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PUB AFFR 974: China's Policymaking and Global Influence

Spring 2022

La Follette School of Public Affairs
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Course information:

Lecture time: Thu 3:30 pm – 5:25 pm

Lecture location: SOC SCI 4308

Instructional mode: In-Person

Number of credits: 3 credits

Prerequisite: Sophomore Status

Course designations: Graduate Attribute

Instructor: [Zhenhuan \(Reed\) Lei](#)
Email: zhenhuan.lei@wisc.edu

Office: 322D North Hall

Office hours: Thu 1:30-3:00 PM and Fri 3:00-4:30 PM

Please sign up for the office hours [here](#)

(Use your *UW-Madison NetID* to access this Google spreadsheet)

Other logistic issues:

- I will upload lecture slides and required readings, which you should not use for purposes beyond this class or share with others, to the Box folder [here](#).
- The best way to contact me is through email. I will respond within one business day.
- Considering the impact of the COVID-19 and its recent variants, I will allow both in-person or virtual options for my office hours. You can indicate your preferred mode of meeting on the webpage [here](#) (use your UW-Madison NetID) to make the appointment with me. If none of those time slots work for you, please send an email to me and propose three time slots that work for you.
- You must show up in person for all class meetings as required by the university (as of January 18, 2022 when I prepare this syllabus). Please consult the university policy on COVID-19 [here](#).

Course description: The course discusses two major themes related to China: (1) the policymaking process of the Chinese government and the major policy challenges of China (e.g., environmental protection, public health, sustainable economic development among many others), and (2) the economic and political impact of the Chinese politics, including the US-China trade war, the impact of China's trade on other countries' political economic landscape, and China's role in international organizations. We will read and discuss recent academic research published in top economics and political science journals about these two

themes in our class.

Learning objectives:

- Develop an understanding of major political institutions and governance challenges of China today.
- Evaluate evidence for China's policy-making and global influence, and develop the ability to analyze other policy changes.
- Communicate effectively through written reports and discussion.
- (Ph.D. students only) Assess the state of a body of scholarly literature related to course themes, identify gaps in that literature, and formulate an original research question in the context of those gaps.

How Credit Hours are Met by the Course: This is a three-credit course. Students are required to attend regular course meetings (a 115-minute class periods per week). It also presumes reading, writing, written exercises, study and review, and other responsibilities as described in this document.

Regular and Substantive Interaction. Several learning activities ensure that students have regular and substantive interactions with the instructor.

- Students participate in regularly scheduled learning sessions once a week (where there is an opportunity for direct interaction between the student and the instructor) and can come to office hours held by the instructor.
- The instructor will provide written and/or oral comments for an individual student's exam and term paper.
- Instructor posts announcements and email check-ins about academic aspects of the class.
- Identify students struggling to reach mastery through observation of discussion activity and assessment completion, and offer additional opportunities for interaction.

Course Requirements

Master students: Graduate students who are pursuing a Master's degree (e.g., MPA or MIPA) are expected to regularly show up in classes, take a mid-term exam, and produce a term paper.

- Participation (20%). You have to show up in all lectures (10 points). For each missing lecture (including leaving the class earlier), you lose one point until all ten points are used up. Absences for religious or university-sponsored activity will be accommodated, but must be cleared with the instructor in advance. You are also encouraged to participate in the course actively through in-class discussion and after-class office hours (10 points).
- Midterm Exam (40%). This is an **open-book, one-hour** exam. This midterm exam

covers all the materials before the spring break. The exam will take place in the class on **March 24, 2022**.

- Term Paper (40%). The student is required to produce a term paper that analyzes a political reform or policy change taking place in any part of the world (preferably, for the sake of this course, China) and at any time.¹ The only exception is that you cannot write about a reform covered in this course. A high-quality term paper should (1) provide necessary background information for readers to understand the key issues at stake for the reform, (2) pinpoint the major obstacles to the reform, (3) summarize the existing explanations for why the reform succeeded (or failed) and (4) offer your analysis (which can be one of the existing explanations) with proper evidence. The length of your term paper should be **no longer than 20 double-spaced pages (everything included)**. The appendix to this syllabus contains a detailed description of these requirements. If you intend to develop the term paper into an undergraduate thesis, you are allowed to go over 20 pages. However, you must talk to the instructor in advance and obtain his permission. The term paper is due on **May 8, 2022 at 11:59 pm**.

Ph.D. students: Ph.D. students will actively participate in the seminar, write two reflection papers, and complete a term paper.

- Participation (20%). You have to show up in all lectures (10 points). For each missing lecture (including leaving the class earlier), you lose one point until all ten points are used up. Absences for religious or university-sponsored activity will be accommodated, but must be cleared with the instructor in advance. You are also encouraged to participate in the course actively through in-class discussion and after-class office hours (10 points).
- Reflection papers (30%). The student will select two weeks to produce a reflection paper. The reflection paper should summarize the student's understanding of the following questions based on that week's readings (and optional readings if possible): (1) What are the major questions that scholars care about in this subfield? (2) What do we know about these questions? (3) Which parts of these questions do we still lack a systematic understanding? (4) Is there anything (e.g., critical players, important assumptions, scope conditions, etc.) missed by the required reading materials? (5) What can you do to improve the current literature assuming that you have the funding to implement a research project on this area? The reflection paper is due on the Wednesday at noon before that week's the class. The reflection paper should not go beyond five pages.
- Final project (50%). Students enrolled in this course have two options for the final project. The final project is due on **May 8, 2022 at 11:59 pm**. The student is encouraged to discuss the topic with the instructor before s/he starts writing.

¹If you wish to write a term paper on political reform in China – which is, again, not required – you may consider writing about why the reforms of Shang Yang, Wang Anshi, Zhang Juzheng, Emperor Guangxu, Li Hongzhang succeeded or failed. You may also consider writing about Chinese government's reform in any specific field today (e.g., reforming China's educational system, financial system, fiscal system, etc.).

- Term paper. The term paper should analyze a question related to the theme of this class (but does not have to use China as the empirical setting). It should clearly identify a question, motivate why the question is important, summarize how this analysis contributes to a deeper understanding of this question, utilize appropriate data and methods, and interpret the results. The paper cannot exceed 35 pages (double-spaced, everything other than the Appendix is included). The style requirement is the same as that adopted by the *Journal of Politics*.
- Research proposal. First-year or second-year Ph.D. students and others who are concurrently taking many other courses and completing the methodological training have the option of submitting a research proposal in lieu of a term paper. The research proposal should clearly identify a question, motivate why the question is important, develop theoretical arguments for the hypotheses, and summarize the research’s contribution to the literature. Whenever possible, the proposal should also demonstrate the plausibility of the plan by pinpointing the data sources and performing preliminary analysis usually based on existing data. The proposal cannot exceed 25 pages (double-spaced, everything other than the Appendix is included). The style requirement is the same as that adopted by the *Journal of Politics*.

The grading scale is as follows, including the overall points as well as the University of Wisconsin’s range for letter grades:

Point Range	Letter Grade	GPA
90–100 points	A (Excellent)	4.0
85–89.99 points	AB (Intermediate grade)	3.5
80–84.99 points	B (Good)	3.0
75–79.99 points	BC (Intermediate grade)	2.5
70–74.99 points	C (Fair)	2.0
60–69.99 points	D (Poor)	1.0
59.99–0 points	F (Failure)	0.0

Disputes. I occasionally make mistakes or otherwise misinterpret answers. If you believe that your grade is incorrect as a result of an error, please submit a request for a grade change *in writing* to me within 48 hours of receiving the grade. This document should be a stand-alone document such as a .pdf (i.e. not an email). In the appeal, please clearly and concisely explain why the grade is incorrect, based on the merit of the work rather than comparisons to other students or various adverse consequences (i.e. I need a better grade to get into law school). Please note that re-grading may result in an increase *or* a decrease in the initial grade.

Make-up Exam. Attendance at exams is a special category. I take missed exams very seriously, as they provide you an unfair advantage over your classmates in the form of additional time to study. This is why, *if you miss an exam, you must provide within one week a written, valid excuse, such as a doctor’s note.* Unexcused exam absences will result

in a 10 point reduction off the top of your make-up exam grade. For example, if you miss an exam without an excuse, and then score perfectly on the make-up exam (40/40), your actual grade on the exam will be 30/40. If you have not communicated with the instructor within one week from the date of the exam, a make-up exam is no longer an option.

Classroom Policies

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty. By virtue of enrollment, each student agrees to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin-Madison; academic misconduct is behavior that negatively impacts the integrity of the institution. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these previously listed acts are examples of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action. Examples of disciplinary action include, but is not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion. To understand more about plagiarism and proper attribution of sources, please consult the [Writing Center](#).

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities. The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform [McBurney Disability Resource Center](#) and faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. I am more than happy to accommodate needs, but it is your responsibility to complete this process officially and in a timely manner, within three weeks of course inception (or upon the recognition of a disability).

Diversity and Inclusion. Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world. For more information, please visit: <https://diversity.wisc.edu/>.

Academic Calendar & Religious Observances. Please find the relevant information [here](#).

COVID-19. Please consult <https://covidresponse.wisc.edu> for the university policy.

Course Schedule

Instructions:

- There is no textbook for this course. All reading materials can be accessed through the library or will be provided by the instructor.
- Required readings are indicated with a [•] symbol. Optional readings, which are not required in any way, are marked with a [-] symbol.
- Ph.D. students, however, should aim for reading all materials. They should pay close attention to those readings indicated by [•] symbols and skim through the papers marked by a [-] symbol.
- I draw on the reading materials from the most cutting-edge research in political science and economics on the political system of China. As a result, a good portion of the readings may seem too technical. The goal of reading (at least for the purpose of this course) is not to fully appreciate or critique the technical part of the paper or book chapter. **You should aim for understanding the *logic* of reading materials. Feel free to jump through the “technical” part of the reading.** I will further elaborate on the analytical part of reading materials in class. Hence, you should read at least the abstract, introduction, background, and conclusion sections of a paper.
- When you read a paper, find the answer for the following questions:
 - What is the question that this study answers?
 - Why is this question important?
 - What is the answer offered by the author(s)?
 - What is the theoretical logic of this answer?
 - Is there any evidence provided by the author(s) to support this answer?
 - (Ph.D. students only) Can you find any internal inconsistency in author(s)’ theoretical arguments? Are there any critical assumptions in the theory that the author(s) did not examine or may not be true in the real world? Methodologically, is there any major problems that may overturn the results? Would the results be different if we perform the same analysis in other countries? Is there anything that the author(s) did not examine in the paper? Can you create a research design to further investigate such questions?

I. INTRODUCTION

January 27: **Getting China Right**

- Opening remarks of the “2+2” U.S.-China Summit in Alaska on March 18, 2021 [[video](#), [transcript](#)]
- Optional: Brzezinski, Zbigniew, and Samuel P. Huntington. 1965. *Political Power: USA/USSR*. New York: The Viking Press. (Read the Introduction Chapter)

II. POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND POLICY PROCESSES

February 3: **Party**

- Congressional Research Service. 2021. *China's Political System in Charts: A Snapshot Before the 20th Party Congress*.
- Fisman, Raymond, Jing Shi, Yongxiang Wang, and Weixing Wu. 2020. "Social Ties and the Selection of China's Political Elite." *American Economic Review*, 110(6): 1752-1781.
- Lu, Fengming, and Xiao Ma. 2019. "Is Any Publicity Good Publicity? Media Coverage, Party Institutions, and Authoritarian Power-Sharing." *Political Communication*, 36(1): 64-82.

February 10: **Government I: Leadership**

- Landry, Pierre F., Xiaobo Lü, and Haiyan Duan. 2018. "Does Performance Matter? Evaluating Political Selection Along the Chinese Administrative Ladder." *Comparative Political Studies*, 51(8): 1074 –1105.
- Lei, Zhenhuan, and Junlong Zhou. 2022. "Private Returns to Public Investment: Political Career Incentives and Infrastructure Investment in China." *The Journal of Politics*, 84(1): 455-469.
- Jiang, Junyan. 2018. "Making Bureaucracy Work: Patronage Networks, Performance Incentives, and Economic Development in China." *American Journal of Political Science*, 62(4): 982-999.
- Lee, Don S., and Paul Schuler. 2020. "Testing the "China Model" of Meritocratic Promotions: Do Democracies Reward Less Competent Ministers Than Autocracies?" *Comparative Political Studies*, 53(3-4): 531-566.

February 17: **Government II: Grassroots Bureaucracy**

- Mattingly, Daniel C. 2020. "Responsive or Repressive? How Frontline Bureaucrats Enforce the One Child Policy in China." *Comparative Politics*, 52(2): 269-288.
- He, Guojun, and Shaoda Wang. 2017. "Do College Graduates Serving as Village Officials Help Rural China?" *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 9(4): 186-215.
- Distelhorst, Greg, and Yue Hou. 2017. "Constituency Service under Nondemocratic Rule: Evidence from China." *The Journal of Politics*, 79(3): 1024-1040.
- Koehler, Ekkehard A. and Matsusaka, John G. and Wu, Yanhui. 2021. "Street-Level Responsiveness of City Governments in China, Germany, and the United States." Working Paper.

February 24: **Legislature**

- Truex, Rory. 2020. “[Authoritarian Gridlock? Understanding Delay in the Chinese Legislative System.](#)” *Comparative Political Studies*, 53(9): 1455-1492.
- Truex, Rory. 2016. *Making Autocracy Work: Representation and Responsiveness in Modern China*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. (Read Chapters 1 and 2)
- Hou, Yue. 2019. *The Private Sector in Public Office: Selective Property Rights in China*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. (Read Chapters 1 and 2)

III. (SOME) GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES

March 3: **Economic Growth**

- Ang, Yuen Yuen. 2016. *How China Escaped the Poverty Trap*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. (Read Chapters 1 and 2)
- Xu, Chenggang. 2011. “[The Fundamental Institutions of China’s Reforms and Development.](#)” *Journal of Economic Literature*, 49(4): 1076-1151. (Read Sections 1-3; other sections are recommended.)
- Zilibotti, Fabrizio. 2017. “[Growing and Slowing Down Like China.](#)” *Journal of European Economic Association*, 15(5): 943-988.
- Naughton, Barry. 2017. “[Is China Socialist?](#)” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 31(1): 3–24.

March 10: **Corruption**

- Chen, Ting, and James Kai-Sing Kung. 2019. “[Busting the ‘Princelings’: The Campaign Against Corruption in China’s Primary Land Market.](#)” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 134(1): 185–226.
- Ang, Yuen Yuen. 2020. *China’s Gilded Age: The Paradox of Economic Boom and Vast Corruption*. Cambridge University Press. (Read Chapters 1, 4, 5, and 6)
- Jia, Ruixue, and Huihua Nie. 2017. “[Decentralization, Collusion, and Coal Mine Deaths.](#)” *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, 99(1): 105-118.

March 17: SPRING RECESS

March 24: **Midterm Exam**

March 31: **Propaganda and the Trust in Government**

- Huang, Haifeng. 2018. “[The Pathology of Hard Propaganda.](#)” *Journal of Politics*, 80(3): 1034-1038.
- Whiting, Susan. 2017. “[Authoritarian ‘Rule of Law’ and Regime Legitimacy.](#)” *Comparative Political Studies*, 50(14): 1907–1940.

- Wu, Cary, Zhilei Shi, Rima Wilkes, Jiaji Wu, Zhiwen Gong, Nengkun He, Zang Xiao, Xiaojun Zhang, Weijun Lai, Dongxia Zhou, Feng Zhao, Xiufang Yin, Ping Xiong, Hao Zhou, Qinghua Chu, Libin Cao, Ruijing Tian, Yu Tan, Liyong Yang, Zexuan He, Malcolm Fairbrother, Jan Mews, and Giuseppe Nicola Giordano. 2021. “[Chinese Citizen Satisfaction with Government Performance during COVID-19.](#)” *Journal of Contemporary China*, 132: 930–944.
- King, Gary, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E. Roberts. 2017. “[How the Chinese Government Fabricates Social Media Posts for Strategic Distraction, Not Engaged Argument.](#)” *American Political Science Review*, 111(3): 484-501.

April 7: **Censorship**

- Qin, Bei, David Strömberg, and Yanhui Wu. 2017. “[Why Does China Allow Freer Social Media? Protests versus Surveillance and Propaganda.](#)” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 31(1): 117-140.
- King, Gary, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E. Roberts. 2013. “[How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expressions.](#)” *American Political Science Review*, 107(2): 326-343.
- Chen, Yuyu, and David Y. Yang. 2019. “[The Impact of Media Censorship: 1984 or Brave New World?](#)” *American Economic Review*, 109(6): 2294-2332.
- Huang, Haifeng. 2015. “[International Knowledge and Domestic Evaluations in a Changing Society: The Case of China.](#)” *American Political Science Review*, 109(3): 613-634.

IV. CHINA’S GLOBAL INFLUENCE

April 14: **Foreign Aid: Determinants and Economic Consequences**

- Dreher, Axel, Andreas Fuchs, Brad Parks, Austin M Strange, and Michael J Tierney. 2017. “[Apples and Dragon Fruits: The Determinants of Aid and Other Forms of State Financing from China to Africa.](#)” *International Studies Quarterly*, 62(1): 182–194.
- Broz, J. Lawrence, Zhiwen Zhang and Gaoyang Wang. 2020. “[Explaining Foreign Support for China’s Global Economic Leadership.](#)” *International Organization*, 74 (3): 417 - 452.
- Dreher, Axel, Andreas Fuchs, Bradley Parks, Austin Strange, and Michael J. Tierney. 2021. “[Aid, China, and Growth: Evidence from a New Global Development Finance Dataset.](#)” *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, 13 (2): 135-74.
- Isaksson, Ann-Sofie, and Andreas Kotsadam. 2018. “[Chinese Aid and Local Corruption.](#)” *Journal of Public Economics*, 159: 146-159.

April 21: **The Political Consequences of China’s Economic Influence**

- Blair, Robert A., and Philip Roessler. 2021. “Foreign Aid and State Legitimacy: Evidence on Chinese and US Aid to Africa from Surveys, Survey Experiments, and Behavioral Games.” *World Politics*, 73 (2): 315 - 357.
- Eichenauer, Vera Z., Andreas Fuchs, Lutz Brückner. 2021. “The Effects of Trade, Aid, and Investment on China’s Image in Latin America.” *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 49(2): 483-498.
- Autor, David, David Dorn, Gordon Hanson, and Kaveh Majlesi. 2020. “Importing Political Polarization? The Electoral Consequences of Rising Trade Exposure.” *American Economic Review*, 110 (10): 3139-83.
- Colantone, Italo, and Piero Stanig. 2018. “Global Competition and Brexit.” *American Political Science Review*, 112 (2): 201-218.

April 28: **Reacting to China’s Influence**

- Chyzh, Olga V., and Robert Urbatsch. 2021. “Bean Counters: The Effect of Soy Tariffs on Change in Republican Vote Share between the 2016 and 2018 Elections.” *The Journal of Politics*, 83(1): 415-419.
- Kim, Sung Eun, and Yotam Margalit. 2021. “Tariffs As Electoral Weapons: The Political Geography of the US–China Trade War.” *International Organization*, 75(1): 1-38.
- Margalit, Yotam. 2011. “Costly Jobs: Trade-related Layoffs, Government Compensation, and Voting in U.S. Elections.” *American Political Science Review*, 105(1): 166-188.

May 5: **Rethinking the “China Model” and the US-China Competition**

- Piketty, Thomas, Li Yang, and Gabriel Zucman. 2019. “Capital Accumulation, Private Property, and Rising Inequality in China, 1978–2015.” *American Economic Review*, 109 (7): 2469-96.

Appendix: Term Paper Preparation Guide

Your term paper is worth 40 points. You will analyze a political reform (preferably, for the sake of this course, in China) that takes place in any part of the world and at any time. You should only focus on one specific reform in your paper. I will grade the term paper based on the extent to which you have successfully achieved the following goals:

- **Provide enough background information** (10 points). Please provide the background information relevant to your case. You should assume that the reader knows nothing about the specific setting that you are analyzing. You will lose points if your paper does not provide enough background information for the reader to understand what is going on. You do not have to write anything irrelevant to your specific research question. For instance, when you analyze a specific foreign policy reform in the United States, there is no need to write a section on American history. But you do want to provide background information about this specific foreign policy problem.
- **Pinpoint the major problem** (5 points). In this part, you should answer the following questions – what was the purpose of the reform? What kind of challenges did the leader face to implement the reform? What made it so difficult? For instance, if you are analyzing Deng Xiaoping’s economic reform in the 1980s, you should tell us what difficulty Deng faced in the wake of the reform. The difficulty for him to reform China’s centrally planned economy (among many other things) is that he will need to persuade the ruling elites to support his reform agenda, while transform the planned economy that many “old guards” in the Party were eager to defend.
- **Existing explanations** (10 points). Summarize the existing explanations for why this reform has failed (or succeeded). This requires you to do some research on the existing literature. Please properly cite others’ work. The style of citation does not matter. What matters is that you cite accurately and people can use your citations to find the paper.
- **Analysis** (15 points). What is your explanation for the failure or success of this reform? Provide theoretical reasoning to support your and use empirical evidence to support your argument. This part will be graded based on how persuasive your argument is and how convincing your evidence is. Your empirical analysis of evidence can be either quantitative (e.g., regression analysis) or qualitative (e.g., case studies). Among the 15 points in total, 5 points will be based on the merit of your argument, 5 points will go to the quality of your evidence, and the remaining 5 points will be based on your analysis of evidence.

Other Requirements:

- Your paper cannot exceed 20 pages in total (everything included – bibliography, tables, appendix, etc.) unless you obtain exception from the instructor. For each additional page beyond the 20th page, you lose 1 point until all 30 points are lost.
- Please use double space and 12 points. Your margins should be 1 inch (which is, in most cases, the standard setting in Microsoft Word or Latex).

- Please write down your name on the first page, otherwise you will lose 2 points (a cost you pay for our time to search for your name through other methods).
- Late submission: This assignment is due at the final class. For every minute late, you lose 0.5 point until it uses up all 30 points.