

PPOL5340

China and the World: Policies and Development Strategies

Instructor:

Dr. Michael Tyrala

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Room 4339, 4/F, Academic Building
(Office hours by appointment)

Teaching Assistant:

Siqi Xie

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Time: Wednesdays, 13:30-16:20

Place: Room 5583, Lift 29-30 (80)



Course Description:

Over the past forty years, China's astounding growth culminated in its rise as the second largest economy in the world. With its "Going Out" policy and the launch of the Belt and Road Initiative in 2013, China's presence and influence in the rest of the world has led to polarized reactions, diverging narratives, and shifting equilibriums of power. As the historian Michael Szonyi wrote: "*China matters. In a certain obvious sense, China has always mattered and always will. What happens to a fifth of the world's population is important. But today China matters not only to the Chinese people themselves but also to Americans and to the rest of the world in some new, unexpected, and interesting ways – and not only because of China's large and growing role in the world economy. Of the many pressing problems facing our world – from climate change to economic growth to maritime security to counterterrorism – none can be solved or even addressed effectively without China's participation.*" This is why it has become increasingly important for policymakers and experts from think tanks, NGOs, and consultancies to be acquainted with the uniqueness of China's evolving development model, its impact on the rest of the world, and the challenges that lie ahead.

Course Objectives:

This course is designed to equip students with fundamental knowledge about China, but also key theoretical foundations from development studies, international relations, and political economy, in order to enable them to think critically about China's role in the world and in specific countries. The different tasks in the course will enable students to produce detailed policy recommendations on China as well as to critically evaluate existing analyses and policy briefs on China. Hence, it is designed specifically for public policy students that aim to work in governments, public administrations, think tanks, NGOs, or consultancies. It will provide students with a broad coverage of issues in different countries around the world.

Upon successfully completing the course, students will be able to:

- Understand and evaluate the policy processes and implications of China opening its door to the rest of the world.
- Utilize multidisciplinary theories to examine China's unique developmental model and its implications for the rest of the world.
- Critically analyze the political, economic, social, and cultural relations between China and a selected set of key powers and regions.
- Critically assess development strategies and policy agendas.
- Understand China's relations with other countries and international organizations under an increasingly complex geopolitical environment.

Course Structure:

This course combines lectures, class and online discussions, documentaries, expert guest speakers, and individual and group work to familiarize students with the various multifaceted issues related to China and its engagement with the rest of the world. The approach is multidisciplinary, drawing on insights and methods from public policy, global political economy, international relations, and development studies, and blends theory with practice through exposure to numerous real life case studies. The course is open to MPP, MPM, and other PG/UG programs.

Overview of Assessment:

Assessment Task	Weight	Date
Attendance and Active Participation (Discussions of lectures, documentaries, and required readings)	20%	Throughout
Policy Brief (A 1,500-word policy brief written from the point of view of an analyst working for a government ministry, a government think tank, an NGO, or another similar body)	20%	October 29
Assessment of a Policy Brief (A 500-word long assessment of a policy brief written from the point of view of a policymaker whom the policy brief was addressed to)	20%	November 12
Final Quiz (A combination of multiple choice, short-answer, and long-answer questions based on material from the whole course)	40%	December 6 (Room 2407)

Explanation of Assessment:

(1) ATTENDANCE AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION (20%)

Attendance is mandatory, unless the student in question has a well-documented reason, which should ideally be provided to my teaching assistant **Ms. Siqi Xie (Kallie)** at sxieaj@connect.ust.hk before the missed class, or in cases of emergencies as soon as possible after the missed class.

Lectures will frequently be interspersed with and followed by class discussions, and the Canvas discussion board will be available to contribute to on a weekly basis as well.

There is a substantial amount of required readings to be done individually by each student in this course (on average around 40-45 pages per lecture week). Students are expected to set aside sufficient time to complete this mandatory reading load before each meeting, and use the class discussions and the weekly Canvas discussion boards to demonstrate that they have done so. Only students that actively participate

on a regular basis through clear, concise, and insightful comments, and by asking pertinent questions that enhance the debate will be able to receive full credit for this part of the assessment. The quantity of engagement matters, but so does its quality, so while any and all eligible participation is welcome and will be counted, not all interventions will necessarily be worth the same.

(2) POLICY BRIEF (20%)

By October 29, you will be tasked with writing a 1,500-word long (+/- 10%) policy brief. The policy brief has to be written from the point of view of an analyst working for a government ministry, a government think tank, an NGO, or another similar body from a country of your choice on a topic of your choice, as long as the topic is directly related to China, and carries contemporary relevance in the chosen country (which naturally cannot be China itself). A few samples of China-related policy briefs are available on Canvas, and more can be found on a wide variety of academic and foreign policy think tank portals, such as, but by far not limited to, the Wilson Center (<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/>), the China Africa Research Institute (<https://www.sais-cari.org/>), China Matters (<https://chinamatters.org.au/>), and the Mercator Institute for China Studies (<https://www.merics.org/>), among numerous others.

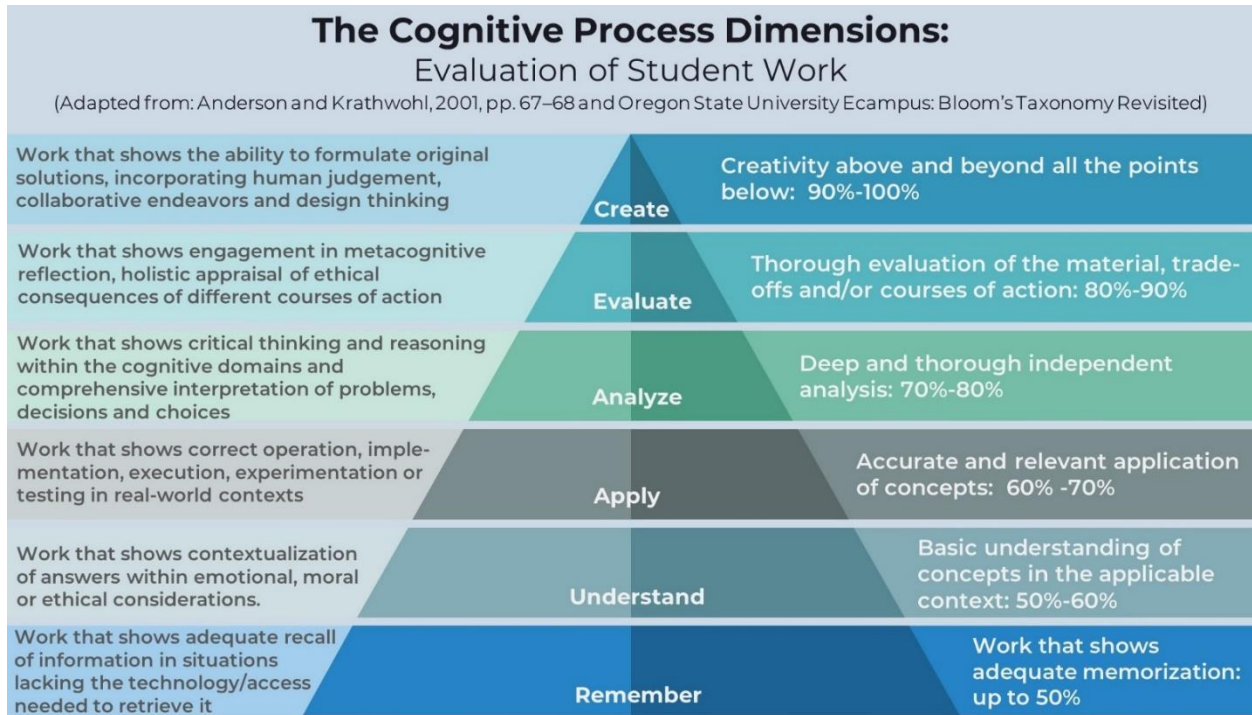
(3) ASSESSMENT OF A POLICY BRIEF (20%)

By November 19, you will be tasked with writing a 500-word long (+/- 10%) assessment of a policy brief written from the point of view of a policymaker whom the policy brief was addressed to. Each student will be given a policy brief written by one of their classroom colleagues (the exact pairings will be arranged by me), and will be tasked with assessing its quality (e.g., is it well researched and argued, or do the sources lack credibility while key aspects of the analysis have not been considered?), and then deciding whether any of the offered policy recommendations would be accepted or not, justifying why or why not.

(4) FINAL QUIZ (40%)

In Week 14 (December 6), a 3-hour open book final quiz will be administered in class in Room 2407. It will consist of 8 multiple choice questions, 4 short-answer questions (around 200-word answers each) and 2 long-answer questions (around 600-word answers each) based on material from the required readings and the lectures from the whole course.

Course Grading:



Course Schedule:

LECTURES	
Time: Wednesdays, 13:30-16:20	
Place: Room 5583, Lift 29-30 (80)	
WEEK 1	(Sep 6): Course introduction
PART I: CHINA AND THE WORLD – KEY IDEOLOGIES, THEORIES, AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	
WEEK 2	(Sep 13): Contextualizing the ideological and theoretical foundations of contemporary reality in the global arena
WEEK 3	(Sep 20): Geopolitics, geoeconomics, soft power, and other useful concepts
WEEK 4	(Sep 27): Theories of development and the rise of today’s great powers
WEEK 5	(Oct 4): The rise of China

PART II: CHINA AND THE WORLD – KEY POLICY ISSUES	
WEEK 6	(Oct 11): China’s role in global development, economic, and financial governance
WEEK 7	(Oct 18): China’s role in global energy, environmental, and climate governance
WEEK 8	(Oct 25): China’s role in global peace, security, and conflict resolution governance
PART III: CHINA AND THE WORLD – RELATIONS WITH KEY POWERS AND REGIONS	
WEEK 9	(Nov 1): China’s relations with the United States of America
WEEK 10	(Nov 8): China’s relations with the Russian Federation and the European Union
WEEK 11	(Nov 15): China’s relations with Asia and the Pacific
WEEK 12	(Nov 22): China’s relations with Africa and Latin America
WEEK 13	(Nov 29): Reading week (NO CLASS)
WEEK 14	(Dec 6): FINAL QUIZ (Room 2407)