

Stanford University
Winter Quarter 2025
Chinese Politics POLISCI 148/348, INTNLREL 158
Tuesday/Thursday, 1:30-2:50 pm
Location: 380-380C, Bldg.380 (Sloan Hall), Main Quad
TAs: Qianmin HU: qianmin@stanford.edu
OH: Tuesday 3:00-4:30pm, Encina West 210

<https://calendly.com/qianmin/ps148-348-oh-with-qianmin>
Victoria LIU: liucx@stanford.edu, Tresidder Starbucks
OH: Fridays 11:30-1:00 p.m.
https://calendly.com/victoria_liu_cx/polisci_148

Professor Jean C. Oi
Tel. (650) 723-6765
Email: joi@stanford.edu
OH: Tues 3:15-4:45 pm & by appt.
Location: Encina Hall EAST, rm. 332
<https://go.oncehub.com/JeanCOi>

REVISED, FINAL
Political Science 148/348
International Relations 158
CHINESE POLITICS

China, one of the few remaining communist states in the world, has not only survived, but has become a global political actor of consequence with one of the fastest-growing economies in the world. What explains China's authoritarian resilience? What changes have occurred under Xi Jinping? Are the post-COVID problems in China's growth signs that there are limits to China's model of development?

Materials will include readings, lectures, and selected films. This course has no prerequisites. (Graduate students should register for PS348.)

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, URL: <https://oae.stanford.edu/>). Students expecting to require accommodations should present their OAE letters to the teaching team by the second week of the course when possible so that appropriate measures can be planned. Those who receive an accommodation after the start of the quarter should notify the instructors as soon as possible. Unless otherwise stated in an OAE letter, all OAE-recommended extensions should be pre-coordinated in advance of assignment deadlines.

BOOKS AND READINGS

All readings can be found on our course CANVAS website (see "MODULES" tab), and most articles can also be found in the Stanford [Library e-journals collection](#).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Examinations:

There will be two examinations—a mid-term and a comprehensive final. All students must take the examinations on the specified dates. Other than documented emergencies, **no exceptions will be made**. We will abide by the Stanford set final exam schedule:

FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, March 18, 2025—3:30 to 6:30 P.M. Room TBD.

2. Discussion Section:

All students are required to attend and actively participate in discussions each week.

Participation is required and will be graded for all students registered for the course. Students must register for one of the following weekly sections via CANVAS:

Tuesdays 9:30-10:20 and 10:30-11:20am—TA Qianmin Hu

- [Lane History Corner 200-202](#)

Fridays 9:30-10:20 and 10:30-11:20am—TA Victoria Liu

- [Green Earth Sciences 131](#)

3. Films

Throughout the course, students may be asked to view selected films to supplement the written materials and lectures.

4. Meet with Professor:

Meet with Prof. Oi at least once over the course of the term. Sign up online:

<https://go.oncehub.com/JeanCOi>

5. Writing Assignment: Literature Review*

• For PS148/INTNLREL 158 Students

- This assignment will ask you to critically review relevant literature on a topic and the types of data available, and identify questions for future research, both of which are key steps in formulating any research question — WITHOUT ACTUALLY WRITING THE RESEARCH PAPER.
- The topic should be related to class material and can be tailored to the background and interest of each student. Students are encouraged to consult with both the instructor and TAs throughout the quarter as they develop their projects.
- This literature review will provide the foundation for future research papers, whether for an honors or master's thesis or a paper for another class. Detailed instructions are posted on the course CANVAS website.
- Different parts of the assignment are due by 11:59 pm on the following dates:
 - ✓ January 26th: Proposal of a topic and preliminary research question
 - ✓ February 16th: Compilation of a bibliography
 - ✓ March 2nd: FIRST DRAFT—Literature review with tentative research question
 - ✓ March 16th: FINAL DRAFT—Literature review with:
 - ✧ Summary of the major arguments in the existing literature
 - ✧ Revised formulation of initial research question based on literature review
 - ✓ 8-10 pages, double spaced

- **For PS348 Students: *Additional requirements with same due dates for different parts of the assignment as above.*** See detailed instructions on CANVAS course website. The final draft of the literature review must also:

- ✧ Include the Research Design on how your research question can be answered
- ✧ Be 15-20 pages, double spaced

***Note that the literature review, including the annotated bibliography, should be the student's OWN, individual work. The use of AI tools such as ChatGPT is not permitted to generate the review. The Stanford Honor Code applies.**

GRADES:

Grades will be calculated based on the following breakdown: midterm (25%), total of literature review assignments (25%), discussion section (15%), and the final exam (35%).

TOPICS AND READINGS:

January 7: *Introduction: China's Great Transformation*

- Background reading: Kenneth, Lieberthal, *Governing China: From Revolution through Reform*, pp. 59-83

January 9: *How Much Did China have to Change?*

- Andrew G. Walder, "The Mao Era in Retrospect," Chapter 14 in *China Under Mao: A Revolution Derailed* (Harvard University Press, 2015), pp. 315-344.

January 14: *Reform in a Leninist One Party State*

- "On Questions of Party History: Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party Since the Founding of the People's Republic of China," *Beijing Review*, Vol. 24, No. 27 (Jul. 1981), pp. 10-39.
- Andrew Walder, "Bending the Arc of Chinese History: The Cultural Revolution's Paradoxical Legacy," *The China Quarterly*, No. 227 (Sep. 2016), pp. 613-630.

January 16: *Start Reform in the Countryside: From Collective to Household Farming*

- Jean Oi, "Communism and Clientelism: Rural Politics in China," *World Politics*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (Jan. 1985), pp. 238-266.
- Jean Oi, "Reflections on Forty Years of Rural Reform," Chapter 2 in Jacques deLisle and Avery Goldstein, eds., *To Get Rich is Glorious: Challenges Facing China's Economic Reform and Opening at Forty* (Brookings Institution Press, 2019), pp. 55-86.

January 21: *China's Growth Takes Off with Rural Industry: Fiscal Incentives for Local State Led Development*

- Jean C. Oi, "Fiscal Reform and the Economic Foundations of Local State Corporatism in China," *World Politics*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (Oct. 1992), pp. 99-126.
- Jean C. Oi, *Rural China Takes Off*, Chapter 3, pp. 58-94.

January 23: *Private Business and the Party State*

- Nicholas Lardy, "Private Sector Development," Chapter 18 in Ross Garnaut, Ligang Song, Cai Fang, eds., *China's Forty Years of Reforms and Development: 1978-2018* (ANU Press, 2018), pp. 329-344.
- Yue Hou, "The Evolving Relationship between the Party and the Private Sector in the Xi Era," in *The Party Leads All: The Evolving Role of the Chinese Communist Party*, eds. Jacques deLisle and Guobin Yang (Brookings Institution Press, June 2022).

January 28: *State Owned Enterprise (SOE) Reform*

- Jean C. Oi, "Politics in China's Corporate Restructuring," in Jean C. Oi, ed., *Going Private in China* (Brookings: APARC, 2011), pp. 1-19.

- Barry Naughton, "State enterprise reform today," in *China's Forty Years of Reforms and Development: 1978-2018*, eds. Ross Garnaut, Ligang Song, Cai Fang (ANU Press, 2018), No. 20.
- Chaohua Han, Xiaojun Li, and Jean Oi, "Firms as Revenue Safety Nets: Political Connections and Returns to the Chinese State," with, *The China Quarterly*, Vol. 251, pp. 683-704, September 2022.

January 30: *Central-Local Relations: Principals and Agents*

- Jean C. Oi, *Rural China Takes Off*, Chapters 5-7, pp. 139-204.
- Adam Liu, Jean Oi, and Yi Zhang, "China's Grand Bargain," *The China Journal*, Vol. 87, No. 1 (Jan. 2022), pp. 40-71.

February 4: *Consequences of Halfway Reform*

- Jean C. Oi and Steven M. Goldstein, "Change within Continuity: Zouping County Government," in Jean C. Oi and Steven M. Goldstein, eds., *Zouping Revisited: Adaptive Governance in a Chinese County* (Stanford Press, 2018), pp. 3-28.
- Thomas Fingar and Jean C. Oi, "Introduction" in Thomas Fingar and Jean C. Oi, eds., *Fateful Decisions*, pp. 1-14.

February 6: *Midterm Examination*****

*Students should view Film: Carma Hinton, "Gate of Heavenly Peace," BEFORE FEB. 11th
Class session will be discussion of the film. Link to film available on CANVAS.*

February 11: *Limits of Reform: 1989 Tiananmen*

- Andrew Walder, "The Political Sociology of the Beijing Upheaval of 1989," *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 38, Iss. 5 (Sep.-Oct. 1989), pp. 30-40.
- June T. Dreyer, "The People's Liberation Army and the Power Struggle of 1989," *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 38, Iss. 5 (Sep.-Oct. 1989), pp. 41-48.

February 13: *Village Elections and the Beginnings of Democracy?*

- Jean Oi and Scott Rozelle, "Elections and Power: The Locus of Decision Making in Chinese Villages," *China Quarterly*, No. 162 (Jun. 2000), pp. 513-539.
- Tan Zhao, "Vote Buying and Land Taking in China's Village Elections," *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 27, No. 110 (2018), pp. 277-294.
- Ben Hillman, "The End of Village Democracy in China," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (Jul. 2023), pp. 62-76.

February 18: *Xi Jinping and the Fate of Reform*

- Bruce J. Dickson, "The Survival Strategy of the Chinese Communist Party," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 39, Iss. 4 (2016).
- Alice Miller, "Xi Jinping and the Evolution of Chinese Political Leadership Politics," in Fingar and Oi, *Fateful Decisions*, pp. 33-51.
- Barry Naughton, "Grand Steerage," Chapter 2 in Fingar and Oi, *Fateful Decisions*, pp. 51-81.

February 20: *Corruption and Rule of Law*

- Andrew Wedeman, "Anti-corruption Forever?" in Fingar and Oi, *Fateful Decisions*, pp. 82-106.
- Yuen Yuen Ang, "The Robber Barons of Beijing: Can China Survive its Gilded Age?" *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 100, No. 4 (Jul.-Aug. 2021), pp. 30-39.
- Branko Milanovic and Li Yang, "How Corruption Fuels Inequality in China: Graft on a Staggering Scale Warps the Country's Economy," *Foreign Affairs*, September 11, 2024.

February 25: *Discontent, Protests, and Governance*

- Diana Fu and Gregory Distelhorst, "Grassroots Participation and Repression under Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping," *The China Journal*, Vol. 79 (Jan. 2018), pp. 100-122.
- Chuxuan Liu and Eli Friedman, "Resistance under the Radar: Organization of Work and Collective Action in China's Food Delivery Industry," *The China Journal*, Vol. 86 (July 2021), pp. 68-89.
- Jing Vivian Zhan, "Repress or Redistribute? The Chinese State's Response to Resource Conflicts," *The China Quarterly*, 248, December 2021, pp. 987-1010.

February 27: *Tool or Weapon: Internet & the Party State*

- Rongbin Han, "Defending the Authoritarian Regime Online: China's 'Voluntary Fifty-cent Army,'" *The China Quarterly*, Vol. 224 (Dec. 2015), pp. 1006-1025.
- Xueguang Zhou, "Social Media and Governance in China," Chapter 5 in Fingar and Oi, *Fateful Decisions*, pp. 128-150.
- Mary Gallagher and Blake Miller, "Who Not What: The Logic of China's Information Control Strategy," *The China Quarterly*, 248, December 2021, pp. 1011-1036

March 4: *Authoritarian Resilience: The Sustainability of China's Development Model*

- Hongbin Li, James Liang, Scott Rozelle, and Binzhen Wu, "Human Capital and China's Future," Chapter 8 in Fingar and Oi, *Fateful Decisions*, pp. 200-224.
- Ren-Jie Hong, Yu-Chi Tseng and Thung-Hong Lin, "Guarding a New Great Wall: The Politics of Household Registration Reforms and Public Provision in China," *The China Quarterly*, 251, September 2022, pp. 776-797.
- Alexsia T. Chan and Kevin J. O'Brien, "Phantom Services: Deflecting Migrant Workers in China," *The China Journal*, Vol. 81 (Jan. 2019), pp. 103-122.

March 6: *Challenges for China's Development Model*

- Karen Eggleston, "Demographic and Health Care Challenges," Chapter 6 in Fingar and Oi, *Fateful Decisions*, pp. 151-179.
- Zongyuan Zoe Liu, "China's Real Economic Crisis: Why Beijing Won't Give Up on a Failing Model," *Foreign Affairs* 103, no. 5 (September/October 2024): 160-176
- Paul Cavey, "China's Consumption Challenge," *China Leadership Monitor*, Winter 2024 Issue 82, Sunday, December 1, 2024

March 11: *Regime Stability and Prospects for Change* (via ZOOM)

- Andrew Walder, "China's National Trajectory," Chapter 14 in *Fateful Decisions*, pp. 335-358.
- Patricia M. Thornton, "'Lying Flat-ism': Is the Party Under Xi 'Governing People to Death'?", *China Leadership Monitor*, Summer 2024 Issue 80, Saturday, June 1, 2024
- Michael Alisky, Scott Rozelle, and Martin King Whyte, "Getting Ahead in Today's China: From Optimism to Pessimism," *The China Journal* (forthcoming, 2025).

March 13: Wrap up and Review (via ZOOM)

March 18, 2025: FINAL EXAM—Tuesday, March 18th 3:30 to 6:30 P.M. Room TBA.