

# IR 333: China in International Affairs

## Spring 2024

**Instructor:** Dr. Victoria Chonn-Ching  
**Days:** Tu and Th, 9:30 – 10:50 a.m.  
**Class location:** DMC 152

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**Office/Questions hours:** Th, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
**Office location:** DMC (formerly CPA) 354

Additional office hours can be booked using the following link:  
<https://victoriaccusc.youcanbook.me> (these additional office hours may change on a weekly basis, so make sure to check the dates and times indicated in the link).



### ATTENTION

Welcome to IR 333: China in International Affairs! This class offers a variety of readings that will help students better understand China and its role in the world. This is not a comprehensive class on the country (it would take us more than a semester to do so!), yet we will focus on some key elements about modern China, including its economic development in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, its political economy strengths, its challenges, and the key relationships the country has established since its opening to the global economy.

**The readings for this class can be extensive.** I expect students to complete the reading assignments and other materials before each class. While I understand that schedules can sometimes be unpredictable, I encourage everyone to cover as much as they can. Most importantly, by completing the assigned materials on time, students should use class time to seek clarification; address, and discuss questions and concerns that emerge *after* reading the material. ***Students should not expect class time to serve as a replacement for reading. If needed, pop reading assessments might be conducted.***

## COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This class **introduces** the main aspects of China’s development and global engagement in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. We will start by briefly examining the changes China has experienced since the fall of China’s last dynasty (Qing), the establishment of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and Mao Zedong’s leadership, China’s reform era and (re)opening to the world. These events have shaped China’s evolution in modern times, giving us insight about how the country and its leadership view the country and its relationships with the rest of the world.

We will then focus on selected exchanges between China and key country-partners, covering issues such as China’s global investments and financing, geostrategic interests, and the country’s overall role in the world. In the final class sessions, we will discuss US-China relations and strategic competition, addressing whether China seeks to displace the US-world order.

The **main objective** for this class is to provide foundational knowledge about China and its place in the world. Students will examine the extent to which the country has become a global power, what that may mean, and the challenges it faces within and outside its boundaries.

## CLASS MATERIALS

Students will read a diverse set of journal articles, opinion pieces, and policy reports. We will also read selected chapters from the following books (*all of them available through the USC Library*) and watch some videos. Since we are only reading parts of books, there is no need to purchase them unless you are interested in owning some (or all) of them.

- Brautigam, Deborah (2009), *The Dragon’s Gift. The Real Story of China in Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press).
- Shirk, Susan (2022). *Overreach. How China Derailed Its Peaceful Reach* (New York: Oxford University Press).
- Ye, Ming. (2020). *The Belt Road and Beyond: State-Mobilized Globalization in China: 1998–2018* (New York: Cambridge University Press).
- Vogel, Ezra (2011). *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press).

## CLASS REQUIREMENTS

Class engagement	10%
Reading reaction paper	15%
Midterm exam (March 7)	25%
Class project (April 9 and 11 for presentations, April 12 for written submission)	25%
Final paper (April 26)	25%

### 1. Class engagement – 10%

Students are expected to *critically* read each week’s assigned materials and contribute to class discussions and activities. **The class will be as interactive and engaging as you make it to be.** As your instructor, I’m not seeking for perfection, but students’ willingness to learn, listen, and grow as professionals and individuals. We all come from different backgrounds and embody many distinct stories, so be respectful at all instances. This means that participation *depends* on each student—if students miss a lot of classes, then this part of the course may be affected and, most importantly, students may miss important class material.

**2. Reading reaction paper – 15%**

Students will submit one reading reaction paper from any day they choose. Students must critically assess **all required readings from that selected day**, and this must be submitted **before noon (12:00 p.m.) of that day**. For example, if a student chooses to write on the readings from January 9, the reaction paper must be submitted by noon on that day. *I will not accept reaction papers that are submitted after the designated deadline.*

The responses should not exceed five (5) pages, double-spaced, 12-point font, and must be submitted before the end of the semester. Responses will be graded based on the following rubric:

Points	Description
< 9	Response is unclear and needs work—it does not show critical analysis of the readings.
9 – 11	Response mostly offers summaries of the texts and/or the class, and it is mostly descriptive.
12 – 13	Response provides some analysis of the texts but mostly relies on material mentioned during lectures and class discussions.
14 – 15	Response provides a critical assessment of the texts, compares arguments, and offer their own input regarding the strengths and weaknesses, and applicability of the content discussed.

**3. Midterm – 25%**

The midterm will be in-person on **March 7**. Students are allowed to use one-page (single-sided) of guiding notes. Anyone who requires accommodations, please inform me as soon as possible.

**4. Class project – 25%**

Students will choose to examine China’s bilateral relationship with one country of their choosing. Students can choose to work in groups of maximum four (4) people or individually and will be expected to discuss their analysis during the assigned dates of **April 9** or **April 11**. Students must submit which bilateral relationship they choose to examine by **January 30**.

Students will also write a report of maximum six (6) pages (double-spaced, 12-point font) including the discussion of the following: (1) brief description of the historical development of

China's relationship with the country, (2) nature of the relationship, and (3) discussion of the main socio-political and/or economic issues in the bilateral exchanges.

All reports must be submitted on **April 12 by 11:59 p.m.** Class discussion will represent 10% and the report will represent 15% of your grade.

### 5. Final paper – 25%

The final paper will elaborate on and examine one prompt from a selected list. It will be **due on April 26 by 11:59 p.m. NO LATE SUBMISSIONS.**

#### Final paper format:

- 10-12 pages, excluding bibliography. No cover page needed.
- 12-point font (i.e., Times New Roman, Calibri, Cambria, or equivalent)
- 1-inch margins
- Double-spaced
- APA or MLA style citations. **No footnote citations.**

### GRADING SCALE

The grading scale for this class is as follow:

A	97-100	C	73-76
A-	93-96	C-	69-72
B+	89-92	D+	65-68
B	85-88	D	61-64
B-	81-84	D-	57-60
C+	77-80	F	56 and below

### CLASS POLICIES

#### MAKE-UP REQUIREMENTS

There will be **no make-up assignments and tests for unexcused absences.** **Acceptable excuses**, which include medical, family, or other emergencies and official university-related business, must be provided to me in writing **in advance** to be considered. Students who are unable to complete a requirement for legitimate reasons that do not qualify as excused under university guidelines, and who provide notification may, at my discretion, complete a requirement belatedly. Any requirement turned in on after the deadline will incur a **10-15% penalty.** *Submissions after a week from the original deadline will not be accepted and will be assigned a grade of zero.*

#### GRADING POLICY

Students may contest the grade on an exam and/or assignment due to clerical error up to one week after it is returned. Students will need to submit a written description of the error they believe occurred along with the exam and/or assignment. Clerical mistakes will be corrected, and the corresponding partial credit will be provided. Keep in mind that **this process does not guarantee the grade to go up.** In addition, everything submitted by students is graded according

to the criteria and rubric provided on this syllabus; thus, **requests for regrading that are not due to clerical error will not be accepted.**

### E-MAIL POLICY

Students are expected to send respectful and complete email messages. I will address you with courtesy and respect, thus students should write back in a similar fashion. I will try to reply to students' messages in a timely manner. Please allow a **wait-period of 48 hours** after you send a message for me to email back. I will try my best to respond as soon as I see your messages.

## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

### ACADEMIC CONDUCT

Plagiarism or presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words, is a serious academic offense with consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* (<https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions>). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information about university policies on scientific misconduct on <https://policy.usc.edu/research-and-scholarship-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* (<http://equity.usc.edu>) or to the *Department of Public Safety* (<https://dps.usc.edu/>). This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community—such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member—can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (<https://sites.google.com/usc.edu/rsvpclientservices/home>) provides confidential support and other resources.

### COVID-19 AND OTHER HEALTH POLICIES

Students are expected to comply with all aspects of USC's health and COVID-19 policy. Failure to do so may result in removal from the class and referral to Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards. This means that students must follow the university's mandates at all times, regardless of vaccination status.

### DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Every student in this course, regardless of background, sex, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, political affiliation, physical or mental ability or any identity category, is a valued and equal member of the class. We all bring different experiences and perspectives to USC, and it is those experiences and perspectives that will enrich the course content. My intent as an instructor is to provide an inclusive learning environment where individual differences are respected, appreciated, and recognized as a source of strength.

For additional information and resources, I encourage you to visit Dornsife's Office of Diversity (<https://dornsife.usc.edu/dei/>) and/or USC's Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (<https://diversity.usc.edu/resources/>).

### ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

Many USC schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Some helpful centers and institutes are:

- The American Language Institute (<https://ali.usc.edu/>), which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for students whose native language is not English and may need support.
- The Office of Disability Services and Programs (<https://osas.usc.edu/>), which provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. The student is responsible for submitting the necessary certification forms to the professor during the first two weeks of class.
- If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information (<http://emergency.usc.edu>) will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

## CLASS SCHEDULE

### Jan 9: Introduction

- Class introduction. No readings.

### Jan 11: Thinking about Today's Asia and China

- Acharya, Amitava (2014). "International Relations Theory and the 'Rise of Asia' in *The Oxford Handbook of the International Relations of Asia*, edited by Saadia Pekkanen, pp. 120-138.
- Hall, Todd and Xiaoyu Pu (2023). "Dare to Fight or Dare to Struggle? Translation of a Chinese Political Concept," *CSIS's Interpret: China*, published May 8. Available at <https://interpret.csis.org/dare-to-fight-or-dare-to-struggle-translation-of-a-chinese-political-concept/>

### Optional:

- Backgrounder on China by the Council on Foreign Relations. "China's Approach to Global Governance." Available at <https://www.cfr.org/china-global-governance/>
- The State Council of the People's Republic of China (2019). "China and the World in the New Era." Read the Preface and Section II. Available at

[http://english.www.gov.cn/archive/whitepaper/201909/27/content\\_WS5d8d80f9c6d0bcf8c4c142ef.html](http://english.www.gov.cn/archive/whitepaper/201909/27/content_WS5d8d80f9c6d0bcf8c4c142ef.html)

**Jan 16: A Brief History of Modern China: From the Qing's Fall to Mao**

- Kaufman, Allison (2011). "The Century of Humiliation and China's National Narratives," Testimony before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission Hearing.
- PBS, "China: A Century of Revolution (Part I – 1911-1949)," 120 minutes. Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xilYfu9nmal>

**Jan 18: A Brief History of Modern China: —From Mao to Deng**

- Vogel, chapters 5, 13.
- PBS, "China: A Century of Revolution (Part II– 1949-1976)," 120 minutes. Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GMaXSKH2w3c>

**Jan 23: A Brief History of Modern China: —China's Road to Opening**

- Vogel, chapters 16, 24.
- PBS, "China: A Century of Revolution (Part III– 1976-1997)," 120 minutes. Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qsmJXJcvG3g>

Optional:

- Vogel, chapter 15.

**Jan 25: Is There a China Model?**

- Fewsmith, Joseph (2011). "Debating 'the China Model'," *China Leadership Monitor*, No. 35, pp. 1-7.
- Xiaoyang, Tang (2020). "Co-evolutionary pragmatism: Re-examine 'China Model' and its impact on developing countries," *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 29, No.126, pp. 853-870.
- Zhao, Shuiseng (2010). "The China Model: Can It Replace the Western Model of Modernization?" *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 19, Issue 65, pp. 419-436.

**Jan 30: China and the World Order**

- Johnston, Alastair Iain (2019). "China in a World of Orders," *International Security*, Vol. 44, No. 2, pp. 9-60.
- Weiss, Jessica Chen (2021). "A World Safe for Autocracy? China's Rise and the Future of Global Politics," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 98, Issue 4.

Optional:

- Ang, Yuen-Yuen (2018). "Autocracy with Chinese Characteristics: Beijing's Behind-the-Scenes Reforms," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 209, Issue 15.

**Feb 1: China and the Global Economy**

- Lin, Justin Yifu (2011). "China and the Global Economy," luncheon address for the Asia Economic Policy Conference.
- Pearson, Margaret M. (2014). "China's Foreign Economic Relations and Policies," in *The Oxford Handbook of the International Relations of Asia*, edited by Saadia M. Pekkanen, pp. 160-178.

#### **Feb 6: Capitalism with Chinese Characteristics?**

- Gu, J., Zhang, C., Vaz, A., & Mukwereza, L. (2016). "Chinese state capitalism? Rethinking the role of the state and business in Chinese development cooperation in Africa," *World Development*, Vol. 81, pp. 24-34.
- McNally, Christopher A. (2012). "Sino-Capitalism: China's Re-emergence and the International Political Economy," *World Politics*, Vol. 64, Issue 4, pp. 741-776.

#### Optional:

- Ang, Yuen-Yuen (2019). "How the West (and Beijing) Got China Wrong," lecture at the Camden Conference. Available at <https://vimeo.com/319201793>.

#### **Feb 8: Economic Diplomacy**

- Lai, Christina (2018). "Acting One Way and Talking Another: China's Coercive Economic Diplomacy in East Asia and Beyond," *The Pacific Review*, Vol. 31, Issue 2, pp. 169-187.
- Roberts, Anthea, Henrique Chroer Moraes, and Victor Ferguson (2019). "Toward a Geoeconomic Order in International Trade and Investment," *Journal of International Economic Law*, Vol. 22, Issue 4, pp. 655-676.

#### **Feb 13: Can China Rule the World?**

- Beckley, Michael (2021). "Conditional Convergence and the Rise of China: A Political Economy Approach to Understanding Global Power Transitions," *Journal of Global Security Studies*, Vol. 6, Issue 1, pp. 1-9.
- Shirk, Susan (2014). "The Domestic Context of Chinese Foreign Security Policies," in *The Oxford Handbook of the International Relations of Asia* (edited by Saadia M. Pekkanen et al.), pp. 391-410.
- Zhang, Feng (2012). "Rethinking China's Grand Strategy: Beijing's Evolving National Interests and Strategic Ideas in the Reform Era," *International Politics*, Vol. 49, No. 3, pp. 318-345.

#### **Feb 15: Chinese Aspirations: Xi Jinping's China Dream**

- Li, Cheng (2019). "Xi Jinping 'Progress': Domestic Moves Toward a Global China," *The Brookings Institution*, pp. 1-15.
- Shirk, Susan (2018). "China in Xi's New Era": The Return to Personalistic Rule," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 29, No. 2, pp. 22-36.
- Wang, Zheng (2014). "The Chinese Dream: Concept and Context," *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, Issue 19, pp. 1-13.



Optional:

- Pan, Phillip (2018). "The Land that Failed to Fail," *The New York Times*. Available at <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/11/18/world/asia/china-rules.html>

**Feb 20 and 22:** No class. I will be in Washington, D.C. serving as speaker at the Atlantic Council.

**Feb 27: Behind the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)**

- Ye, Min (2020). *The Belt Road and Beyond: State-Mobilized Globalization in China: 1998-2018* (New York: Cambridge University Press). Read chapters 1-5.

Optional:

- Liu, Hong, Kong Yam Tan, and Guanle Lim (2021). "Introduction: Southeast Asia and the Belt and Road Initiative: The Political Economy of Regionalism, Trade, and Infrastructure," *The Singapore Economic Review*, Vol. 66, No. 1, pp. 1-20.
- Yu, Hong (2017). "Motivation behind China's 'One Belt, One Road' Initiative and Establishment of the Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank," *Journal of Contemporary China*, 26, pp. 353-368.

**Feb 29: Weaponizing the BRI?**

- Russel, Daniel. R. and Blake H. Berger (2020). "Weaponizing the Belt and Road Initiative," Report by the Asia Society Policy Institute, September. Read the Introduction, Parts 2, 3, 6, and 9.
- Zhao, Suisheng. (2020). "China's Belt-Road Initiative as the signature of President Xi Jinping diplomacy: Easier said than done," *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 29, No. 123, pp. 319-335.

**March 5: Chinese Infrastructure and Firms**

- Brautigam, Deborah (2019). "Misdiagnosing the Chinese infrastructure push." *The American Interest*. Available at <https://www.the-american-interest.com/2019/04/04/misdiagnosing-the-chinese-infrastructure-push/>
- Camba, Alvin. (2021). "How Chinese firms approach investment risk: strong leaders, cancellation, and pushback," *Review of International Political Economy*, pp. 1-26.

**March 7: In-class midterm**

**March 10-17: No class. SPRING BREAK**

**March 19: China in Africa**

- Brautigam, Deborah (2009). *The Dragon's Gift. The Real Story of China in Africa* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press), Chapter 11, pp. 273-306.
- Zhu, Keren, Ben Mwangi and Lynn Hu. (2023). "Socio-economic impact of China's infrastructure-led growth model in Africa: A case study of the Kenyan Standard Gauge Railway," *Journal of International Development*, Vol. 35, No. 4, pp. 614-638.

### **March 21: China in Southeast Asia and The Pacific Islands**

- Mingjiang, L. (2020). "Southeast Asia through Chinese eyes: A strategic backyard?" In *The deer and the dragon: Southeast Asia and China in the 21st century*, edited by Donald K. Emmerson (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution Press).
- Zhang, Denghua (2022). "China's influence and local perceptions: the case of Pacific Island countries," *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 76, No. 5, pp. 575-595.

### **March 26: China in Latin America**

- Gallagher, Kevin P., & Porzecanski, R. (2008). "China matters: China's economic impact in Latin America," *Latin American Research Review*, Vol. 43, No. 1, pp. 185-200.
- Wise, Carol and Victoria Chonn Ching (2018). "Conceptualizing China-Latin America relations in the twenty-first century: the boom, the bust, and the aftermath," *The Pacific Review*, Vol. 21, Issue 5, pp. 553-572.

### **March 28: The US and China: Evolving "Friendnemies"?**

- Shirk (2022), Prologue, chapter 10, Conclusion.
- Tooze, Adam (2019). "Is this the end of the American century?" in *London Review of Books*, Vol. 41, No. 7, April 2019. Available at <https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v41/n07/adam-tooze/is-this-the-end-of-the-american-century>

Optional:

- The Hoover Institution (2019). *China's Influence & American Interests* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press).

### **April 2: US-China Trade War and Other Rivalries**

- Malkin, Anton and Tian He (2023). "The geoeconomics of global semiconductor value chains: extraterritoriality and the US-China technology rivalry," *Review of International Political Economy*, pp. 1-27.
- Zhou, Weihuan and Henry Gao (2020). "US-China Trade War: A Way Out?" *World Trade Review*, No. 19, pp. 605-617.

Optional:

- Beinart, Peter (2019). "China Isn't Cheating on Trade," *The Atlantic*. Available at <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/04/us-trade-hawks-exaggerate-chinas-threat/587536/>
- Lukin, Alexander (2019). "The US-China Trade War and China's Strategic Future," *Survival*, No. 61, pp. 23-50.

**April 4:** No class. I will be presenting at the International Studies Association (ISA) Annual Meeting.

### **April 9 and 11: Bilateral relationship discussions**

#### **April 16: Soft Power and Hard Power**

- Mearsheimer, John (2010). "The Gathering Storm: China's Challenge to US Power in Asia," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, Vol. 3, pp. 381-396.
- Repnikova, Maria (2022). "The Balance of Soft Power: The American and Chinese Quests to Win Hearts and Minds," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August. Read parts 1, 3, and 6.

Optional:

- Nye, Joseph S. Jr. (2023). "Peak China?" *Project Syndicate*. Available at <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/peak-china-debate-calls-for-careful-assessment-by-joseph-s-nye-2023-01>

#### **April 18: Toward a More Sustainable China Policy?**

- Schell, Orville and Susan Shirk (2019). "Course Correction: Toward an Effective and Sustainable China Policy," Center on China-U.S. Relations, *Asia Society*, New York, February. Read chapters 1, 3, and 5.

#### **April 23: China's Tech Race and AI**

- Mazzocco, Ilaria (2022). "Governance by Data: How China's Party-State Keeps Its Pulse on the People," *Big Data China*. Available at <https://bigdatachina.csis.org/governance-by-data-how-chinas-party-state-keeps-its-pulse-on-the-people/>
- Ryan, Fergus, Audrey Fritz, and Daria Impiombato (2021). "Reining in China's technology giants," *Australian Strategic Policy Institute*, Report No. 46/2021.

Optional:

- "FBI Director Christopher Wray's Opening Remarks: China Initiative Conference" at the *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, 6 February 2020.
- Campbell, Charlie (2019). "'The Entire System is Designed to Suppress Us.' What the Chinese Surveillance State Means for the Rest of the World," *Time*. Available at <https://time.com/5735411/china-surveillance-privacy-issues/>

#### **April 25: Propaganda and Other Core Issues**

- DiResta, Renée, Carly Miller, Vanessa Molter, John Pomfret and Glenn Tiffert (2020). "Telling China's Story: The Chinese Communist Party's Campaign to Shape Global Narratives," *Hoover Institution*. Read the Introduction, Parts 4 and 6.
- Wang, T.Y. (2019). "Generations, political attitudes and voting behavior in Taiwan and Hong Kong," *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 58, pp.80-93.

Optional:

- Kamata, Jio (2022). "The Paradox of China-Japan Relations," *The Diplomat*. Available at <https://thediplomat.com/2022/09/the-paradox-of-china-japan-relations/>

**April 26: Final paper due by 11:59 p.m. (Pacific Time)**