

CONTEMPORARY CHINESE HISTORY

The 8 sessions in this course will deal with the following topics:

1. Ancient Civilization
2. The Opium War
3. Diaspora
4. Warring Period I--Civil War 1 and WW1
5. Warring Period II--Civil War 2 and WW2
6. The New Communist Government's Struggles
7. Nixon's trip to China
8. US/China Relations

China has emerged from self-imposed isolationism to the forefront of world attention today. President Xi Jinping is leading his nation of 1.4 billion people into a new era of international relations, as well as agricultural and industrial development. China is being transformed economically, socially, and ideologically at a pace that is difficult to keep up with. The Chinese kaleidoscope can be dizzying. But China is basically a Marxist-Leninist form of government insisting on the dictatorship of the communist party that is mobilized for maximum production and modernization.

Any attempt to understand China's future world role must begin with appreciation of its long history. In this course we will examine episodes in Chinese foreign policy from the classical era to the present day, with particular emphasis on the decades since the rise of communism in 1949. We will discuss diplomacy between China and European powers, the formation and breakdown of the Sino-Soviet alliance, the Korean War, Nixon's trip to China, and crises in the Taiwan Straits. Most importantly we will study the evolution of US-China relations in the past 70 years from estrangement to strategic partnership to economic interdependence.

Course participants will be given a set of lecture notes. There is no assigned text. You may find the following references helpful:

1. *The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom* by John Pomfret
2. *On China* by Henry Kissinger
3. *Red Star Over China* by Edgar Snow

Leader: Leonard Chin is a retired professor of engineering.

Wednesdays: 10:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m., 8 weeks: February 28 through April 18

Location: PSRC