CHINESE/COLL 150

Revolution in Life—How Communism Changed China

Time: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11:00am–12:20pm, Remote Synchronous

Instructor: Professor/Dr. Emily Wilcox (aka “魏老师”)

Email: eewilcox@wm.edu
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 1:00pm-3:00pm & by appointment.
Sign up for Office Hours here: https://calendar.google.com/calendar/u/0/selfsched?sstoken=UUXLTXQxOXo5cXNuGRIZmF1bHR8OTlhZjQzYjM3ODJ0NzU0ZmE1NzQwM2IxZjQ2Y2M0Zjg

Course Overview: China is one of the only countries in the world ruled by a political party that calls itself communist. Furthermore, the country’s communist history has been a major source of tension and misunderstanding between China and the United States. What were the early models and inspirations for China’s communist revolution? Why did China become communist and what did communism mean to the leaders of China’s revolution? What did communism entail as a mode of social organization and everyday experience? How did men and women and rural and urban people experience communist revolution differently? What was art and culture like in China during the period of communist revolution? In this course, we answer these questions and others through an interdisciplinary examination of Chinese culture in the twentieth century. Using a combination of historical writings, personal interviews, feature films, and primary texts from revolutionary thinkers, students will explore the diverse meanings and lived experiences of China’s communist revolution and the legacies it has left today.
WHAT IS COLL 150?
Official description: “In a COLL 150 course, you’ll engage in deep readings and group discussions of texts, data, or methods of inquiry from the discipline. These are small classes that typically focus on a more narrow topic. Along with learning methods of scholarly research, you can expect to practice and strengthen your writing skills. As you become more aware of the rhetorical nature of academic writing (to clearly and persuasively communicate your ideas), you’ll experience how the process of writing includes revision and self-editing. Through your work in this course and others across the curriculum, you’ll become more skilled at writing prose that communicates complex ideas in your own lively, intelligent, and interesting voice.”

Prerequisites: None.

Course Objectives:
- Carry out critical reflection and writing on Chinese communism and its historical representations within the context of Cold War politics;
- Gain an understanding of the history of Chinese communism, from its beginnings in Marxist revolutionary thought and the Russian revolution through its culmination in the Chinese revolution and the establishment of the People’s Republic of China;
- Learn and articulate in writing about the social transformation of Chinese society during and after the Chinese communist revolution through a diverse array of sources;
- Become familiar with the cultural strategies employed by Chinese communist artists and intellectuals and interpret films and other media from the early PRC period;
- Engage in the guided process of research, writing, and revision of a research paper;
- Practice, improve, and refine skills of written communication and academic research.

Readings and other course materials: This course takes advantage of materials available for free to students through the W&M Swem Library. Most required course readings and viewings are available to students at no cost. Students are encouraged to purchase their own copies of the following three books or access the ebooks available through Swem:
- Readings on Blackboard or online, as listed in the Schedule (marked by *)
Course Requirements: Students will be graded on a combination of attendance, participation, reading quizzes, three short papers, an interview project, and a final paper. Grades will be broken down as follows:

- Attendance and Participation: 15%
- Reading Quizzes: 20%
- Interview Project (2 pp + recording, presentation): 15%
- Three Analytical Papers (3 pp each = 9 pp total): 30%
- Final Paper (4 pp draft + 9 pp revision/final = 13 pp total): 20%
- Peer Review Process: P/F
- In-class writing exercises: P/F

- Attendance: Class will begin promptly at 11:00am and end promptly at 12:20pm. Students are expected to arrive on-time and attend class in its entirety. Students should have their cameras on during class to get full attendance points (turning it off for a minute or two here and there is ok, but not for prolonged periods—if you have extenuating circumstances that make this difficult, please talk to the professor). All students will be allowed one free excused absence to be used anytime during the semester. After that, excused absences will be granted only for extenuating circumstances such as illness, family emergency, or required participation in a university activity. Students must email the professor before class for an excused absence. Please review the W&M Honor Code. Unexcused absences will result in a “0” for the attendance and participation grade for that day. Quizzes missed for excused absences can be made up for full credit. Quizzes missed for unexcused absences can be made up for 2/3 credit. Missed quizzes can be made up in office hours within one week of the original date.

- Participation: As a seminar course, this class employs interactive teaching methods in place of a lecture format. Students are expected to complete required readings and/or viewings before class and to arrive prepared to participate actively in class discussion. While active listening is an important component of participation, a complete participation grade should also include verbal contributions to class discussion, either spoken orally or written in the chat. Apart from large group discussion, brainstorming activities and break-out groups will also be used to encourage a lively and interactive atmosphere. Short writing assignments will also be completed in class and will contribute to this portion of the course grade. An important part of full participation will also include leaving time for all classmates to talk and responding meaningfully to others’ contributions.

- Reading quizzes: Periodically, pop quizzes will take place at the beginning of class to assess students’ preparation of the assigned readings and viewings for that day. Unlike assignments, there will be no prior warning. These quizzes are designed to provide incentives for keeping up with the course readings, as well as a system to identify and reward students who consistently complete the reading and viewings on time. Quizzes typically consist of ten true/false and multiple choice questions and are designed to assess basic completion of the reading, not comprehension. At the end of the semester, the lowest quiz score will be dropped.
**Interview Project:** During Unit Two, students will conduct a 90-minute oral history interview with a person who lived in the People’s Republic of China at least through high school. This may be a member of the student’s family, a classmate, teacher, or neighbor, the relative of a friend or acquaintance, or someone the student is matched with through the assistance of the professor. Prior to the interview, students will submit an Interview Plan and learn basic interview skills during in-class activities. After the interview is complete, students will submit a recording along with a short (2-pages double spaced) reflection paper, which will serve as the basis for a short in-class presentation. Detailed instructions for this project will be distributed to students during Unit One.

**Three Analytical Papers:** At the end of each Unit, students will synthesize their learning through a written response in the form of a 3-page (double spaced) expository paper written in response to a question prompt. These papers are NOT research papers. Instead, they require students to respond to the required course readings and materials. Students will be evaluated on their ability to develop an original thesis in response to the posted question, by drawing upon evidence from the course content. The final day of each Unit will be dedicated to brainstorming ideas for the paper. A Peer Review Process will be carried out for each of these three papers, with the requirement to submit one in a revised form for a revised grade.

**Final Paper:** You will complete a series of steps in the research and writing process that will culminate in a research paper of 9 pages (double spaced). You will receive verbal or written feedback from the professor at each stage of the process. Students are encouraged to start thinking early about a topic they may like to research. Below are some dates to note for the Final Paper:

- A topic, a set of research questions, and a preliminary bibliography (Final Paper Plan) will be due April 11.
- An abstract (roughly 250 words) will be due April 18.
- A rough draft (minimum of 4 pages) will be due April 29th, and a peer review session will be conducted in class on that day. During this week, students will also schedule individual office hours appointments with the professor for additional feedback.
- A one-page revision plan that is based on your peer review and your meeting with the professor will be due in class on May 4.
- Students will carry out a robust revision and expansion of their draft based on peer and instructor feedback.
- Oral presentations on the final project will take place in class on May 4 and May 6.
- A final version of the research paper will be due on May 12 at 5:00pm.

For instructions on citations, students should refer to the following guide: [https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/turabian/citation-guide.html](https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/turabian/citation-guide.html)

A full assignment description will be distributed later in the semester.

**Assignments:** All assigned readings and viewings should be completed before class on the day noted in the course schedule. Assignments listed under “prepare” should be brought to class in electronic typed form that can be distributed via Zoom (they should be...
on the same device you will be using to connect on Zoom to allow for copy and paste, sharing screen, and other functions as needed. All other written assignments should be submitted on Blackboard. Students will receive written feedback on all assignments and are encouraged to visit the professor during Office Hours to discuss any questions or concerns. Grades will be posted regularly on Blackboard for student review and verification.

**Office Hours:** This is a precious opportunity to get to know your instructors and to get one-on-one attention and advice. Take advantage of it! You can use office hours to get feedback on a recent assignment, to brainstorm ideas for your final project, or to talk about the class and your interests in general. Times and instructions can be found at the top of this syllabus. Slots are allocated in 10-minute slots, and students can feel free to sign up for more than one slot back-to-back if they have something longer to discuss.

**Email:** Students are responsible for regularly checking and reading all course-related emails and Blackboard announcements. Instructors will make every effort to respond to student emails within 24 hours, excluding weekends. Questions posed in email should be limited to those that can be answered within 2-3 sentences. Complex content-related questions or requests for feedback on individual assignments should be addressed during office hours or in discussion.

**Disabilities and Special Accommodations:** William & Mary accommodates students with disabilities in accordance with federal laws and university policy. Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a learning, psychiatric, physical, or chronic health diagnosis should contact Student Accessibility Services staff at 757-221-2512 or at sas@wm.edu to determine if accommodations are warranted and to obtain an official letter of accommodation. For more information, please see [www.wm.edu/sas](http://www.wm.edu/sas).

**Writing Resources Center:** Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of one-on-one peer consultation and other forms of writing support provided by the Writing Resources Center (WRC). The WRC “help[s] you strengthen your writing and communication skills by providing resources, workshops, and individual support for all kinds of assignments and projects that require writing: academic essays, presentations, storyboards, posters, personal statements, creative writing, applications, and more.” [https://www.wm.edu/as/wrc/](https://www.wm.edu/as/wrc/)

**Professional Conduct on Zoom:** To maintain the privacy of class discussions and content, please do not share our Zoom meeting information with people who are not registered for class unless you have prior permission from the instructor. If you need to share your workspace with siblings, roommates, etc., please use headphones so that you are the only one in the room who can hear our class discussions. To minimize background noise and distractions, please mute your microphone until you are ready to speak. Students should feel free to eat, drink, stand, and move around during Zoom sessions as long as it is not disruptive to other students. We will usually take a 5-minute break in the middle of class so that students can stretch, rest their eyes, etc. Please use the
chat box or the microphone to speak out at any time if you cannot see the screen-share, hear video sound, or other technological issues occur. Feedback is always welcome!

**Academic Integrity and Plagiarism:** Plagiarism will result in an automatic failing of this course and possible disciplinary action by the University. It is your responsibility to understand the rules of plagiarism and to cite your sources appropriately in assignments for this course. For more information, see the explanation of Honor Code Violations.

**Classroom environment:** All students are of equal importance and value in this classroom. If you ever feel that your ability to participate and learn in this class is limited by the behavior of the professor or of other students, please let the professor know immediately so that change can be made. The professor welcomes student input at all times and on all aspects of the class. Humanistic inquiry acknowledges and values diversity in ideas and personal experiences. Let us join in celebrating these differences and similarities, and let us work together to make this classroom safe and respectful space for the expression of all views and all backgrounds.

**Land and Slavery Acknowledgment:** William & Mary occupies the ancestral lands of the Powhatan people. In 1677, near our historic campus, the Pamunkey leader, Cockacoeske, negotiated Articles of Peace, with England, on behalf of several indigenous tribes. We acknowledge the Native youths who attended the Brafferton Indian School in the eighteenth century. At present we acknowledge and honor Virginia’s seven federally recognized tribes and the Commonwealth’s four state-recognized tribes. William & Mary acknowledges that it owned and exploited slave labor from its founding to the Civil War; and that it had failed to take a stand against segregation during the Jim Crow Era.

**Grading Scale for Final Grades:**

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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
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<td>93 – 100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 – 92.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 – 89.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83 – 86.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 – 82.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 – 79.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
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<td>D-</td>
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**SCHEDULE**

**Week 1: Introduction to the Course**

Thurs, Jan 28 — Course Overview
No required readings

**Week 2: Foundations for Writing and Thinking**

Tues, Feb 2 — Writing Style and Mechanics
Read:
- *The Elements of Style*. Longman. (See link under Readings above.)
Prepare:
- Bring to class a list of at least 10 points in the book that you found helpful.

Thurs, Feb 4 — Politics of Cold War History
Read:
Prepare:
- Write a paragraph responding to the two readings. Content is open and should be just a journal of your own thoughts after completing the two readings.

UNIT ONE: Comparative Trajectories — Communist Revolution from Marx to Lenin to Mao

Week 3: Communist Revolution in Marx and Engels

Tues, Feb 9 — Introduction to Marxist Thought
Read:
Prepare:
- Take notes on the “Concepts” handout to try to define each key word.

Thurs, Feb 11 — Early Communist Documents
Read:
The readings for today are available online here:
https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/index.htm
- “Manifesto of the Communist Party, Part I: Bourgeois and Proletarians”
- “Draft of a Communist Confession of Faith”
- “The Principles of Communism”
- “Demands of the Communist Party in Germany”
Prepare:
- Identify 3 quotes from the readings that you would like to discuss further in class.

Week 4: Communist Revolution in Russia

Tues, Feb 16 — Launching a Revolution
Read:
Prepare:  
  • Write a paragraph identifying the key challenges facing pre-revolutionary Russia.

Thurs, Feb 18 – The Bolshevik Experiment  
Read:  
Prepare:  
  • Make a basic timeline of the Russian Revolution based on the reading.  
  • One paragraph about writing goals due on Blackboard by Sunday night at 11:59pm.

**Week 5: Communist Revolution in China (I)**

Tues, Feb 23 – Opium War to the Long March  
Read:  
Prepare:  
  • Write a paragraph identifying major similarities and differences between pre-revolutionary China and pre-revolutionary Russia.

Thurs, Feb 25 – Yan’an to the Great Leap Forward  
Read:  
Prepare:  
  • Make a basic timeline of the Chinese Revolution based on the reading.  
  • Email me by Friday if you need an interviewee match.

**Week 6: Communist Revolution in China (II)**

Tues, March 2 – Cultural Revolution to Reform and Opening  
Read:  
Prepare:  
  • Write a paragraph summarizing the changes in China after 1976.

Thurs, March 4 – SPRING BREAK DAY
William & Mary, Spring 2021
Department of Modern Languages and Literatures

• Interview Proposal due on Blackboard by Friday night at 11:59pm.

• Analytical Paper One due on Blackboard by Sunday night at 11:59pm.

Unit TWO: Communism at the Ground Level—Revolution as Lived Experience

Week 7: Land Reform Up Close

Tues, March 9 – Rural North China in the 1940s
Read:

Prepare:
• Identify three quotations from the reading that you would like to discuss further in class.

Thurs, March 11 – Land Reform in a Shanxi Village
Read:

Prepare:
• Write a paragraph describing the process of land reform.

Week 8: Rural Women’s Experiences of Revolution I

Tues, March 16 — Rural Women’s Lives Before 1949
Read:
• “Introduction” (pp. 1-12) and Chapter 2 “No One is Home” (pp. 32-64) in Gail Hershatter, *The Gender of Memory: Rural Women and China's Collective Past.* University of California Press, 2011.

• Interview presentations (Group 1)

Thurs, March 18 — Changes in Family Life
Read:
• Chapter 4 “Activist” (pp. 96-128) and Chapter 5 “Farmer” (pp. 129-153) in Gail Hershatter, *The Gender of Memory: Rural Women and China's Collective Past.* University of California Press, 2011.

• Interview presentations (Group 2)

• Interview Recording and Reflection Paper due on Blackboard by Sunday night at 11:59pm.
Week 9: Rural Women’s Experiences of Revolution II

Tues, March 23 – Reproduction and Women’s Labor
Read:
- Chapter 6 “Midwife” (pp. 154-181) and Chapter 7 “Mother” (pp. 182-209) in Gail Hershatter, The Gender of Memory: Rural Women and China’s Collective Past. University of California Press, 2011.
- Interview presentations (Group 3)

Thurs, March 25 – Rural Women on Film + Unit 2 Reflections
Watch:
- Li Shuangshuang 1962 film (with English subtitles)
- Interview presentations (Group 4)

- **Analytical Paper Two due on Blackboard by Sunday night at 11:59 pm.**

Unit Three: Revolutions of Thought—The Communist Media Sphere

Week 10: Using Culture to Launch Revolution

Tuesday, March 30 – Mao’s “Talks” and Transforming the Intellectuals
Read:

Thurs, April 1 – Representing Suffering and Liberation
Watch:
- Bai Mao Nü (White-Haired Girl) 1950 film (with English subtitles)

Week 11: Folk Culture as Revolutionary Culture

Tues, April 6 – SPRING BREAK DAY

Thurs, April 8 – The Yangge Movement, or “New Wine in Old Bottles”
Read:
- Watch selections IN CLASS: Xiao Dao Hui (Dagger Society) 1959 film https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VL9FU9iNsMg&t=6s
Final Paper Plan due on Blackboard by Sunday night at 11:59 pm.

Week 12: Performing Revolution

Tues, April 13 – Wartime Drama and the Story of Liu Hulan
Read:

Thurs, April 15 – Cultural Revolution Performance
Watch:
- *Hongse Niangzi Jun (Red Detachment of Women)* 1970 ballet film
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yCxE5UirSRk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yCxE5UirSRk)

Final Paper Abstract due on Blackboard by Sunday night at 11:59 pm.

Week 13: Socialism on Film

Tues, April 20 – Guest Speaker: Yin Mei
Watch:
- *Peony Dreams—On the Other Side of Sleep* Dance Theater Performance
  Link TBD

Thurs, April 22 – Ethnic Diversity in Socialist Film
Watch:
- *Wu Duo Jin Hua (Five Golden Flowers)* 1959 film (with English subtitles)
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ntx_EcTnzmg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ntx_EcTnzmg)

Analytical Paper Three due on Blackboard by Sunday night at 11:59 pm.

Week 15: Final Papers

Tues, April 27 – NO CLASS
Work on Final Papers

Thurs, April 29 – Individual Meetings
Sign up for a meeting slot here:
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pn0on_67m4JF0ce2uC9H6mLa-W2-2cDPRuocT6jIr-s/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pn0on_67m4JF0ce2uC9H6mLa-W2-2cDPRuocT6jIr-s/edit?usp=sharing)

Rough Draft (4pp) due on Blackboard by Sunday night at 11:59 pm.
Week 16: Final Papers

Tues, May 4 – Final Paper Presentations
Nick
Shahzeb
Emily
Brennen
Kennedy
Gaelan
Alex W.
Cora
Yufei

Thurs, May 6 – Final Paper Presentations + Course Wrap Up
- Final paper revision plan due on Blackboard at start of class (11:00am EDT)

Linda
Yuze
Shu
Sophia
Raksha
Brendan
Xiwen
Alex P.

- Final Paper due on Blackboard on Wednesday, May 12 at 5:00pm.