The Beijing Center

Spring 2019
TBC 2320 The China-U.S. Relations:
Dynamic History and Formidable Realities

Credit Hours: 3.0
Class Times and Location: TBA
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Course Description
The goal of this course is to help students obtain, in the context of dynamic history and complex realities of power and ideas, a better grasp of the China-U.S. relations, the most important bilateral relations to China at the present as well as in a large part of her modern history, and also increasingly likely the most important ones to the United States in the coming decades. There is already little doubt in the world that the prospects of this bilateral relationship will in a large part shape the world political economy and more. The general orientation of the past evolution of the intercourses between these two powers with very different traditions but the similar “continental” magnitude will be surveyed, the developments in the most recent years and months emphasized, and the predictable future prospects discussed.

The course is characterized, among other things, by prominence of the political and strategic aspects of the international relations and foreign policy, while their social and economic ones are also touched from time to time, especially when they do have significant politico-strategic implications. As in most other courses in the field of international studies almost anywhere, students are expected to have at least a minimum grounding in general international political theories. There may be often a largely consistent theme or framework of “grand strategy” emerged in discussing, which has been marked by a holistic approach, a focus on the calculated relationship between ends and means, a constant concern with the cost-effectiveness of different policy options, and the most important strategic quality of unrelenting adaptation to the unending changes of the world.

Weekly Themes
1. The emergence of the American preponderance and China’s evolving relations with the international society
2. Conflict, confrontation, and rapprochement: the China-U.S. relations in the Cold War years and beyond
3. Crisis in Tiananmen and its aftermath
4. From the Embassy bombing, through 9/11, to the 16th Party Congress of the CCP
5. Toward partnership through vicissitudes
6. Drastic ups and downs: Obama and China
7. Obama and China again: Historic rivalry and competition over Asia-Pacific
8. Effects of political economy and culture: The United States and the Chinese Politics, and ongoing strong trend of reverse under Xi Jinping
9. South China Sea dispute: U.S. power in the Pacific and China’s maritime aspiration
10. Northeast Asia: China’s intensive maritime confrontation with Japan
12. New problems at a new agenda: Finance, trade, energy, investment, strategic weaponry, and more
13. China’s new troubles domestic, with Trump storm the harbinger of New Cold War (?)

Readings and Books
Most readings are to be provided by instructor through TBC in course-pack form, others are available in TBC libraries. In addition, students should keep up with current related affairs in publications such as the New York Times (which can be found for free at www.nytimes.com), the Washington Post (www.washingtonpost.com), the Asian Times (www.atimes.com), the Straits Times, a prestigious Singapore newspaper with much related reporting or comments (it free website as www.straitstimes.asia1.com), and the China’s no.1 official newspaper, the People’s Daily (in English at http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/home.html), etc. A truly excellent and free web service is Taiwan Security Research (www.taiwansecurity.org), update on the Taiwan issue, China’s foreign policy, Sino-American relations, and East Asian security.


All of them are excellent and very useful. If one would be particularly interested in historical and “philosophical” thinking about China and her probable impacts upon the future course of world history, one could read Martin Jacques, When China Rules the World: The Rise of the Middle Kingdom and the End of the Western World [London: Allen Lane: 2009], an innovative, insightful, and controversial book.

Course Requirements
1. Course Format
The course is organized as a seminar. It requires students to complete reading the assigned materials, and bring to class their own questions or comments about the readings. It also requires students to actively engage in in-class interactions in the general context of their course reading as well as lecture-listening. Insights with highly practical relevance are particularly welcome.
Each session will begin with a lecture by the instructor, which takes about half of the session time. Then the course will focus on a presentation on one of the sub-topics of each session by a pre-designated student, with discussions from other course participants, and related topics/issues they want to have discussed. The presentation in its written form (or its outline) can serve as a short reflection paper (see more below).

2. Grading
   Participation (25%)
   One short reflection paper (25%)
   Final research paper (50%)

A short reflection paper is meant to be 3-4 pages in length, typed. It should demonstrate a student’s strength and scope in reflecting on one sub-topic in China-U.S. relations covered by the course. Documentation of sources of information is not required, but the writer ought to base his/her comments on reliable data and expert opinions as much as possible.

A research paper is meant to be 8-9 pages in length, typed. It should deal with a significant research topic within the general line of the course, be documented and written according to rules and conventions governing in the Beijing Center (TBC). Plagiarism and other academic dishonesty are strictly forbidden. The due date of the final research paper will be announced during the class.

3. Attendance Policy
   Only valid medical or family emergencies qualify as an absence, and documentation of the same must be presented to the professor no later than the next class meeting.

4. Academic Honesty Statement
   Please click the following link to see The Beijing Center's policy on Academic Integrity: http://thebeijingcenter.org/academic-integrity

**Course Schedule**

1. The emergence of the American preponderance and China’s evolving relations with the international society

   Required readings:


II. Conflict, confrontation, and rapprochement: the China-U.S. relations in the Cold War years and beyond

Required readings:


III. Crisis in Tiananmen and its aftermath

Required readings:


IV. From the Embassy bombing, through 9/11, to the 16th Party Congress of the CCP

Required readings:

V. Toward partnership through vicissitudes

Required readings:

1) Ching Cheong, “Pressure from US and China Limits Taiwan Separatism,” Straits Times, May 21, 2004;
4) “The Dragon Comes Calling,” The Economist, September 2, 2005;
7) Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, “Iran: Russia, China Drift toward U.S.,” Asia Time, May 12, 2006;

VI. Drastic ups and downs: Obama and China

Required readings:

3) Calum MacLeod, “No Breakthroughs Made, but China Keeps Obama Busy,” USA Today, November 17, 2009;
4) “Copenhagen Talks Show G2 Far from Reality,” Agency France Presse, December 21, 2009;
6) Tania Branigan, “Chinese Media Accuses U.S. of ‘Cold War Thinking’ over Taiwan Arms Deal,” Guardian, February 1, 2010;
8) Ewen MacAskill and Mark Tran, “China and U.S. Extend Thaw as Hu Jingtao Confirms Nuclear Summit Visit,” Guardian, April 1, 2010;

**VII. Obama and China again: Historic rivalry over Asia-Pacific**

*Required readings:*

1) David Shambaugh, "US-China Relations Take A New Direction?" YaleGlobal, January 24, 2011;
12) Calum MacLeod, "China Launches Charm Offensive as Obama Cancels Asia Trip," *USA Today*, October 4, 2013.

**VIII. Effects of Political Economy and Transnational Culture: The United States and the Chinese High Politics**

*Required readings:*

4) Mark McDonald, "In China, a Ferrari Crashes and the Party Is Dented," *International Herald Tribune*, September 3, 2012;
7) Steven Lee Myers and Mark Landler, "Frenzied Hours for U.S. on Fate of a China Insider," *The New York Times*, April 17, 2012;

IX. South China Sea dispute: U.S. power in the Pacific and China’s maritime aspiration

Required reading:

4) Greg Torode and Minnie Chan, "For China, War Games Are Steel behind the Statements," *South China Morning Post*, July 31, 2010;
5) "Seas Fill with Tension over China’s Moves," *Asahi Shimbun*, October 2, 2010;

X. Northeast Asia: China’s intensive maritime confrontation with Japan

Required reading:

XI. Northeast Asia: China, U.S., and the oft-dramatic North Korea problem, with troubled China-ROK relations

Required reading:

4) “Trump, growing frustrated with China, weighs trade actions, officials say,” Reuters, June 28, 2018;
6) “Trump announces new executive order targeting those who trade with North Korea,” CBS, Sep 21, 2017;
7) Faith Karimi, “North Korea calls latest UN sanctions ‘an act of war’,” CNN, December 24, 2017;
8) Shi Yinhong, “The Current Fundamental Situation of the North Korea Problem,” (note written in December 2017);
9) Shi Yinhong, “How to Interpret Kim Jun En's Initiative on January 1, 2018? A Strategic Magic Strike,” (note written on January 9, 2018);
10) Shi Yinhong, "China and ROK: Bizarre Political Relationship and Huge Strategic Suspicions" [An excerpt from idem, “China, the North Korea Problem, and the Korean Peninsula,” paper presented to a conference organized by Research Institute for National Security Studies at KNDU on December 8, 2009];
XII. New problems in a new agenda: Finance, trade, energy, investment, strategic weaponry, and more

Required readings:

4) Harry Harding, “China: Think Again!” PacNet #17, Pacific Forum, CSIS, April 5, 2007;

I. XIII. China’s new troubles domestic, with Trump storm the harbinger of New Cold War (?)

Required readings:

1) Fran Wang, “China Manufacturing Activity Shrinks at Fastest in 4 years: Govt,” Agence France Presse, March 1, 2016;
3) Rachel Butt, “China Is Walking Itself into a Trap,” Business Insider, September 2, 2016;
4) “Beware the Cult of Xi,” The Economist, April 2, 2016; February 28, 2016;
10) Nicole Gaouette, “Tillerson raps China as ‘predatory’ rule breaker,” CNN, October 19, 2017;
12) “Mike Pence at the Hudson Institute,” Voltaire Network, Washington D.C., October 4, 2018;
13) Jake Werner, “Politicians Pait China as the Vallian Who Will ‘Rip-off American Jobs and Industries...”, Foreign Policy, August 12, 2018;
14) Zhang Lin, “Economic Cold War Betwee China and US Inevitabla,” South China Morning Post, September 25, 2018;