

# CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY

TERM: Fall 2022  
WEBSITE: [POLS 1350](#)  
TIME: T/Th 10:30-11:50am  
CLASSROOM: TBD  
TEACHING ASSTS: Max Foley-Keene

PROFESSOR: Tyler Jost  
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OFFICE HOURS: TBD

## COURSE SUMMARY

This undergraduate lecture examines the foreign policy of the People's Republic of China. It aims both to teach students theoretical perspectives on international relations and to critically evaluate whether these theories explain past and present Chinese foreign policy. What explains China's historical use of military force? Why did the alliance between China and the Soviet Union fall apart despite their institutional and ideological similarities? Has the personality of China's leaders or its domestic institutions affected its international behavior? Why is China modernizing its military and how concerned should we be? To what extent has the world changed China and to what extent does it seek to change the world?

## SHOULD I TAKE THIS COURSE? AND WHY?

While each student's experience is likely to differ, I believe there are two broad reasons to take this course. First, China's foreign relations are an increasingly critical component of global affairs. Various academics, policymakers, and pundits posit that the rise of China presents *the* defining challenge of international politics in the twenty-first century. This course will help you draw your own conclusions about the validity of these claims. While I predict that not everyone will arrive at the same answer, I do expect that everyone will develop historical and theoretical building blocks that will make their answers better informed.

The second reason is that studying international relations (IR) theory and country-specific foreign policies are often mutually reinforcing endeavors. Theoretical frameworks help us structure (nearly infinite) quantities of data and develop more stable expectations about politics. Thinking like a social scientist, we can leverage what scholars have learned in economics, sociology, psychology, or political science in order to better explain what happens in the international arena. However, studying the foreign policy decisions of a particular country, such as China, affords an opportunity to test the limits of these theoretical models. Thinking like a historian or regionalist, we can critically evaluate broad theoretical claims about why states do what they do based upon how well theories match empirical patterns. In short, I hope that students interested in *either* international politics generally or China specifically will gain something meaningful.

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The course is divided into two sections. In the first half, we'll (speedily) trace the history of Chinese foreign policy from 1949 to 2007. We'll ask why China allied with the Soviet Union and entered the Korean War, why it charted an independent course in the mid-1950s and eventually normalized relations with the United States. We'll then ask whether and how Chinese foreign policy changed during the 1980s and 1990s. In the second half, we'll examine Chinese foreign policy in the era after Deng Xiaoping, switching from a chronological to a thematic lens. Specifically, we'll examine five important facets of contemporary Chinese foreign policy: (1) military modernization; (2) state and society relations; (3) elite decision-making; (4) economic interdependence and global governance; and (5) international bargaining behavior.

Each week pairs one or two general readings on international relations theory with several applications to the case of China. The goal is to critically evaluate how well theoretical frameworks illuminate historical and contemporary events. Rather than covering all theoretical material at the onset, the course introduces some each week. The upside is that each discussion focuses on a few theoretical concepts in the context of a China-specific topic. *Please note that there are readings for the first week of class.*

This course is structured to be a *survey class*. There are no prerequisite requirements. Students without background in Chinese politics or international relations theory should not be discouraged from enrollment. Because the course is oriented toward broader historical and theoretical debates, it cannot cover the full range of particular issues involved in Chinese foreign policy (e.g. environmental policy, human rights, bilateral relations with North Korea, etc).

In the past, however, students have recommended that those with limited prior exposure to China might consult a general history prior to beginning the course. To that end, students may find it helpful to consult: (1) *The Search for Modern China*, especially Chapters 19 through 25; (2) *Making Modern China: From the Great Qing to Xi Jinping*, especially Chapters 7 through 12; (3) *Modern China: A Very Short Introduction*; or (4) *China: A Century of Revolution*, a PBS documentary available on YouTube. Similarly, students that have not taken a course in international relations theory may find it helpful to consult an introductory text, such as *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, Institutions* (4th edition).

## COURSE GOALS

The overall goal of this course is to help you develop informed opinions regarding the foreign policies China has and is pursuing. You should come away from this class with a better understanding of Chinese political history, theories of international politics, and the general value of social science in explaining world events.

## REQUIRED TEXTS

There are two required texts for the course: (1) *China's Quest: The History of the Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China* (\$34); (2) *Following the Leader: Ruling China, from Deng Xiaoping to Xi Jinping* (\$22). Both are available for purchase at the Brown bookstore. Copies of additional chapters and articles are provided on Canvas.

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Note that there are a few optional readings in Chinese for those who have the language skills to read them. **These readings are not required and will not be tested.** Please direct any questions about these readings to me, rather than the teaching assistants.

## COURSE EXPECTATIONS

This course will be taught using a traditional lecture format. Nevertheless, there are three things critical to your success in the course. First, you should invest time in engaging with the material prior to class. Second, you should engage with the material with a critical eye. On the one hand, assigned readings in this course represent the culmination of years of careful academic research by some of the leading scholars in the field. Try to remain open-minded and take what the author is saying seriously. On the other hand, the study of Chinese foreign policy is filled with contestation. Lectures will aim to bring out multiple sides of the debate and encourage you to start developing ideas about where you stand. Third, in-class discussion and debate requires that we be respectful of each other's opinions. That includes the instructor. If you ever feel that the classroom environment is problematic in any way, please contact me.

## TIME ALLOTMENT

You should expect to spend approximately: 6 hours per week (on average) reading and reviewing the material and 10-15 hours preparing for the mid-term and final exams.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND COLLABORATION

Plagiarism violates the academic policies of Brown University and the norms of the scholarly community. Consequences for plagiarism are often severe, and can include suspension or expulsion. Brown's [Academic Code](#) provides specific details regarding how to properly cite material. A general rule of thumb is, if you are in doubt, ask for clarification. If you are still in doubt, *include the citation*. Students may find additional support for the writing requirements in this course at the [Brown Writing Center](#). You are encouraged to discuss course material and assignments with classmates. This is critical to academic work. In the end, however, all assignments must be your own work. You should acknowledge assistance given by other students. For example, if a classmate provided comments on an earlier draft, simply include a footnote acknowledging the assistance (you will see this convention in nearly every assigned reading).

## ACCESSIBILITY

Brown University is committed to full inclusion of all students. Please inform me if you have a disability or other condition that might require accommodations or modification of any of these course procedures. You may speak with me after class or during office hours. For more information contact [Student and Employee Accessibility Services](#) (401-863-9588; SEAS@brown.edu).

Brown University welcomes students from around the country and the world, and the unique perspectives international and multilingual students bring enrich the campus community. To empower multilingual learners, an array of support is available including language and culture workshops and individual appointments. For more information about [English Language Learning](#) support at Brown, contact the ELL Specialists (ellwriting@brown.edu).

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## COURSE STRUCTURE

**15% Reflection Essay**

**35% Mid-Term Exam**

**40% Final Exam**

*Mid-Term Exam.* The mid-term exam will cover content from lessons 1-17. The exam will be 30% multiple choice and identification, 30% short answer, and 40% essay. The first two sections will focus on people and events. The third will focus on making connections between theory and empirics across the first half of the course. A set of potential essay questions will be circulated the week before the exam. The exam is open book and open note, but students must have produced referenced notes themselves. While group study is encouraged, you want to ensure that your short answers and essays are original. **No group study or collaboration is permitted once the exam has been posted.** The exam will be posted to Canvas on TBD and is due on TBD. Unless there are extraordinary circumstances, exams uploaded after the deadline will not be accepted.

*Final Exam.* The final exam will cover content from lessons 18-32. It does *not* include content from the first half of the course, although students are free to draw on it in their responses. The exam will be 30% multiple choice and identification, 30% short answer, and 40% essay. A set of potential essay questions will be circulated the week before the exam. The exam is open book and open note. Rules and guidance for the final exam are the same as the mid-term exam. The exam will be posted to Canvas on TBD and is due on TBD.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### Part I: History of Chinese Foreign Policy

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- Campbell, Kurt M., and Ely Ratner. "The China Reckoning: How Beijing Defied American Expectations." *Foreign Affairs* 97 (2018): 60.
- Cui Liru. "Managing Strategic Competition Between China and the US." *China US Focus* 10 (2016).

#### 2. THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

*Theoretical concepts: actors, preferences, and bargaining*

- Frieden, Jeffrey A., and David A. Lake. *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, Institutions*. Third Edition. W.W. Norton & Company, 2015. pp. 42-87.
- (Optional) Qin Yaqing. "Why Is There No Chinese International Relations Theory?" *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 7.3 (2007): 313-340.

#### 3. THE POLITICS OF AUTHORITARIAN RULE

*Theoretical concepts: domestic institutions*

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- Geddes, Barbara, et al. *How Dictatorships Work: Power, Personalization, and Collapse*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018. pp. 1-24.
  - Joseph, William A., ed. *Politics in China: An Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. pp. 3-44.

#### 4. FOREIGN POLICY AT THE NATIONAL FOUNDING

*Theoretical concepts: alignment*

- Garver, John W. *China's Quest: The History of the Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. pp. 29-58.
- (Optional) Niu Jun. *From Yan'an to the World: The Origin and Development of Chinese Communist Foreign Policy*. Norwalk: Eastbridge Books, 2004. pp. 316-343.

#### 5. THE KOREAN WAR

*Theoretical concepts: interstate war*

- Fearon, James D. "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization* 49.3 (1995): 379-414.
- Garver, John W. *China's Quest: The History of the Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. pp. 59-91.

#### 6. THE SINO-SOVIET SPLIT I

*Theoretical concepts: ideology*

- Miller, Manjari Chatterjee. *Wronged by Empire: Post-Imperial Ideology and Foreign Policy in India and China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013. pp. 7-34.
- Lüthi, Lorenz M. *The Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010. pp. 46-156.

#### 7. THE SINO-SOVIET SPLIT II

*Theoretical concepts: international status*

- Christensen, Thomas J. *Worse than a Monolith: Alliance Politics and Problems of Coercive Diplomacy in Asia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011. pp. 1-27 and 146-180.
- (Optional) Shen Zhihua, and Xia Yafeng. "The Great Leap Forward, The People's Commune and the Sino-Soviet Split." *Journal of Contemporary China* 20.72 (2011): 861-880.

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## 8. THE TAIWAN STRAIT CRISES

*Theoretical concepts: political accountability*

- Chen Jian. *Mao's China and the Cold War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010. pp. 163-204.
- (Optional) Wu Lengxi, "Inside Story of the Decision Making during the Shelling of Jinmen." English translation from *Wilson Center Digital Archive*. For original, see: 吴冷西. 《十年论战: 1956-1966中苏关系回忆录》北京: 中央文献出版社, 1999.

## 9. REVOLUTION ABROAD

*Theoretical concepts: regime change*

- Owen, John M. *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change, 1510-2010*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010. pp. 1-30.
- Garver, John W. *China's Quest: The History of the Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. pp. 196-231.
- (Optional) 李丹慧. "中苏关系与中国的援越抗美." 《当代中国史研究》3 (1998): 114-129.

## 10. REVOLUTION AT HOME

*Theoretical concepts: experience*

- Horowitz, Michael C., Allan C. Stam, and Cali M. Ellis. *Why Leaders Fight*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. pp. 1-24.
- Garver, John W. *China's Quest: The History of the Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. pp. 259-285.
- (Optional) 张清敏. "领导人人格特点与中国外交研究." 《世界经济与政治》6 (2014).

## 11. DIPLOMATIC NORMALIZATION

*Theoretical concepts: international threat*

- Walt, Stephen M. *The Origins of Alliances*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987. pp. 17-49.
- Garver, John W. *China's Quest: The History of the Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. pp. 286-348.
- (Optional) Yang Kuisong and Xia Yafeng. "Vacillating between Revolution and Détente: Mao's Changing Psyche and Policy toward the United States, 1969-1976." *Diplomatic History* 34.2 (2010): 395-423.

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## 12. OPENING AND REFORM I

*Theoretical concepts: political performance*

- Shirk, Susan L. *The Political Logic of Economic Reform in China*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993. pp. 3-22.
- Garver, John W. *China's Quest: The History of the Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. pp. 349-382.

## 13. OPENING AND REFORM II

*Theoretical concepts: leaders*

- Vogel, Ezra F. *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011. pp. 1-14.
- Garver, John W. *China's Quest: The History of the Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. pp. 401-427.
- (Optional) 李海文. “华国锋谈史传写作.” 《炎黄春秋》 4 (2015).

## 14. OPENING AND REFORM III

*Theoretical concepts: socialization*

- Johnston, Alastair Iain. *Social States: China in International Institutions, 1980-2000*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014. pp. 1-40.
- Garver, John W. *China's Quest: The History of the Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. pp. 428-461.

## 15. TIANANMEN AND THE FALL OF THE SOVIET UNION

*Theoretical concepts: domestic political survival*

- Svolik, Milan W. *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012. pp. 1-18.
- Sarotte, Mary Elise. “China's Fear of Contagion: Tiananmen Square and the Power of the European Example.” *International Security* 37.2 (2012): 156-182.

## 16. THE TAIWAN CRISIS

*Theoretical concepts: the balance of military power*

- Heginbotham, Eric, et al. *The US-China Military Scorecard: Forces, Geography, and the Evolving Balance of Power, 1996-2017*. Rand Corporation, 2015. pp. 26-28 and 75-87.
- Garver, John W. *China's Quest: The History of the Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. pp. 607-633.

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## 17. THE UNIPOLAR ERA

*Theoretical concepts: international order*

- Johnston, Alastair Iain. "Is China a Status Quo Power?" *International Security* 27.4 (2003): 5-56.
- Garver, John W. *China's Quest: The History of the Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. pp. 634-673.

### *Mid-Term Exam - TBD*

## **Part II: Contemporary Chinese Foreign Policy**

### 18. CHANGE AND CONTINUITY IN GRAND STRATEGY

*Theoretical concepts: grand strategy*

- Goldstein, Avery. "China's Grand Strategy under Xi Jinping: Reassurance, Reform, and Resistance." *International Security* 45.1 (2020): 164-201.
- Weiss, Jessica Chen. "A World Safe for Autocracy: China's Rise and the Future of Global Politics." *Foreign Affairs*. 98 (2019): 92.

### 19. STATE AND SOCIETY I

*Theoretical concepts: domestic audiences and nationalism*

- Weiss, Jessica Chen, and Allan Dafoe. "Authoritarian Audiences, Rhetoric, and Propaganda in International Crises: Evidence from China." *International Studies Quarterly* 63.4 (2019): 963-973.

### 20. STATE AND SOCIETY II

*Theoretical concepts: censorship and repression*

- Roberts, Margaret E. *Censored: Distraction and Diversion Inside China's Great Firewall*. Princeton University Press, 2018. pp. 1-20.
- Greitens, Sheena Chestnut, Myunghee Lee, and Emir Yazici. "Understanding China's 'Preventive Repression' in Xinjiang." *Lawfare*. March 2020.

### 21. ELITE DECISION-MAKING

*Theoretical concepts: personalism and monitoring*

- Jost, Tyler. "The Institutional Origins of Miscalculation in Chinese Foreign Policy." Working paper.
- Economy, Elizabeth. "China's New Revolution: The Reign of Xi Jinping," *Foreign Affairs*, 2018.
- (Optional) 宫力, 门洪华, 孙东方. "中国外交决策机制变迁研究(1949-2009年)." 《世界经济与政治》11 (2009): 44-54.



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## 22. MILITARY MODERNIZATION

*Theoretical concepts: commitment problems*

- Powell, Robert. *In the Shadow of Power: States and Strategies in International Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999. pp. 3-22.
- Department of Defense. *Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China*. 2020. (skim)

## 23. COERCIVE DIPLOMACY

*Theoretical concepts: coercion*

- Wong, Audrye. "Reaping What You Sow: Public Accountability and the Effectiveness of China's Economic Statecraft." Working Paper. (2019).
- (Optional) Zhang, Ketian. "Cautious Bully: Reputation, Resolve, and Beijing's Use of Coercion in the South China Sea." *International Security* (2019).

## 24. MILITARY CONFLICT

*Theoretical concepts: miscalculation*

- Cunningham, Fiona S., and M. Taylor Fravel. "Dangerous Confidence? Chinese Views on Nuclear Escalation." *International Security* 44.2 (2019): 61-109.

## 25. INTERNATIONAL TRADE I

*Theoretical concepts: comparative advantage*

- Naughton, Barry J. *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth*. Second edition. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2018. pp. 397-422.
- Tan, Yeling. "How the WTO Changed China," *Foreign Affairs*. March/April 2021.

## 26. INTERNATIONAL TRADE II

*Theoretical concepts: globalization*

- Autor, David H., David Dorn, and Gordon H. Hanson. "The China Shock: Learning from Labor-Market Adjustment to Large Changes in Trade." *Annual Review of Economics* 8 (2016): 205-240.
- (Optional) Zhang, Xiaowen, and Xiaoling Li. "The Politics of Compliance with Adverse WTO Dispute Settlement Rulings in China." *Journal of Contemporary China* 23.85 (2014): 143-160.

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## 27. INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

*Theoretical concepts: dependency*

- Dreher, Axel, et al. "Aid, China, and Growth: Evidence from a New Global Development Finance Dataset." *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* (forthcoming).
- (Optional) Ye, Min. "Fragmentation and Mobilization: Domestic Politics of the Belt and Road in China." *Journal of Contemporary China* 28.119 (2019): 696-711.

## 28. INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS I

*Theoretical concepts: sovereignty*

- Fung, Courtney J. *China and Intervention at the UN Security Council: Reconciling Status*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. pp. 1-28.
- (Optional) Carrai, Maria Adele. *Sovereignty in China: A Genealogy of a Concept since 1840*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019. pp. 1-17.

## 29. INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS II

*Theoretical concepts: hold-up problems*

- Kastner, Scott L., Margaret M. Pearson, and Chad Rector. "Invest, Hold Up, or Accept? China in Multilateral Governance." *Security Studies* 25(1).
- (Optional) Guo Ji, "The Profound Institutional Crisis of the West." *Qiushi* 3(4), 2011.

## 30. INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS III

*Theoretical concepts: institutional reform*

- Goddard, Stacie E. "Embedded Revisionism: Networks, Institutions, and Challenges to World Order." *International Organization* 72.4 (2018): 763-97.
- Johnston, Alastair Iain. "China in a World of Orders: Rethinking Compliance and Challenge in Beijing's International Relations." *International Security* 44.2 (2019): 9-60.

## 31. CLASS SUMMARY

- Wang Jisi and Hu Ran. "From Cooperative Partnership to Strategic Competition: A Review of China-US Relations 2009-2019." *China International Strategy Review* 1.1 (2019): 1-10.

***Final Exam - TBD***