

History 2620G

China Reconstructs: The Making of ‘New China’

Winter 2024

Instructor: **James Flath**

Email: jflath@uwo.ca

This is a **draft** syllabus. Please see the course site on OWL for a final version.

Course Description

China Reconstructs examines China’s effort to reinvent itself as a globally relevant nation-state in the mid-20th and 21st centuries. We discuss the ways in which China’s leadership envisioned the “New China,” the ways governing bodies tried to make those visions a reality, and the ways the Chinese people responded.

Course Syllabus

There is, arguably, no more critical issue in modern global affairs than the rise of China. After the collapse of the imperial system in the 19th century, and after suffering a lengthy period of ‘humiliation’ on the global stage, the Chinese people began to forge a new political entity – a nation. In this course we explore the nature of the Chinese nation, the painful lessons learned during the early decades of the communist experiment, and the ongoing effort of China’s leaders to command respect for China on the global stage.

The course emphasizes communication and collaborative problem solving. To promote discussion students will be assigned to small groups (four to six per group) for weekly group-based instructional activities. In addition, there will be two group-based assignments to supplement the individual research projects. It is essential that students make every effort to attend every class.

Methods of Evaluation:

- 1) Weekly Quizzes: 25%. A short quiz at the beginning of each class (excluding Weeks 1 and 12) to test the student's comprehension of weekly readings. **There are no make-up quizzes**, however, the lowest two weekly scores will be dropped from the final calculation.
- 2) Essay Critique: 15%. Each group will receive a pre-written essay relating to one of the course topics. The group will examine the essay in detail, identifying its weaknesses as well as strengths. Students will be graded on their individual contribution to the critique. **Due Date: Feb. 5.**
- 3) Media Assignment (group project): 15%. Each group will produce a five-minute video focusing on one of the weekly topics (Weeks 4-11). All students in the group will receive the same grade. **Due Date: April 5.**
- 4) Essay Assignment: 20%. Each student will write an essay (2000 words) on an approved topic. **Due Date: April 8.**
- 5) Final Exam: 25%. Students must earn at least 50% on the exam to pass the course. **During Final Exam Period.**

Notifications:

***Late assignments will not be accepted, except on the advice of Academic Counselling.**

***Students are strongly advised against using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to generate papers, as the student will be held responsible for all errors, biases, falsifications, and plagiarism committed by the AI.**

***Students will be asked to use personal response systems ('clickers').**

University guidelines on the use of clickers is available here:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/courseoutlines.pdf#page=5

Accommodation for missed tests/midterms:

The professor will not organize a make-up time slot on the basis of student convenience. There are two make-up slots each term – students *must* write in one of those slots.

Students with an approved absence from an in-class test will be required to write a make-up test. The make-up test will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test.

Online courses will have online make-up tests.

For in-person classes, make-up tests will be written at one of the Department of History

make-up midterms. Dates for the make-ups will be listed on the Department of History website under [Important Dates](#).

IMPORTANT: In the event the University moves to online learning make-up tests will take place online via OWL. The date for the make-up may differ from the date listed above.

No other make-up opportunities will be provided unless further academic consideration is granted by Academic Counselling. Students who fail to write a make-up test in a designated time slot will receive a grade of zero on that assessment.

Course professors may not be available to respond to questions during the make-up test slots.

Make-up tests, midterms, and exams can only be approved by Academic Counselling. Please see https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html for department procedures and requirements involving make-up tests and exams.

DRAFT

Course Materials

Selected Readings, TBA

Course Schedule and Readings (tentative)

- 1) Week 1: Introductions, and the Origins of the Chinese Nation
- 2) Week 2: The Mao Era: overview
- 3) Week 3: The Reform Era: overview
- 4) Week 4: Back to the Beginning: Land and Class Reform
- 5) Week 5: The Great Leap Forward
- 6) Week 6: The Cultural Revolution
- 7) Week 7: Liberal Nationalism
- 8) Week 8: State Led Nationalism and Patriotic Education in the Reform Era
- 9) Week 9: Ethnicity and Identity
- 10) Week 10: Digital Nationalism
- 11) Week 11: International Implications of China's Nationalism
- 12) Week 12: Film Festival

Please review the Department of History's shared policies and statements for all undergraduate courses at: https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html for important information regarding accessibility options, make-up exams, medical accommodations, health and wellness, academic integrity, plagiarism, and more.

DRAFT