Modern China (HST 467)

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Office hours: 10:30-12:30 MWF or by appointment
Time and Place: MWF 1:30-2:20

Required textbooks:


Course description and objectives:

This course takes a deep and highly analytical look at modern China. It begins with a look at the foundations of modern China, taking students through the magnificence of the Ming, the rise and fall of the Manchus, encounters with the West, struggles with nationalism and communism, and finally examining the emergence of “Greater China” as the Chinese once again establish themselves as a world power. This course is reading and writing intensive and primarily aimed at students who have a familiarity with history as an academic discipline.

The primary goals of this course are 1) to gain an understanding of the general narrative of China’s modern history, 2) to recognize and understand historical patterns and concepts, 3) to gain familiarity with historiographical trends and scholarly consensus on various subjects in Chinese history, and 4) to improve analytical and critical thinking skills through readings and writing assignments.

Expectations:
- Attendance – All students are expected to attend class regularly, to arrive on time, to stay the entire class period, to come prepared, and to actively participate in class discussion and assignments.
- Classroom Etiquette – While this section is often unnecessary, there are occasionally some students that may forget that university courses are a commodity purchased by
students, and often represent a great deal of time and sacrifice. Hence, each of us has a responsibility to ensure that each student gets his or her money’s worth. Arrive to class on time, stay the whole period. Please turn off cell phones, ipods, etc. DO NOT TEXT. Participate with the class rather than doing other homework, reading newspapers, or sleeping.

- **Plagiarism and Cheating** – Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated in this course. These are capital offenses in the academic world. Plagiarism and/or cheating will result in the filing of a report of academic dishonesty. Guilty students will be dismissed from the class and referred to a disciplinary council in addition to receiving an “F” in the course.

- Students also should expect my best efforts as the professor. It is my goal to provide the best educational experience possible. I am interested in your success as students and will do everything possible to help you succeed in this course.

**Assignments:**

- **Reading Responses** – Once we begin reading the memoir literature we will devote a certain amount of time each Friday to discussing these amazing experiences. Students will prepare a 400-500 word typed response to the readings in preparation for the discussion. Students should include insights, reflections, and critical questions rather than simply providing a summary. Each response is worth 25 points.

- **Exams** – There will be a mid-term and final exam worth 250 points each. These exams will be open note and book in class. I will provide three potential questions for each exam and choose one on the day of the test. Since these are open book exams it is expected that students will provide a clear thesis statement supported by in-depth analysis and effective use of historical facts and examples. The exam should also be well organized and written. Preparation for these exams should be an ongoing process throughout the semester. Students should constantly be formulation ideas, arguments, and outlines for the questions provided. Students should demonstrate their abilities to think and write critically while synthesizing information. The first question I ask when grading exams is: does this exam represent several weeks of diligent thought and preparation. They are designed to prompt students to engage the material rather than simply trying to retain it for a test. It is my hope that after the exams each student will be able to engage in historical discourse intelligently and authoritatively wherever they may be.

- **Research Paper** – Each student will write a 10-15 page paper on some aspect of modern China. The paper is worth 300 points. Topics and parameters of these papers will be discussed as the course progresses. Each student is expected to meet with me at least once during the semester to go over paper topics, sources, etc.

- **Participation and Discussion** – Since this is an upper division course, student participation and discussion is not only suggested but required. We will be discussing a variety of primary and secondary sources that must be critically engaged in if they are to be understood.
- **Grade Breakdown** – Exams: 500 pts (50%); Research Paper: 300 pts (30%); Reading Responses: 200 pts (20%); Participation and Discussion: 200 pts (20%)

- **There is no extra credit offered. Exams cannot be made up. If you have a severe schedule conflict, please come see me before hand so we can discuss it.**

**Students with Disabilities**

If you have a disability that will require special accommodation(s) in this course, please contact the Disability Support Services (DSS) in 200 STU. The DSS will assist me in providing the necessary accommodations in order to enhance the learning environment for you. DSS will provide you with a letter that describes your specific needs and the necessary accommodations. Please bring that letter to my attention as soon as possible, and before the due date of the first course requirement.

**Class Cancellation Policy**

In case of an unexpected class cancellation due to inclement weather or some other reason, I will try to notify all students through the BlueLine course site and via e-mail. In the event of a college-wide disruption of normal classroom activities, the format of this course may be modified to enable completion of the course. More information will be forthcoming, as necessary.

**Class/Reading Schedule:**

**Week One, Aug. 25-27:** Introductions; Foundations of Chinese Civilization – Read, Fairbank and Goldman pp. 33-45; BB “Week One”

**Week Two, Aug. 30-Sept. 3:** Qin, Han, and the Shaping of Modern China Under the Yuan - Read, Fairbank and Goldman pp. 46-71; 119-127

**Week Three, Sept. 6 – Sept. 10:** The Ming Dynasty; The Rise of the Manchus – Read, Fairbank and Goldman pp. 128-151

**Week Four, Sept. 13 – Sept. 17:** Opium Wars and the End of Imperial China: Read, Fairbank and Goldman pp. 151-216

**Week Five, Sept. 20 – Sept. 24:** Attempts at Recovery; Early Marxist Thought in China – Read, Fairbank and Goldman pp. 217-267; BB “Week Five”; Red Star pp. 129-162

READING RESPONSE DUE FRIDAY

**Week Six, Sept. 27 – Oct. 1:** Republican China; – Read, Fairbank and Goldman pp. 267-311; Wild Swans pp. 21-61; Red Star pp. 69-76, 97-105; 185-206

READING RESPONSE DUE FRIDAY

**Week Seven, Oct. 4 - Oct. 8:** Japanese Aggression and Civil War – Read, Fairbank and Goldman pp. 312-330; Wild Swans pp. 62-93; Red Star pp. 106-125
READING RESPONSE DUE FRIDAY

Week Eight, Oct. 8 – Oct. 15: Communist Revolution and Transformation in China – Read, Fairbank and Goldman pp. 331-341; Wild Swans pp. 94-114

MIDTERM EXAM OCT. 15!!!!

Week Nine, Oct. 18 – Oct. 22: FALL RECESS!!!


READING RESPONSE DUE FRIDAY


READING RESPONSE DUE FRIDAY


READING RESPONSE DUE FRIDAY


READING RESPONSE DUE FRIDAY

Week Fourteen, Nov. 22 – Nov. 26: Documentary; Happy Thanksgiving!!!

Week Fifteen, Nov. 29 – Dec. 3: Reform and Opening – Read, Fairbank and Goldman, pp. 406-451; Oracle Bones pp. 3-241

READING RESPONSE DUE FRIDAY

Week Sixteen, Nov. 6 – Nov. 10: China in the 21st Century – Read, Fairbank and Goldman pp. 457-469; Oracle Bones pp. 243-458

READING RESPONSE DUE FRIDAY

FINAL EXAM, DEC 17, 10:00-11:40AM!!!
RESEARCH PAPER DUE DAY OF EXAM!!!
MIDTERM EXAM QUESTIONS

1) Many historians have argued that imperial China fell due to a stagnant, archaic, and lethargic culture mired in ancient traditions. In other words, when met with the dynamism of the modern West China was incapable of adapting and effectively responding to new challenges. Do you agree with this view? Why or why not? If not, what other factors contributed to a shift in global power in the 19th century (assuming that there was a shift in power)?

2) Why do you think communism ultimately triumphed over nationalism in China following Western intrusion? Explore the philosophies of recovery and explain your position.