The Overall Idea
For over 30 years China has enjoyed rapid economic growth. During this time, Chinese politics have changed but remain authoritarian. China’s growing wealth and power have transformed life in China, as well as the structure of world power. In this class we will look into China’s recent history, political institutions and economic reforms. We will consider a series of questions to improve our understanding of how this has happened, what Chinese have gained and lost, and what China’s transformation means for the rest of humanity. This course will be accessible to students with no background in China, but will also seek to challenge advanced students.

Objectives
In this class, students will: 1) improve their knowledge and understanding of contemporary China and Chinese politics; 2) improve their grasp of key issues in the study of comparative politics; 3) improve their research skills; 4) improve their written and oral communication skills; and 5) improve their critical reasoning skills.

Assignments and Grading
1. Map assignment. (required, but not graded).
2. Short Essays. Students will write four three-page essays due at the dates specified below. Questions for the essays will be distributed about a week before they are due. The questions will concern issues raised in the readings and lectures. Additional research is not required but will help. While grading I will look for a grasp of readings and lectures and a persuasive and original answer. (45%)
3. Research paper. Topics will involve a significant question relevant to Chinese politics. All topics must be approved by the instructor. A 1-2 page proposal will be due at mid-term (required but not graded). Drafts will be due late in the semester. The final draft will not exceed 15 pages and is due on the day scheduled for the final exam. Grading criteria will include the quality of your ability to pose a significant and appropriate question, your ability to marshal relevant information, the persuasiveness and originality of the answer to your question, and the quality of your writing. (40%)
4. Class participation. Students are expected to attend regularly and to be prepared to discuss the readings, questions raised in lectures, and current events. Grading criteria include the ability to answer questions asked in class about assigned readings and the ability to ask and answer questions in ways that raise the level of discussion and help other students to learn. Grades will be informed by peer and self-assessment. (15%)

Notes
Students may receive email updates on class requirements at their account listed in D2L. Students who miss deadlines will only be allowed to make-up the work if the circumstances are truly exceptional, tragic and/or beyond their control. Some leniency may be shown if problems are discussed in advance. Regular attendance is expected as specified by university policy and failure to attend regularly may be sanctioned as specified by university policy. Academic dishonesty may receive the harshest sanctions allowed by university policy. Please refer to relevant sections of the Bulletin for University and College policy on attendance and academic dishonesty. Formatting for papers will be discussed in class. Students who would like to improve their grade
may do extra assignments or revise their papers, but must first consult with the instructor. Students seeking honors credit and graduate students will have special assignments and should consult with the instructor.

**Tentative Schedule of topics and readings**

*(Readings marked with **“*” are recommended, all others are required.)*

I. Introduction: History and Culture (August 29 & 31)

II. Origins of the Leninist State (September 7) Labor Day Holiday, September 5
   *Jonathan D. Spence, The Search for Modern China (New York: Norton, 1990) 300-402.

III. Great Leap and Cultural Revolution (September 12 & 14)

IV. Reform to June 4 (September 19 & 21)

V. Politics and Administration since June 4 (Sept. 26 & 28) **First Essay due Sept. 28**

VI. China’s Economy (October 3 & 5)


VII. Farmers and Migrants (October 10 & 12)


VIII. Ideology & Thought (Oct. 17 & 19) **Second Essay & Paper Proposal due Oct. 19**


IX. Media (October 24 & 26)

James Leibold “More Than a Category: Han Supremacism on the Chinese Internet” *The China Quarterly* 203 (September 2010) 539–559


X. Contentious Politics (October 31 & November 2)


XI. Religion (November 7 & 9)


André Laliberté “Buddhist Revival under State Watch” ibid 107-134.


XII. Tibet (November 14 & 16)

Third Essay due November 16


XIII. Environment (November 21) (Thanksgiving Holiday November 23)


IV. Taiwan (November 28 & 30) Paper Drafts Due November 30


*Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Taiwan” [http://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/ljzg/3568/]

XV. Prospects and Implications (December 5 & 7)


Yu Keping, “Democracy is a Good Thing” in Democracy is a Good Thing: Essays on Politics, Society, and Culture in Contemporary China (Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution, 2009) 3-5.