Course Description

This course focuses on emerging issues in the field of Chinese politics, and (mostly) younger authors who have published books 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, local legislatures, village elections, social capital, private entrepreneurs, banking, law, local cadres, policy implementation, and small-n comparison. For political science graduate students preparing for the East Asian politics exam, this syllabus should be read in conjunction with the 2006 Political Science 244c syllabus available at my website.

Books to be purchased

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


4) Yasheng Huang, Capitalism with Chinese Characteristics: Entrepreneurship and the State (Cambridge, 2008), hardcover

5) Scott Kennedy, The Business of Lobbying in China (Harvard, 2005), paperback

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

7) Andrew Mertha, Water Warriors: Political Pluralization in China’s Hydropower Policy (Cornell, 2008), paperback

8) Victor Shih, Factions and Finance in China: Elite Conflict and Inflation (Cambridge, 2009), paperback


10) Kelly Tsai, Capitalism Without Democracy: The Private Sector in Contemporary China (Cornell, 2007), paperback
11) Lily Tsai, Accountability Without Democracy: Solidary Groups and Public Goods Provision in Rural China (Cambridge, 2007), paperback

12) Teresa Wright, Accepting Authoritarianism: State-Society Relations in China’s Reform Era (Stanford, 2010), 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 CD or flash drive.

Week 1 (8/29)

Introduction

Week 2 (9/5)

Entrepreneurs, Democracy and Growth

Kelly Tsai, Capitalism Without Democracy

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

Student Discussants:
1) 2) 3)

Convergence?

Week 3 (9/12)
Edward Steinfeld, *Playing Our Game: Why China’s Rise Doesn’t Threaten the West*

Teresa Wright, *Accepting Authoritarianism: State-Society Relations in China’s Reform Era*

Student Discussants:
1) 2) 3)

**Week 4 (9/19)  Pluralization of High-Level Politics?**

Scott Kennedy, *The Business of Lobbying in China*

Andrew Mertha, *Water Warriors*

Student Discussants:
1) 2) 3)

**Week 5 (9/26) – Instructor in China, Class Cancelled**

**Week 6 (10/3)  Local Legislatures and Political Change -- Institutionalization or Embeddedness? Representation or Remonstrating? Supervision Taking Off?**


Young Nam Cho, "From 'Rubber Stamp' to 'Iron Stamps': The Emergence of Chinese Local People's Congresses as Supervisory Powerhouses," *China Quarterly* no. 171 (September 2002): 724-40 (on the web)

Young Nam Cho, “Symbiotic Neighbour or Extra-Court Judge? The Supervision over Courts by Chinese Local People’s Congresses,” *China Quarterly* 176 (December 2003): 1068-83 (on the web)


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


**Implementation of Elections:**


**Effects of Elections:**


Gunter Schubert and Chen Xuelian, "Village Elections in Contemporary China: New Spaces for Generating Regime Legitimacy? Experiences from Lishu County," *China Perspectives*, no. 3 (2007): 12-25 (available from instructor by e-mail)


Student Discussants:

1)  
2)  
3)  

Week 8 (10/17)  
**Social Capital at the Grassroots**

Lily Tsai, *Accountability Without Democracy*
Student Discussants:
1)                                    2)                                    3)

Week 9 (10/24)  Banking and Factions
Victor Shih, Factions and Finance in China
Student Discussants:
1)                                    2)                                    3)

Week 10 (10/31)  Local Cadres, Predation and Developmentalism
Anna Ahlers and Gunter Schubert, “County and Township Cadres as a Strategic Group in Local Policy-Implementation: ‘Constructing a New Socialist Countryside’ in Shaanxi, Zhejiang and Jiangxi Provinces,” Journal of Chinese Political Science, forthcoming (available by e-mail from the instructor)

Student Discussants:
1)                                    2)                                    3)

Week 11 (11/7)  Adaptive Governance
Week 12 (11/14)  Law and Politics

Neil Diamant, Stanley Lubman, and Kevin J. O’Brien (eds.), Engaging the Law in China, chapters 1-4


Student Discussants:
1) 2) 3)

Weeks 13 (11/21)  Cross-National Comparison

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

Student Discussants:
1) 2) 3)

Week 14 (11/28)  How We Know What We Know

Allen Carlson, Mary Gallager, 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 Thogersen eds., Doing Fieldwork in China (Hawaii, 2006), pp. 27-41 (available from instructor by e-mail)


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

Discussants:
Wednesday December 5, 2pm; By e-mail to kobrien@berkeley.edu – Final Paper or Take-home Exam Due