

HISTORY 143 Modern China

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Lecture Time: TR 3:25-4:40 PM
Lecture Location: Wilmot 116
Office hours: TR 2:00-3:00PM or by appointment



Course Description

This course surveys the history of China from the late-nineteenth century to the twenty-first century. From the May Fourth Movement to the Cultural Revolution, Chinese society and culture underwent significant transformation as it was incorporated into the global capitalist system of nation-states. By examining the country's modern experiences, students will analyze a variety of currents that shaped the everyday lives of its people as they strived to recreate China in their own vision. The first part of the course examines the domestic and global dynamics that led to the downfall of the Qing imperial dynasty. The second part focuses on Chinese efforts to establish a modern nation-state through the revolutionary politics of the Nationalist and Communist parties. The third part examines the establishment of the People's Republic and the construction of a socialist society and culture in the context of the Cold War international system.

Course Learning Outcomes

By taking this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate a broad acquaintance with important historical, economic, political, and cultural developments in modern China
- Analyze primary and secondary sources and construct original arguments regarding the history of modern Chinese society and culture
- Situate historical moments and issues in local, regional, and global contexts.
- Write a clearly argued academic paper that uses appropriate style and bibliographic apparatus.

Course Requirements

Required Texts

- [Rebecca Karl. *China's Revolutions in the Modern World* \(Brooklyn: Verso, 2020\).](#)

All other readings will be posted on the course website in PDF format.

Course Policies

Method of Instruction

This is an in-person course that meets on Mondays and Wednesdays for lecture (3:25–4:40 PM in Wilmot 116). I will engage in regular and substantive interaction with students through direct instruction, assessment and feedback on student work, and facilitation of group discussion.

Grading

A. Attendance: Students are expected to complete the readings and attend lecture. You may miss up to two lectures without hurting this portion of the grade.

B. Primary Source Analysis: Students will be responsible for writing an essay (Times New Roman Font 12, double-spaced, 3 pages) that analyzes primary sources on the Taiping Revolution.

C. Midterm Exam: A take-home midterm exam will be uploaded to the course website. It will consist of short essay questions.

D. Historiography Paper: Students will be responsible for writing an essay (Times New Roman Font 12, double-spaced, 3 pages) on the historiography of the Cultural Revolution.

E. Final Exam: A take-home final will be uploaded to the course website.

Attendance	20%
Primary Source Analysis	20%

Midterm Exam	20%
Historiography Paper	20%
Final Exam	20%

Grading Scale

A	93–100%
A-	90–92.9%
B+	87–89.9%
B	83–86.9%
B-	80–82.9%
C+	77–79.9%
C	73–76.9%
C-	70–72.9%
D	60–69.9%
E	Below 59.9%

Writing and Speaking Center

The [Writing and Speaking Center](#) supports effective academic communication across all disciplines by offering free writing and speaking tutoring to all members of the University of Rochester community. The center is staffed by professional, graduate, and undergraduate writing and speaking tutors from the humanities, social sciences, and natural and applied sciences. These tutors provide individualized feedback and assistance on all types of academic writing and speaking. To work with a tutor, sign-up for an in-person or online appointment using their scheduling system or visit drop-in hours.

The Kelly Family History Book Fund

In 2022, the History Department received an endowed fund to purchase class text books for undergraduate students enrolled in a history course. If you need help acquiring your books, you may apply for funds through this link <https://forms.gle/c2WArDa5g696oKeU6>. Preference will be given to history majors but any student may apply.

University of Rochester Policies

Academic Honesty

Students and faculty at the University must agree to adhere to high standards of academic honesty in all the work that we do. You are encouraged to discuss course readings and assignments with your fellow students. However, all written work must be done independently and not in collaboration with another. To make appropriate help available for your essays, I encourage you to consult with me and with the [College Writing, Speaking, and Argument Program](#). The College Board on Academic Honesty website gives further information on our policies and procedures: rochester.edu/college/honesty.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

The University of Rochester complies fully with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232g. Under FERPA students have, with certain limited

exceptions, the right to inspect and review their educational records and to request the amendment of their records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. Requests to inspect or review records should be addressed to the registrar, or to the appropriate administrator responsible for the record and will be honored within 45 days. Any student questioning the accuracy of any record may state his or her objection in writing to the University administrator responsible for the record, who will notify the student of his or her decision within 45 days of receiving the objection. A student dissatisfied with the administrator's decision may request a hearing pursuant to federal regulations at 34 C.F.R. Part 99. Students concerned with the University's compliance with FERPA have the right to file complaints with the U.S. Department of Education's Family Compliance Office.

Nondiscrimination Policy Statement

The University of Rochester values [diversity](#) and is committed to equal opportunity for persons regardless of age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, genetic information, marital status, military/veteran status, national origin, race, religion/creed, sex, sexual orientation, or any other status protected by law. Further, the University complies with all applicable non-discrimination laws in the administration of its policies, admissions, employment, and access to and treatment in University programs and activities.

Inclusion Statement

The University of Rochester, this course, and I are committed to inclusion, and welcome students of all backgrounds and abilities. Services and reasonable accommodations are available to students with temporary and permanent disabilities, to students with DACA or undocumented status, to students facing mental health issues, other personal situations, and to students with other kinds of learning needs. Please feel free to let me know if there are circumstances affecting your ability to participate in class or your full participation in this course.

Some resources that might be of use include:

- Office of Disability Resources rochester.edu/college/disability/
- Undocumented/DACA Student Support Contacts rochester.edu/college/ccas/undergraduate/daca/index.html
- University of Rochester CARE Network rochester.edu/care/

Disability Resources

The University of Rochester respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds and abilities. In the event you encounter any barrier(s) to full participation in this course due to the impact of a disability, please contact the [Office of Disability Resources](#). The access coordinators in the Office of Disability Resources can meet with you to discuss the barriers you are experiencing and explain the eligibility process for establishing academic accommodations.

Reading and Lecture Schedule

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION

R (8/31) Introduction

WEEK 2: LATE IMPERIAL CHINA

Read: Giovanni Arrighi, "States, Markets, and Capitalism, East and West" (pp.309-344)

T (9/5) Late Imperial China

R (9/7) Opium Wars and Treaty Port System

WEEK 3: TAIPING REVOLUTION

Read: Rebecca Karl, Introduction, Chapter 1, and Interlude

Robert Weller, "The Modern Politics of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom"

Primary sources

T (9/12) Taiping Revolution

R (9/14) Self-Strengthening Movement

WEEK 4: REPUBLICAN REVOLUTION

Read: Rebecca Karl, Chapter 2 and Interlude

James Hevia, "Making China 'Perfectly Equal'"

T (9/19) Boxer Rebellion

R (9/21) Republican Revolution

WEEK 5: EARLY REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT

Read: Liu, Karl, and Ko, "Chinese Feminist Worlds at the Turn of the Twentieth Century"

T (9/26) **PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS DUE**

R (9/28) Early Republican Government

WEEK 6: EARLY REPUBLICAN SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Read: Rebecca Karl, Chapter 3 and Interlude

Primary sources

T (10/3) May Fourth Movement

R (10/5) Nationalist Revolution

WEEK 7: NANJING DECADE

Read: Rebecca Karl, Chapter 4 and Interlude
Eugenia Lean, "The Making of a Public"

T (10/10) Nanjing Decade

R (10/12) Wartime China

WEEK 8: COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

T (10/17) Communist Revolution

R (10/19) **MIDTERM**

WEEK 9: COLD WAR CHINA

Read: Rebecca Karl, Chapter 5 and Interlude
Hajimu Masuda, "People's War at Home"

T (10/24) Establishment of the People's Republic

R (10/26) Cold War China

WEEK 10: EARLY SOCIALIST SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Read: Jake Werner, "Global Fordism in 1950s Urban China"
Elizabeth Perry, "Shanghai's Strike Wave of 1957"

T (10/31) Rapid Industrialization

R (11/2) Great Leap Forward

WEEK 11: CULTURAL REVOLUTION

Read: Rebecca Karl, Chapter 6 and Interlude
Barbara Mittler, "Popular Propaganda?"
Primary sources

T (11/7) Famine

R (11/9) Cultural Revolution

WEEK 12: BEIJING SPRING

Read: Helmut Opletal, "The 1978-1981 Democracy Wall Movement"

T (11/14) International Socialism

R (11/16) Beijing Spring

WEEK 14: REFORM AND OPENING-UP

Read: Giovanni Arrighi, "Origins and Dynamic of Chinese Ascent"

T (11/28) **PAPER DUE**

R (11/30) Reform and Opening-up

WEEK 15: TIANANMEN

T (12/5) Watch: TBD

R (12/7) Tiananmen

WEEK 16: CONCLUSION

T (12/12) **FINAL EXAM**