public Goods Provision in Rural China (Cambridge, 2007), paperback

## Course Requirements

3 seminar papers (30% of course grade) -- Due on Monday evening (5 pm) of the three weeks for which a student is responsible. (Copies should be sent to the e-mail addresses of all students and, of course, to the instructor). Each paper (approx. 3-4 double-spaced pages) should critically engage the readings assigned for that week. Students may focus on gaps or conflicts in one (or more) readings and may bring in relevant material from other courses. The purpose of these papers is to stimulate class discussion. Papers should not be a summary but rather an effort to highlight an important point, a methodological issue, and/or an assumption that underlies or permeates the reading(s). Efforts should be made to explore ways in which the readings relate to each other and how they help us improve our understanding of politics. During class, each author should be ready to explain (and expand upon) the points raised. Hint: When preparing your papers, pretend you are an overburdened student racing to figure out "why this reading is so important" the night before your qualifying exams. You might also consider how the readings speak to other areas of political science (or other regions of the world) with which you are familiar.

A 15-20 page research paper (50% of course grade) or a final exam (2 out of 3 essay questions, approx. 4000 words total)

Class participation (20% of course grade) -- All students will be expected to participate in class discussions and to come to class prepared to consider the seminar papers for that week.

Please keep a copy of your essays until the instructor has returned them. Also, to sidestep easily avoidable problems related to computer failures, keep a copy of your essays on a flash drive.

Week 1 (8/26)

### Introduction

Week 2 (9/2)

### Entrepreneurs, Democracy and Growth

Kelly Tsai, Capitalism Without Democracy

Yasheng Huang, Capitalism with Chinese Characteristics: Entrepreneurship and the State

Student Discussants:

1)

2)

3)

Week 3 (9/9)

### Pluralization of High-Level Politics?

Scott Kennedy, The Business of Lobbying in China

Andrew Mertha, Water Warriors

Student Discussants:

1)

2)

3)





1)

2)

3)

Week 9 (10/21)

### **Cross-National Comparison**

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

Yuen Yuen Ang, "Authoritarian Restraints on Online Activism Revisited: Why 'I Paid a Bribe' Worked in India but Failed in China," Comparative Politics 47:1 (October 2014): 21-40 (on the web)

Student Discussants:

1)

2)

3)

Week 10 (10/28)

### **Conceptualizing Resistance**

Kevin J. O'Brien, "Rightful Resistance," World Politics 49 (October 1996): 31-55 (on the web)

Ethan Michelson, "Justice from Above or Justice from Below? Lessons from Rural China for the Study of Disputing," China Quarterly 193 (March 2008): 43-64 (on the web)

Kevin J. O'Brien, "Rightful Resistance Revisited," Journal of Peasant Studies 40:6 (November 2013): 1051-62 (on the web)

Lily L. Tsai, "Constructive Noncompliance," Comparative Politics (April 2015): 253-79 (on the web)

Diana Fu, "Disguised Collective Action: Mobilizing Without the Masses in Authoritarian China," unpublished article, 2015, 43 pp. (available from the instructor)

Susan K. McCarthy, "Serving Society, Repurposing the State: Religious Charity and Resistance in China," China Journal 70 (July 2013): 48-72 (on the web)

Student Discussants:

1)

2)

3)

Week 11 (11/4)

### **Rights vs. Rules Consciousness**

Elizabeth J. Perry, "A New Rights Consciousness?" Journal of Democracy 20:3 (2008): 17-20 (on the web)

Lianjiang Li, "Rights Consciousness and Rules Consciousness in Contemporary China," China Journal 64 (2010): 47-68 (on the web)

Peter L. Lorentzen and Suzanne E. Scoggins, "Rising Rights Consciousness: Undermining or Undergirding China's Stability?" China Quarterly (forthcoming) (available at [ssrn.com](http://ssrn.com))

Linda Wong, "Chinese Migrant Workers: Rights Attainment Deficits, Rights Consciousness and Personal Strategies," China Quarterly 208 (December 2011): 870-92 (on the web)

Mary E. Gallagher, "Mobilizing the Law in China: 'Informed Disenchantment' and the Development of Legal Consciousness," Law & Society Review 40:4 (2006): 783-816 (on the web)

Margaret L. Boittin, "New Perspectives from the Oldest Profession: Abuse and the Legal Consciousness of Sex Workers in China," Law & Society Review 47:2 (2013): 245-78

Student Discussants:

1)

2)

3

## Week 12 (11/18) **Experiments and Chinese Politics: Understanding Authoritarian Responsiveness and Censorship**

Xiaobo Lü, "Ethical Challenges in Comparative Politics Experiments in China," unpublished paper, March 11, 2015, forthcoming in Scott Desposato ed., Ethics and Experiments: Problems and Solutions for Social Scientists and Policy Professionals (London: Routledge) (available at [http://www.xiaobolu.com/researchpapers/China\\_Ethic\\_in\\_Experiment\\_Lu.pdf](http://www.xiaobolu.com/researchpapers/China_Ethic_in_Experiment_Lu.pdf))

Greg Distelhorst and Yue Hou, "Ingroup Bias in Official Behavior: A National Field Experiment in China," Quarterly Journal of Political Science 9:2 (2014): 203-20 (on the web)

Chen Jidong, Jennifer Pan and Yiqing Xu, "Sources of Authoritarian Responsiveness: A Field Experiment in China," unpublished paper, February 26, 2015 (available at [ssrn.com](http://ssrn.com))

Rory Truex, "Consultative Authoritarianism and Its Limits," Comparative Political Studies, forthcoming, 33pp. (available at "online first" at the journal)

Daniel Mattingly, "Informal Institutions and Property Rights in China," unpublished paper, 2014 (available at [ssrn.com](http://ssrn.com))

Gary King, Jennifer Pan and Margaret E. Roberts, "Reverse Engineering Censorship in China," Science 345:6199 (22 August 2014) (available on the web)

Week 13 (12/2)

## **How We Know What We Know**

Allen Carlson, Mary Gallagher, Kenneth Lieberthal and Melanie Manion, Chinese Politics: New Sources, Methods, and Field Strategies (Cambridge, 2010)

Kevin J. O'Brien, "Discovery, Research Re(Design) and Theory Building," in Maria Heimer and Stig Thøgersen eds., Doing Fieldwork in China (Hawaii, 2006), pp. 27-41 (available from instructor by e-mail)

Kevin J. O'Brien, "Studying Chinese Politics in an Age of Specialization," Journal of Contemporary China (September 2011): 535-41 (on the web)

Bruce Gilley, "Paradigms of Chinese Politics: Kicking Society Back Out," Journal of Contemporary China (June 2011): 517-533 (on the web)

Student Discussants:

1)

2)

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Friday December 11, 2pm; By e-mail to kobrien@berkeley.edu – Final Paper or Take-home Exam Due