

# PIA2041: POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA

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## Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

## Part I Course Overview

### Course Title

Political and Social Development in China

### Subject Code

PIA - Public and International Affairs

### Course Number

2041

### Academic Unit

Public and International Affairs (PIA)

### College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

### Course Duration

One Semester

### Credit Units

3

### Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

### Medium of Instruction

English

### Medium of Assessment

English

### Prerequisites

Nil

### Precursors

Nil

### Equivalent Courses

AIS2041 Political and Social Development in China

### Exclusive Courses

Nil

## Part II Course Details

### Abstract

This course will provide students a fundamental understanding of the role of the Chinese state in contemporary China and its relationship to society. As China's importance has grown significantly in the past, it is necessary to understand both the historical basis of modern China, present institutions and how the state has sought to shape the society and how the society has responded. Using the latest research and various media, students will discuss the implications of China's rise on the Chinese state and its relationship to society.

### Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Identify major institutional transformations and socio-economic changes in China since the inception of the communist regime in 1949, and especially after the 1978 economic reforms.	20	x	x	
2	Examine major social problems and debates in relation to contemporary China, such as state-market relation, land reform, ideology change, nationalism and identity, social capital and social development, and the politics of censorship and information access.	20	x	x	
3	Apply various social and political theories to analyse China's political and economic development	20	x	x	x
4	Explore possible and/or essential areas of reform for the Chinese state and probe the chances of success for these reforms.	20	x	x	x
5	Indicate self-motivated knowledge-discovering ability.	20	x	x	x

#### A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

#### A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

#### A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

### Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1-5	Lectures/seminars, reading: The key issues evolving the development of the Chinese state and its response to society will be discussed. Students are expected to be prepared with reading.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	

2	1-5	Documentaries: A number of shorter documentaries will be shown in class to illustrate the lecture topics.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	
3	1-5	Tutorials: Students will form groups to gain a deeper understanding of the topics discussed in the lecture	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	
4	1-5	In-class discussions, debates: Time will be left for discussion within the class as well as the tutorial.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	
5	1-5	Film critique: Students will select a film and discuss how it connects to the topics discussed in the class.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	

**Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)**

ATs		CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("-" for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Tutorial discussion	1, 3, 5	40	-	Yes
2	Presentation	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	30	-	No
3	Essay	2, 3, 4, 5	30	-	No

**Continuous Assessment (%)**

100

**Examination (%)**

0

**Assessment Rubrics (AR)****Assessment Task**

Tutorial discussion

**Criterion**

Active participation in tutorial discussion

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Superior understanding of a major issue or problem of political and social development in China.  
Clear ability of independent thinking and critical analysis.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Good understanding of a major issue or problem of political and social development in China.  
Evidence of some good Clear ability of independent thinking and critical analysis.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Sufficient understanding of a major issue or problem of political and social development in China.  
Some attempts at analytical thinking.

**Marginal (D)**

Some knowledge of a major issue or problem of political and social development in China.  
Little evidence of analysis of relevant concepts.

**Failure (F)**

Little evidence of knowledge of a major issue or problem of political and social development in China.

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**Assessment Task**

Presentation

**Criterion**

Group presentation

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Superior understanding of a major issue or problem of political and social development in China.  
Clear ability of independent thinking and critical analysis.  
Extensive range of references consulted, including good use of scholarly materials to support all key arguments made.  
Very well organized; coherent arguments presented with a high standard of expression.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Good understanding of a major issue or problem of political and social development in China.  
Evidence of some good Clear ability of independent thinking and critical analysis.  
A reasonably wide range of references consulted, including good use of Scholarly materials to support all key arguments made.  
Well organized; coherent arguments presented with a high standard of expression.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Sufficient understanding of a major issue or problem of political and social development in China.  
Some attempts at analytical thinking.  
Barely sufficient use of scholarly materials.  
Reasonable standard of expression; average quality in terms of organization and coherence.

**Marginal (D)**

Some knowledge of a major issue or problem of political and social development in China.  
Little evidence of analysis of relevant concepts.  
Very limited use of scholarly materials.  
Acceptable organization of a mostly descriptive essay.

**Failure (F)**

Little evidence of knowledge of a major issue or problem of political and social development in China.  
No scholarly materials consulted.  
Poor quality structure and presentation.

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**Assessment Task**

Essay (3,000 words)

**Criterion**

Individual term paper

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Superior understanding of a major issue or problem of political and social development in China.

Clear ability of independent thinking and critical analysis.

Extensive range of references consulted, including good use of scholarly materials to support all key arguments made.  
Very well organized; coherent arguments presented with a high standard of expression.

#### **Good (B+, B, B-)**

Good understanding of a major issue or problem of political and social development in China.

Evidence of some good Clear ability of independent thinking and critical analysis.

A reasonably wide range of references consulted, including good use of scholarly materials to support all key arguments made.

Well organized; coherent arguments presented with a high standard of expression.

#### **Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Sufficient understanding of a major issue or problem of political and social development in China.

Some attempts at analytical thinking.

Barely sufficient use of scholarly materials.

Reasonable standard of expression; average quality in terms of organization and coherence.

#### **Marginal (D)**

Some knowledge of a major issue or problem of political and social development in China.

Little evidence of analysis of relevant concepts.

Very limited use of scholarly materials.

Acceptable organization of a mostly descriptive essay.

#### **Failure (F)**

Little evidence of knowledge of a major issue or problem of political and social development in China.

No scholarly materials consulted.

Poor quality structure and presentation.

## **Part III Other Information**

### **Keyword Syllabus**

Authoritarianism. Communism. Market Socialism. Political Change. The China Model. Chinese Democracy. Elite politics. Population Growth. Gender. Nationalism. Minorities. Internal Migration. Media.

### **Reading List**

#### **Compulsory Readings**

	<b>Title</b>
1	Grasso, June, Jay Corrin, and Michael Kort. 2004. <i>Modernization and revolution in China: From the Opium Wars to World Power</i> . 3rd ed. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe Ch. 9.
2	Lieberthal, Kenneth. 2004. "The Maoist Era," in: Kenneth Lieberthal. <i>Governing China: From Revolution through Reform</i> . 2nd ed. New York and London: WW Norton.
3	Dittmer, Lowell. 1990. "China in 1989: The Crisis of Incomplete Reform," in: <i>Asian Survey</i> , 30:1, pp. 25-41.
4	Shambaugh, David. 1993. "Deng Xiaoping: The Politician," in: <i>The China Quarterly</i> , 135, pp. 457-490.
5	Shambaugh, David. 2001. "The Dynamics of Elite Politics under Jiang Zemin," in: <i>The China Journal</i> , 45, pp. 101-111.
6	Wang, Zhengxu. 2006. "Hu Jintao's Power Consolidation: Groups, Institutions, and Power Balance in China's Elite Politics," in: <i>Issues &amp; Studies</i> , 42:2, pp. 97-136.
7	Economy, Elizabeth C. 2014. "China's Imperial President: Xi Jinping Tightens His Grip," in: <i>Foreign Affairs</i> , November/December, pp. 80-91.
8	Starr, John Bryan. 2010. <i>Understanding China: A Guide to China's Economy, History, and Political Culture</i> . 3rd ed. New York: Hill and Wang. Chap. 3.

9	Li, Cheng. 2014. "China's Communist Party-State: The Structure and Dynamics of Power," in: William A. Joseph (ed.). <i>Politics in China: An Introduction</i> . Oxford: Oxford University Press.
10	Cook, Malcolm. 2015. "China's Power Status Change: East Asian Challenges for Xi Jinping's Foreign Policy," <i>China Quarterly of International Strategic Studies</i> , 1:1, pp. 105-131.
11	Zhang, Jian. 2015. "China's new foreign policy under Xi Jinping: towards 'Peaceful Rise 2.0?'," <i>Global Change, Peace &amp; Security</i> , 27:1, pp. 5-19,
12	Dillon, Michael. 2009. <i>Contemporary China - An Introduction</i> . Abingdon: Routledge. Part III: The Economy, pp. 21-56.
13	Starr, John Bryan. 2010. <i>Understanding China: A Guide to China's Economy, History, and Political Culture</i> . 3rd ed. New York: Hill and Wang. Chap. 5.
14	Kam Wing Chan. 2009. "The Chinese Hukou System at 50," in: <i>Eurasian Geography and Economics</i> , 50:2, pp. 197-221.
15	Wang, Xin-Rui, Eddie Chi-Man Hui, Charles Choguill, and Sheng-Hua Jia. 2015. "The new urbanization policy in China: Which way forward?" <i>Habitat International</i> , 47, pp. 279-284.
16	Zhang Xiaowei. 2008. "Family, Kinship, Marriage and Sexuality," in: Robert E. Gamer (ed.). <i>Understanding Contemporary China</i> . 3rd ed. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, pp. 299-322.
17	Goodman, David S. G. 2004. "Why Women Count: Chinese Women and the Leadership of Reform," in: Anne E. McLaren (ed.). <i>Chinese Women, Living, and Working</i> . London: Routledge, pp. 19-40.
18	Alpermann, Björn. 2010. "State and Society in China's Environmental Politics," in: Joel Jay Kassiola and Sujian Guo (eds.). <i>China's Environmental Crisis: Domestic and Global Political Impacts and Responses</i> . New York: Palgrave, pp. 123-151.
19	Liu, Jianguo and Peter H. Raven. 2010. "China's Environmental Challenges and Implications for the World," in: <i>Critical Reviews in Environmental Science and Technology</i> , 40, pp. 823-851.
20	Chan Hoiman and Ambrose Y.C. King. 2008. "Religion," in: Robert E. Gamer (ed.) <i>Understanding Contemporary China</i> . 3rd ed. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, pp. 357-395.
21	Madsen, Richard. 2010. "The Upsurge of Religion in China," in: <i>Journal of Democracy</i> , 21:4, pp. 58-71.
22	MacKinnon, Rebecca. 2011. "China's 'Networked Authoritarianism'" in: <i>Journal of Democracy</i> , 22:2, pp. 32-46.
23	Ngok, Kinglun and Joseph S. Y. Cheng. 2011. "Public Opinion on the Internet and Authoritarian Politics: The Chinese Authorities' Control of the Internet," in: Joseph S. Y. Cheng (ed.). <i>Whither China's Democracy? Democratization in China since the Tiananmen Incident</i> . Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong Press, pp. 177-213.

### Additional Readings

	Title
1	Bergsten, C. F. ed., 2008. <i>China's Rise: Challenges and Opportunities</i> . Washington: Center for Strategic and International Studies.
2	Cai, Y., 2010. <i>Collective Resistance in China: Why Popular Protests Succeed or Fail</i> . Stanford: Stanford University Press.
3	Dreyer, J. T., 2011. <i>China's Political System: Modernization and Tradition</i> . 8 ed. New York: Pearson Longman.
4	Duara, P., 2009. <i>The Global and Regional in China's Nation-Formation</i> . New York: Routledge.
5	Economy, E. 2010. <i>The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future</i> . 2Nd ed. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
6	Gaetano, A. M. & Jacka, T. eds., 2004. <i>On the move: women and rural-to-urban migration in contemporary China</i> . New York: Columbia University Press.
7	Hoffmann, J. & Enright, M. J. eds., 2008. <i>China into the future: making of the world's most dynamic economy</i> . Singapore: John Wiley & Sons (Asia).
8	Ho, P. & Edmonds, R. eds., 2009. <i>China's embedded activism: opportunities and constraints of a social movement</i> . New York: Routledge.

9	Heberer, T. & Schubert, G. eds., 2009. Regime Legitimacy in Contemporary China: Institutional Change and Stability. New York: Routledge.
10	Jensen, L. M. & Weston, T. B. eds., 2007. China's Transformations: The Stories beyond the Headlines. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
11	Laliberté, A. & Lanteigne, M. eds., 2008. The Chinese party-state in the 21st century: adaptation and the reinvention of legitimacy. New York: Routledge.
12	Landry, P. F., 2008. Decentralized authoritarianism in China: the Communist Party's Control of Local Elites in the Post-Mao Era. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
13	Li, Z. & Ong, A. eds., 2008. Privatizing China: Socialism from afar. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
14	Lowell, D. & Liu, G. eds., 2006. China's Deep Reform: Domestic Politics in Transition. Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
15	Lu, Xiaobo., 2000. Cadres and Corruption: the Organizational Involution of the Chinese Communist Party. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
16	Manion, M., 2004. Corruption by Design: Building Clean Government in Mainland China and Hong Kong. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
17	Merkel-Hess, K., Pomeranz, K. L. & Wasserstrom, J. N. eds., 2009. China in 2008: A Year of Great Significance. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
18	O' Brien, K. J. & Li, L., 2006. Rightful Resistance in Rural China. New York: Cambridge University Press.
19	Pei, M., 2006. China's Trapped Transition: The Limits of Developmental Autocracy. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
20	Saich, T., 2004. Governance and Politics of China. 2 ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
21	Shapiro, J., 2012. China's Environmental Challenges. Malden: Polity Press.
22	Shambaugh, D. 2009. China's Communist Party: Atrophy and Adaptation. Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press.
23	Solinger, D., 1999. Contesting Citizenship in Urban China: Peasant Migrants, the State, and the Logic of the Market. Berkeley: University of California Press.
24	Wu, G. & Lansdowne, H. eds., 2009. Socialist China, Capitalist China: Social Tension and Political Adaptation under Economic Globalization. New York: Routledge.
25	Yan, Y., 2009. The Good Samaritan's New Trouble: A Study of the Changing Moral Landscape in Contemporary China. <i>Social Anthropology</i> , 17(1), pp. 9-24.
26	Zhao, Q. & Liu, G. eds., 2009. Managing the China Challenge: Global Perspectives. New York : Routledge.
27	Zheng, Y. & Fewsmith, J. eds., 2008. China's Opening Society: the Non-state Sector and Governance. New York: Routledge.
28	Online resources will be specified for individual classes.