

INTL 8200 - FALL 2025

Special Topics: China and the World Order

Ryan Powers
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Mondays, 6:30 p.m.–9:15 p.m., in Room 117 of 202 Herty Drive.

Office hours: On Zoom by appointment (<https://ryanpowers.youcanbook.me/>).

Course Description

This course is a graduate-level seminar for Masters of International Policy students on how the rise of China has shaped the world order. In this course, we review the history of China's relations with the international community since World War II and use theories of international politics to consider how the rise of China has effected international relations between states and the international system as a whole. We will place particular emphasis on critically evaluating the theoretical arguments advanced by IR scholars about China and the evidence that they marshal in support for those arguments. Substantively, we will focus on facets of China's foreign policy that implicate questions of global governance and the world order including the Belt and Road Initiative, the renmibi as a potential reserve currency, economic relations with the United States, and China's place in the international liberal order.

Course Materials

There are no required textbooks for this course. Those readings that are not readily available online or via the library will be posted on the [eLearning Commons](#).

Grading and Expectations

Grade Composition

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

- Class attendance and participation: 25%
- Three response papers: 25%
- Discussion lead: 10%
- Literature Review: 30%
- Final Presentation: 10%

Grading Scale

- 94–100: A
- 90–93: A-
- 87–89: B+
- 84–87: B
- 80–83: B-
- 77–79: C+
- 74–77: C
- 70–73: C-
- 67–69: D+
- 64–67: D
- 60–63: D-
- Less than 59: F

Participation

Your participation in class discussions is vital to our success this semester. By the start of each class meeting, you should have read the assigned work closely enough to actively participate in a detailed and critical discussion of the arguments and evidence presented by the authors. I also expect you to be familiar with the major international news stories of the day. You get access to both *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal* as part of your student activities fees. Failing to actively participate in class discussions will result in a participation grade penalty for the day.

Assignments

Assignments should be submitted online to the eLearning Commons.

- **Response Essays.** You will write three response essays over the course of the semester in which you critically evaluate one or more of a given week's assigned readings. A successful response essay will *quickly* summarize the major claims of a given reading, discuss how those claims are evaluated empirically, and then identify several strengths or weaknesses of the argument and/or the empirical evidence used to support that argument. Each essay should be about 1,000 words and conclude with at least two ideas for in-class discussion questions. Response papers are due the evening before we discuss the readings about which you have written.
- **Discussion Lead.** You (and perhaps a colleague or two) will lead the class discussion one week during the semester. You will be responsible for writing discussion questions and moderating our review and critique of each of the readings. You will sign up for a discussion slot on the first day of class.
- **Literature Review.** You will write a 15 page literature review on a topic related to the international relations of China. The review should provide a broad overview of the scholarly literature published on your topic. While your focus should be on research published in last 25 years or so, you may find it useful to engage some of the foundational works published in earlier periods. As part of your overview, I expect you to critique the dominant theories and prominent empirical tests. The paper should conclude by outlining the most important outstanding questions/challenges in the topic area. I will distribute a detailed rubric in first weeks of the course. *Hint: Select your the readings for your response essays with an eye towards your literature review; they may serve as "first drafts" of portions of your literature review.*

If you are taking INTL 6000 or INTL 6010, I encourage you to align your literature review topic with your INTL 6000 policy report and/or your INTL 6010 research design assignment.

- **Final Presentation.** You will give a 8 minute presentation summarizing your literature review to your colleagues in class at the end of the semester. Your focus should be on the outstanding questions in the topic area.

University and SPIA Policies

Accommodations

In accordance with UGA policy, “[s]tudents with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations in order to participate in course activities or meet course requirements should contact the instructor or designate during regular office hours or by appointment.” More information about accommodations that are available to students with disabilities is available from the [Disability Resource Center](#).

Academic Integrity and Professional Conduct

I expect you to do your own work and to abide by all university policies on academic integrity and professional conduct. In part, these policies state:

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University’s academic honesty policy, “A Culture of Honesty,” and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in “A Culture of Honesty” found at: <https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/>. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

Well-being, Mental Health, and Student Support

If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care & Outreach (SCO) in the Division of Student Affairs at (706) 542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu/>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services. UGA has several resources to support your well-being and mental health (<https://well-being.uga.edu/>). Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS) is your go-to, on-campus resource for emotional, social and behavioral-health support (<https://caps.uga.edu/>). You can get help online with Therapy Assistance Online (TAO) at (<https://caps.uga.edu/tao/>) or 24/7 by phone (706) 542-2273. The University Health Center offers FREE workshops, classes, mentoring and health coaching led by licensed clinicians or health educators (<https://healthcenter.uga.edu/>).

For crisis support go to: <https://healthcenter.uga.edu/emergencies/>.

Course Outline

The UGA Course Syllabus Policy requires me to include the following statement: “The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviation announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.”

1. Monday, August 18, 2025: Preliminaries
 - No reading.
2. Monday, August 25, 2025: A short history of China’s rise
 - MacMillan, Margaret. *Nixon and Mao: The Week That Changed the World*. Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2008.
 - Morrison, Wayne M. “China’s Economic Rise: History, Trends, Challenges, and Implications for the United States.” *Current Politics and Economics of Northern and Western Asia* 28, nos. 2/3 (2019): 189–242.
 - Johnston, Alastair Iain. “China in a world of orders: Rethinking compliance and challenge in Beijing’s international relations.” *International Security* 44, no. 2 (2019): 9–60.

- He, Kai, and Huiyun Feng. “Xi Jinping’s Operational Code Beliefs and China’s Foreign Policy.” *Chinese Journal of International Politics* 6, no. 3 (2013): 209–231.
3. Monday, September 01, 2025: Labor Day, No Class
 4. Monday, September 08, 2025: Power Transitions
 - Brooks, Stephen G, and William C Wohlforth. “The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers in the Twenty-first Century: China’s Rise and the Fate of America’s Global Position.” *International security* 40, no. 3 (2015): 7–53.
 - Johnston, Alastair Iain. “Is China a Status Quo Power?” *International security* 27, no. 4 (2003): 5–56.
 - Lebow, Richard Ned, and Benjamin Valentino. “Lost in Transition: A Critical Analysis of Power Transition Theory.” *International Relations* 23, no. 3 (2009): 389–410.
 - Powell, Robert. “War as a Commitment Problem.” *International Organization* 60, no. 1 (2006): 169–203.
 - Monteiro, Nuno P, and Alexandre Debs. “An Economic Theory of War.” *The Journal of Politics* 82, no. 1 (2020): 255–268.
 5. Monday, September 15, 2025: Status and Humiliation
 - Renshon, Jonathan. “Status Deficits and War.” *International Organization*, 2016, 513–550.
 - Musgrave, Paul, and Daniel H Nexon. “Defending Hierarchy from the Moon to the Indian Ocean: Symbolic Capital and Political Dominance in Early Modern China and The Cold War.” *International Organization* 72, no. 3 (2018): 591–626.
 - Strange, Austin. “Symbols of State: Explaining Prestige Projects in the Global South.” *International Studies Quarterly* 68, no. 2 (2024): sqae049.
 - Masterson, Michael. “Catching Fire: How National Humiliation Spreads Hostile Foreign Policy Preferences on Chinese Social Media.” *International Studies Quarterly* 68, no. 2 (2024): sqae033.
 - Huang, Haifeng. “International Knowledge and Domestic Evaluations in a Changing Society: The Case of China.” *American Political Science Review* 109, no. 3 (2015): 613–634.
 6. Monday, September 22, 2025: Identity and Trust
 - Herrera, Yoshiko M, and Andrew H Kydd. “Don’t Look Back in Anger: Cooperation Despite Conflicting Historical Narratives.” *American Political Science Review*, 2023, 1–15.
 - Li, Xiaojun, Jianwei Wang, and Dingding Chen. “Chinese citizens’ trust in Japan and South Korea: Findings from a four-city survey.” *International Studies Quarterly* 60, no. 4 (2016): 778–789.
 - Jia, Ruixue, and Margaret E Roberts. “Policy Community Preferences on US-China Scientific Collaborations: A Survey Experiment.” *Available at SSRN 4943104*.
 - Renshon, Jonathan, and Ryan Powers. “Identity and the Social Construction of Reputation in World Politics,” 2024.
 7. Monday, September 29, 2025: Domestic Politics
 - Jost, Tyler. “The Institutional Origins of Miscalculation in China’s International Crises.” *International Security* 48, no. 1 (2023): 47–90.
 - Weiss, Jessica Chen. “Authoritarian signaling, mass audiences, and nationalist protest in China.” *International Organization* 67, no. 1 (2013): 1–35.
 - Weiss, Jessica Chen, and Allan Dafoe. “Authoritarian Audiences, Rhetoric, and Propaganda in International Crises: Evidence from China.” *International Studies Quarterly* 63, no. 4 (2019): 963–973.
 - King, Gary, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E Roberts. “How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression.” *American political science Review* 107, no. 2 (2013): 326–343.

8. Monday, October 06, 2025: Foreign Aid

- Dreher, Axel, Andreas Fuchs, Bradley Parks, Austin Strange, and Michael J Tierney. *Banking on Beijing: The Aims and Impacts of China's Overseas Development Program*. Cambridge University Press, 2022, Chapters 1–3.
- Hernandez, Diego. “Are ‘New’ Donors Challenging World Bank conditionality?” *World Development* 96 (2017): 529–549.
- Rolland, Nadège. “China’s ‘Belt and Road Initiative’: Underwhelming or game-changer?” *The Washington Quarterly* 40, no. 1 (2017): 127–142.
- Brazys, Samuel, Johan A Elkind, and Gina Kelly. “Bad Neighbors? How Co-located Chinese and World Bank Development Projects Impact Local Corruption in Tanzania.” *The Review of International Organizations* 12, no. 2 (2017): 227–253.

9. Monday, October 13, 2025: Global Reserve Currencies

- Cohen, Benjamin J. “Currency statecraft: Monetary rivalry and geopolitical ambition,” 2018, Chapters 1 and 2.
- McDowell, Daniel. *Bucking the Buck: US Financial Sanctions and the International Backlash Against the Dollar*. Oxford University Press, 2023, Introduction and chapter 8.
- Weldzius, Ryan M. “The End of Currency Manipulation? Global Production Networks and Exchange Rate Outcomes.” *Economics & Politics* 33, no. 3 (2021): 514–532.
- Galantucci, Robert A. “The Repercussions of Realignment: United States–China Interdependence and Exchange Rate Politics.” *International Studies Quarterly* 59, no. 3 (2015): 423–435.

10. Monday, October 20, 2025: International Financial Institutions

- Wang, Yu. “The Political Economy of Joining the AIIB.” *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 11, no. 2 (2018): 105–130.
- Kaya, Ayse. *Power and Global Economic Institutions*. Cambridge University Press, 2015, Chapter 5.
- Pratt, Tyler. “Angling for Influence: Institutional Proliferation in Development Banking.” *International Studies Quarterly* 65, no. 1 (2021): 95–108.
- Kaya, Ayse, Christopher Kilby, and Jonathan Kay. “Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank as an instrument for Chinese influence? Supplementar Versus Remedial Multilateralism.” *World Development* 145 (2021): 105531.

11. Monday, October 27, 2025: Investment

- Liao, Steven. “Chinese Foreign Real Estate Investment and Local Voting in US Presidential Elections.” *International Studies Quarterly* 67, no. 4 (2023): sqado84.
- Tingley, Dustin, Christopher Xu, Adam Chilton, and Helen V Milner. “The Political Economy of Inward FDI: Opposition to Chinese Mergers and Acquisitions.” *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 8, no. 1 (2015): 27–57.
- Pearson, Margaret M, Meg Rithmire, and Kellee S Tsai. “China’s Party-State Capitalism and International Backlash: From Interdependence to Insecurity.” *International Security* 47, no. 2 (2022): 135–176.
- Gallagher, Mary E. “‘Reform and openness’: Why China’s Economic Reforms Have Delayed Democracy.” *World Politics* 54, no. 3 (2002): 338–372.
- Leblang, David. “Familiarity Breeds Investment: Diaspora Networks and International Investment.” *American Political Science Review* 104, no. 3 (2010): 584–600.

12. Monday, November 03, 2025: The Liberal Order

- Larson, Deborah Welch, and Alexei Shevchenko. “Status Concerns and Multilateral Cooperation.” Chap. 10 in *International cooperation: The extents and limits of multilateralism*, edited by William Zartman and Touval Saadia. Cambridge University Press, 2010.

- Ikenberry, G John. “The Rise of China and the Future of the West: Can the Liberal System Survive?” *Foreign Affairs* 87 (2008): 23.
- Owen, John M. “Two Emerging International Orders? China and the United States.” *International Affairs* 97, no. 5 (2021): 1415–1431.
- Weiss, Jessica Chen, and Jeremy L Wallace. “Domestic politics, China’s rise, and the future of the liberal international order.” *International Organization* 75, no. 2 (2021): 635–664.
- Ambrosio, Thomas. “Catching the ‘Shanghai Spirit’: How the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Promotes Authoritarian Norms in Central Asia.” *Europe-Asia Studies* 60, no. 8 (2008): 1321–1344.

13. Monday, November 10, 2025: The China Shock

- Autor, David H, David Dorn, and Gordon H Hanson. “The China Shock: Learning from Labor-market Adjustment to Large Changes in Trade.” *Annual review of economics* 8, no. 1 (2016): 205–240.
- Margalit, Yotam. “Political responses to economic shocks.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 22, no. 1 (2019): 277–295.
- Feenstra, Robert C, and Akira Sasahara. “The ‘China Shock,’ Exports, and US Employment: A Global Input-Output Analysis.” *Review of International Economics* 26, no. 5 (2018): 1053–1083.
- Feigenbaum, James J, and Andrew B Hall. “How Legislators Respond to Localized Economic Shocks: Evidence from Chinese Import Competition.” *The Journal of Politics* 77, no. 4 (2015): 1012–1030.
- Ballard-Rosa, Cameron, Mashail A Malik, Stephanie J Rickard, and Kenneth Scheve. “The Economic Origins of Authoritarian Values: Evidence from Local Trade Shocks in the United Kingdom.” *Comparative Political Studies* 54, no. 13 (2021): 2321–2353.

14. Monday, November 17, 2025: People’s choice

- Over the course of the semester, I will collect ideas for additional readings or topics of interest from the class.

15. Monday, November 24, 2025: Thanksgiving, No Class

16. Monday, December 01, 2025: **Final presentations**