

**HST  
597A**

**CRN  
#22064868**

# 20th Century China: 1911- 2008

**Professor  
Randall Doyle**

This course will analyze and discuss the primary economic, military, political and social factors and major historic events that were part of this period of Chinese history (1911-2008). The 20th century witnessed three significant developments within China that have eventually led to the re-emergence of one of the great civilizations in world history. First, during the first half of the 20th century, China found itself in a constant state of turmoil, war and revolution due to the humiliation and suffering associated with foreign interventions—in the form of ‘unequal treaties’, ‘extraterritoriality’, territorial ‘concessions’ within their major eastern cities, and the destructive wars with Japan. Also, China witnessed the collapse of the Qing Dynasty in 1912. Afterwards, it moved slowly toward a Republican form of government which experienced a limited degree of success until the Communist takeover in 1949.

In the post-WWII period, particularly after 1949, China was led by radical revolutionaries: Mao Zedong, Chou En-lai, and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The CCP first met in 1921 in the French Concession in Shanghai. By 1949, Mao and his cadre of followers were able to defeat Chiang Kai-shek and his Nationalist forces for the heart and soul of China. However, the Mao era (1949-1976), though it produced a new Chinese identity, experienced some of the greatest calamities in China’s long history—specifically, The Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. As a result of such decision-making, millions perished and millions more suffered due to Mao’s insane edicts and policies.

After Mao’s death in 1976, China took a dramatic and revolutionary step toward opening its economy to the world. In 1978, Deng Xiaoping boldly and decisively took the Chinese people upon a new economic path—though political reforms have remained quite limited. Nevertheless, the world was given a glimpse of what the future beholds for them by the spectacular presentation of the Beijing Olympic Games in 2008. China’s influence and power are truly in ascendance. What does this mean for the global community? No one is really certain. Yet, one thing is certain. The genesis of the stunning re-emergence of China began in the late 20th century. Thus, as expected, this course will examine this historical epoch and its potential ramifications for the world as the 21st century unfolds.



**Tuesday  
6:30-9:20 p.m.**

