

AIU Spring Semester 2009

Instructor: Dr W Lam

PLS370 Chinese Politics, Thought and Law

/ PLS360 Modern Chinese Politics and Thought

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the exciting world of Chinese politics, thought, law, as well as economic and social developments. While the entire post-1949 period will be examined, focus will be put on the “new thinking” after late patriarch Deng Xiaoping inaugurated the reform era in late 1978. The thoughts and policies of leaders including Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, Hu Yaobang, Zhao Ziyang, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao will be analyzed. Students will be invited to discuss the achievements and failings of major policies in the 30 years of reform (from 1979/80 to 2008/09). Evaluations will be made of the viability of the so-called “China model” in this age of intensifying globalization. This course will equip students with useful information and conceptual tools for further research on China and East Asia in the fields of politics, law, economics and business.

DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE

Session 1. Introduction of the topic and relevant teaching materials, reference books and articles. China’s modernization in the context of Asian modernization. The importance of studying the modern Chinese leadership’s views on politics, law, as well as economic and social development. Brief comparisons between the experience of Chinese and Japanese modernization. Reasons behind the victory of the Chinese Communist Party in the 1940s.

Sessions 2 & 3. An introduction of the seminal political thoughts and policies of Chinese Communist Party leaders ranging from Mao Zedong to the current leaders including Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao. The significance of the ideas and statecraft of prominent leaders including Deng Xiaoping, Hu Yaobang, Zhao Ziyang and Jiang Zemin will be discussed.

Session 4. Discussion of samples of the seminal speeches and writings of top leaders including Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao.

Session 5. Unique characteristics of Chinese political institutions: the Chinese Communist Party, the State Council, the National People's Congress and the People's Liberation Army. The party's domination over most aspects of political life. Basic drifts of security and foreign policies.

Sessions 6/7. Major ideas about economic and political reform since Deng Xiaoping unveiled the era of reform and the open door in 1978. The idea of a "socialist market economy with Chinese characteristics." Reasons behind China's accession to the World Trade Organization. Reasons behind the failure of "Western-style reforms" under late party chiefs Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang (through the 1980s). The stagnation of political reform since the Tiananmen Square crackdown of 1989.

Sessions 8/9. Legal modernization from the Cultural Revolution (1966-76) to the turn of the century. The characteristics of the Chinese Constitution. Chinese concept of "rule by law" and "administering the country according to law." The unique traits of the Chinese legal and judicial systems. The party's domination over the courts and the procuratorate (prosecutor's offices).

Session 10. Focus on the current administration under President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao. Ideas behind the "scientific theory of development" and other policies initiated by the Hu-Wen leadership. Economic and institutional reforms introduced from 2002 to 2009.

Session 11. Major thought currents among intellectuals and members of the ruling elite. The roles of nationalism and globalization. China's interaction with the world: the impact of the Internet age. The "clash of civilizations" and contemporary China's contribution to the world in terms of ideas and political culture.

Sessions 12/13. Evaluation of the "China model" as licked together through 30 years of reform (1978-2008). Projection of the development of Chinese politics, law and thought into the first few decades of the 21st century. Revision of salient points covered by the course.

ASSESSMENT

50% class participation & mid-term essay

50% final exam

Course Textbooks/Reference Materials

Chapters and materials from the following texts will be prescribed for reading/reference. The instructor will also provide supplementary class notes.

John Fairbank & Albert Feuerwerker ed. **The Cambridge History of China, Vol 12 & Vol 13** (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge, 1978)

Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: W W Norton, 2001)

Orville Schell & David Shambaugh, ed. *The China Reader* (New York: Vintage, 1998)

Tu Wei-ming, ed. *China in Transformation* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1994)

John K. Fairbank, *The United States and China (Revised Edition)* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1983)

Willy Wo-Lap Lam, *Chinese Politics in the Hu Jintao Era* (New York: M E Sharpe, 2006)