History 3995: Foreign Relations of China since 1949

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History, UConn
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Lectures: 2 lectures per week
6 discussions

This course studies developments in China’s foreign relations after 1949, with reference to historical influences, ideological premises, and practical political, strategic, and economic considerations. Special attention is given to the domestic influence on China’s foreign relations, the evolution of the impact of China’s foreign policy on international politics and vice versa, and the assessment of major foreign policymakers.

This course will analyze current and past historiography and will introduce students to several historical stages of China’s foreign policy. By the end of this course, successful students will increase their understanding of China’s contradictory foreign policy as a result of conflicting domestic policies. The students will learn about the role of Chinese ambassadors, leaders and communist ideology in shaping China’s relations with major global powers during and after the Cold War. Critical thinking and writing skills will be strengthened through reading primary documents, written assignments and research for a term paper. This course does not require previous knowledge of Chinese history or politics.

Required texts:

2) Selected Readings Packet: Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, and Deng Xiaoping on Chinese foreign policy.

Distribution of Grades:

Book Review – 10%
Paper proposal – 20%
Term Paper – 30%
Final Exam – 20%
Participation – 20%
• The class will have several in-class discussions based on primary documents.
• Attendance is required.
• This course has final exam, and three writing assignments (a book review, a term paper proposal, and the term paper) and a final exam based on lectures.

1) Book review: Liu Xiaohong, *Chinese Ambassadors* (5 pages, double spaced)
2) Term paper proposal (3 pages double-spaced). Each student will choose one aspect of Chinese foreign policy (leadership, event, or China’s relations with a certain country) and will write a brief plan of the term paper, which will include the topic, potential arguments, chronology and available sources. You will have to defend your proposal and answer questions during the tutorial immediately preceding the submission date. This exercise will prepare you for writing a successful term paper.
3) Term Paper (10 pages double-spaced, including bibliography). This paper will answer one of three broad questions about the history of China’s foreign policy.

**Lectures:**

Week 1: Pre-1949 sources of PRC foreign policy.
   China’s territory and borders

Week 2: The establishment of the PRC in 1949 and its position in the world.
   Mao Zedong and his analysis of China’s foreign relations

Week 3: Korean War
   Sino-Soviet Friendship in the 1950s

Week 4: **Discussion 1**: Mao Zedong, *On Diplomacy*

Week 5: Zhou Enlai and China’s foreign policy
   China and the developing world in the 1950s

Week 6: **Discussion 2**: Each student will defend her/his proposal before submitting it
   **Term paper proposal is due!**

Week 7: Radicalization of China’s domestic and foreign policies
   Great Leap Forward

Week 8: Sino-Soviet Split
   **Discussion 3**

Week 9: China-India border clashes.
   China’s Cultural Revolution and isolationism

Week 10: Nixon’s 1972 visit and normalization of China-US relations
Documentary on Nixon’s visit to China

Week 9: Deng Xiaoping and China’s shift in foreign policy
   Discussion 4: Deng on foreign relations

Week 10: Discussion 5: Liu Xiaohong Chinese Ambassadors
   Book review is due!
   China’s alliances and rivals in Asia

Week 11: Sino-Vietnamese conflict
   Sino-Japanese trade and frictions

Week 11: The end of the Cold War and China’s foreign policy
   Discussion 6

Week 12: Hong Kong’s road to 1997.
   Tiananmen Square (1989)

Week 13: The principles of China’s current foreign policy.
   1990s: New leadership and new priorities

Suggested Books for Final Paper:

I. China’s Foreign Policy Since 1949–general:

II. China and Individual Countries/Regions:

- Niklas Swanström, *Foreign Devils, Dictatorship, or Institutional control: China’s Foreign Policy Towards Southeast Asia* (2001).
- Rabin Sen, *China and ASEAN: Diplomacy During the Cold War and After* (2002).