

Political Science 191  
Chinese Politics in the Reform Era  
Kevin J. O'Brien

Wednesday 12pm-2pm  
Fall 2016  
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### 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

- 1) Teresa Wright, Party and State in Post-Mao China (Polity, 2015) (paperback)
- 2) Yuhua Wang, Tying the Autocrat's Hands: The Rise of the Rule of Law in China (Cambridge, 2015) (paperback)
- 3) Melanie Manion, Information for Autocrats: Representation in Chinese Local Congresses (Cambridge, 2015) (paperback)
- 4) Jessica Teets, Civil Society under Authoritarianism: The China Model (Cambridge, 2014) (paperback)
- 5) Rachel Stern, Environmental Litigation in China: A Study in Political Ambivalence (Cambridge, 2013) (paperback)
- 6) Kevin O'Brien and Lianjiang Li, Rightful Resistance in Rural China (Cambridge, 2006) (paperback)
- 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**

Kevin O'Brien and Lianjiang Li, "Selective Policy Implementation in Rural China," Comparative Politics 31:2 (January 1999): 167-86

Maria Edin, "State Capacity and Local Agent Control in China: CCP Cadre Management from a Township Perspective," China Quarterly 173 (March 2003): 35-52

Christian Gobel, "Uneven Policy Implementation in Rural China," China Journal 65 (January 2011): 53-76

Anna Ahlers and Gunter Schubert, "Effective Policy Implementation in China's Local State," Modern China 41:4 (July 2015): 372-405

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

Yuhua Wang, Tying the Autocrat's Hands

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

Chen Jidong, Jennifer Pan and Yiqing Xu, "Sources of Authoritarian Responsiveness: A Field Experiment in China" American Journal of Political Science 60(2) (April 2016): 383-400

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

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)

Daniel Mattingly, "Elite Capture: How Decentralization and Informal Institutions Weaken Property Rights in China," World Politics 68:3 (July 2016): 383-412

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

Melanie Manion, Information for Autocrats

Kevin O'Brien, "Local People's Congresses and Governing China," China Journal 61 (January 2009): 131-41

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

Daniel Kelliher, "The Chinese Debate over Village Self-Government," China Journal 37 (January 1997): 63-86

Tianjian Shi, "Village Committee Elections in China: Institutionalist Tactics for Democracy," World Politics 51:3 (April 1999): 385-412

Lianjiang Li, "The Empowering Effect of Village Elections in China," Asian Survey 43:4 (July/August 2003): 648-62

Yusheng Yao, "Village Elections and Their Impact: An Investigative Report on a Northern Chinese Village," Modern China, 39:1 (January 2013): 37-68

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**

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

Julia Chuang, "China's Rural Land Politics: Bureaucratic Absorption and the Muting of Rightful Resistance," China Quarterly 219 (September 2014): 649-69

Wing-chung Ho and Fen-Ling Chen, "Compromising Citizenry: The Perceived Irrelevance of Rightful Resistance among Peasant Coal-Miners Suffering from Pneumoconiosis," China Review 16:2 (June 2016): 85-103

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

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

Elizabeth Perry, "A New Rights Consciousness?" Journal of Democracy 20:3 (July 2009): 17-20

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

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

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)***