

# Modern China Tutorial

## Course Outline & Objectives

### ***DESCRIPTION***

This course is designed to prepare students for participation in the [China Exchange Program](#) with Hangzhou High School. It is a one-semester course that builds on students' pre-existing knowledge from the World History I and II course curricula. Its focus is on the post-1949 period to the present, though some earlier periods are revisited in order for students to understand cultural and historical traditions and themes, which continue to influence China.

### ***OBJECTIVES***

To give students the historical context necessary to understand the current political, economic and social conditions which exist in China

To raise awareness of the major challenges and issues facing China in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

To understand China's importance as a key player in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

To prepare students for travel to China

### ***ORGANIZING QUESTIONS AND KEY FOCUS AREAS OF STUDY***

Why study China?

In what ways does China's geography and climate continue to create serious challenges and problems for China's development?

What were some of Mao's greatest challenges in establishing the People's Republic of China after the revolution? What were his greatest successes and failures? (special attention will be given to the Great Famine and the Cultural Revolution)

How did China reform economically and politically under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping?

What about Tiananmen Square and why is it significant?

What are the most significant changes in China in the last 20 years?

What are some of the key issues now facing China? How is she working to confront them?

What does one need to do and know to prepare for travelling to China?

## ***RESOURCES USED***

### **Basic Texts**

Understanding Contemporary China, Robert Gamer Editor  
Hungry Ghosts: Mao's Secret Famine (selections) - Jasper Becker  
Chinese Lessons - by John Pomfret  
Mao for Beginners - Rius and Friends  
Ten Years of Madness (selections) - Feng Jicai  
Various Internet sites for information about travel sites in China  
Supplementary readings from primary sources

### **Videos**

"Gates of Heavenly Peace"  
"The Great Leap Forward"  
"The Mao Years"  
"To Live"

## ***REQUIREMENTS***

Students will be expected to read the basic texts and selected sections from the resources listed above as well as supplementary handouts from selected texts.

Grades will be based mostly on homework, papers, reports, and projects. There will be a written exam at mid-term and a final project at the end of the semester.

Students will keep a current events notebook. They will choose an issue or aspect of Chinese culture that interests them and every 8 day cycle, they will bring in two newspaper/ magazines/internet articles of considerable length related to those issues. Students will be expected to summarize as well as analyze and raise questions regarding their selected readings.

At the end of the first term, students will write a research paper on a selected topic and/or develop a creative project to present to the class on a topic.

Students will be expected to participate in senior project upon their return from China. The basic outline of their project must be ready before students leave for China.