

# Chinese Politics in Comparative Perspective: History, Institutions and the

## Modern State

### Advanced Training Program

June 10-20, 2017, Fudan University, China

Co-organized with:

School of Government and Public Affairs, Sun Yat-Sen University

School of Government, Nanjing University

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#### Lecturing faculty:

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Schedule:

Application deadline: April 10, 2017

Program dates: June 10-20, 2017

## Program introduction

Since the establishment of the People's Republic of China, China's institutional growth, developmental path and experiences have led to widespread global attention. Following the period of reform and opening up, with rapid changes in Chinese politics, economics, society and culture over the past nearly 40 years, an increasing number of scholars both overseas and in China have joined the ranks of contemporary China studies. A variety of hypotheses, analytical methods, and research perspectives continue to emerge, giving rise to a significant amount of influential academic work. Contemporary China studies has already become an important field, encompassing the social science disciplines of political science, sociology, economics, and history. Under the tide of globalization, the study of Chinese politics has benefited from an open international academic dialogue and international cooperation and exchange, making significant

progress in knowledge attainment, theoretical perspectives, methodological training, and awareness of key issues.

The state of contemporary Chinese politics is closely connected to Chinese history. Philosophers such as Montesquieu and Hegel attempted to reveal characteristics of traditional Chinese culture. Since Weber, scholarly discussions on the connections between traditional social culture and modernization in China have had a far-reaching influence in academia. In fact, China is a unique civilization subject to its own traditional characteristics while also carrying the duality of inheriting and criticizing its own tradition. Since the mid-nineteenth century, amidst the global expansion of capitalism, China became an emerging political power, drawn into the process of globalization while also seeking its own path between contention and change. In this sense, Chinese modernization is the product of the intersection and mutual tension between “Historic China” and “Global China.” This modernization is not only an approach China adopted to carry out its revolution, as the largest undeveloped country in Asia in the specific context of the 20th century, but also an option China made in response to the immense expansion of global capitalism. In essence Chinese modernization concerns China’s modern state-building, and at its base is an issue of reconstructing a new model of modern state-society relations, and on this basis making reasonable institutional arrangements on the organization, allocation, exercise and supervision of public authority. The revolutionary movements, social restructuring and state-building that have occurred in China for over a century are linked to this specific history and reality.

Knowing this, there is no doubt of the importance of studying modern state-building in China from the dimensions of history and institutions, process and structure. Given the current prevalence of and achievements in empirical and quantitative research methods, the study of contemporary Chinese politics requires renewed self-reflection and conclusions. Whether based on state-centric research goals or a society-centric academic aim, we seek to discuss institutional change, ideology,

party mobilization, state-building and mechanisms of governance; to analyze the political experiences of different classes, social strata, and groups and the impact of politics on these different groups; to reveal the relationship between major incidents, their outcomes and the event backgrounds and variables; and to explain the formation and operation of power relations as historically manifested in social organizations, professional groups, religious culture, and psychological tendencies, in order to explore the inner logic and developmental characteristics of modern Chinese state-building, so that we may go beyond specific, localized experiences and narratives to unearth general, universal knowledge in political science and political theory.

We are interested in encouraging cross-national comparisons in order to assess the extent to which the processes and outcomes of Chinese state-building are – or are not – unique or unusual. The instructors are scholars of comparative politics who bring to their lectures knowledge of other societies, in addition to China, and who will endeavor to put the Chinese experience in dialogue with that of other developing and/or formerly socialist countries.

In view of this, the Harvard-Yenching Institute and the School of International Relations and Public Affairs, Fudan University are cooperating on an advanced training program on “Chinese Politics in Comparative Perspective: History, Institutions and the Modern State.” By starting at the historical and institutional levels, and with reference to research methods and outcomes in different disciplines, the program aims to promote the further development of contemporary Chinese political science.

The program is scheduled to be held from June 10-20, 2017 at Fudan University’s Handan Campus. As co-organizers of the training program, the Sun Yat-Sen University School of Government and Public Affairs and the Nanjing University School of Government will provide key additional support.

This program will invite scholars from the United States and China to present on topics ranging from Chinese state-building, grassroots governance, public participation,

party transformation, and national identity. In the evening, instructors and students will divide into groups for roundtable discussions. Through an open competitive admissions process, with a focus on the aforementioned research areas, we will carefully select no more than 20 young faculty and advanced doctoral students from universities and research institutions throughout China (and other Asian countries and regions) to participate in the workshop. Each student's research design will receive directed guidance from faculty instructors and will be put in interdisciplinary dialogue with work by their peers.

After the workshop ends, the program's selection committee may invite 3-5 outstanding trainees (from universities and research institutes in Asia) to study and conduct research in residence at the Harvard-Yenching Institute during the 2018-19 academic year.

### **Application and Admission**

The workshop will be open to younger faculty, post-doctoral fellows and doctoral students who are dedicated to the study of Chinese politics. The workshop plans to accept 20 official trainees and several auditor trainees depending on the applicants' qualifications. All the trainees will be provided with food and accommodation but are financially responsible for their own international/inter-city transportation. Only official trainees will be offered interview opportunities for the Harvard-Yenching Institute fellowship.

#### **Applicants must meet the following qualifications:**

1. All students must be dedicated to the study of Chinese politics but may come from universities or research institutes anywhere in the world, not just China. The majority of selected trainees will be from Asian universities and research institutes. Younger faculty (who have already obtained their PhD) must be under 40 years old (born after January 1,

1977).

2. Students must be proficient in both Chinese (Mandarin) and English and capable of understanding lectures and discussing academic issues in both languages. Applicants are expected to present evidence of their language proficiency, which can include language test results, overseas educational certificates, etc. Proof of ability for the applicant's native language is not required. This program will not accept applicants who have a degree from an institution outside of Asia and who have substantial experience teaching and conducting research outside of Asia.

### **Workshop focuses**

The lectures and workshop discussions will primarily focus on the following topics:

- (1) The formation and evolution of the modern Chinese state
- (2) Issues and institutions in Chinese grassroots governance
- (3) Chinese citizens' political attitudes and behaviors
- (4) The current and future state of Chinese labor politics
- (5) National identity in contemporary China
- (6) New trends in Chinese central-local relations
- (7) Modernizing political parties: China's experience and logic
- (8) Chinese politics from an international perspective
- (9) China's state capacity building under market transitions

### **Application and Admission Procedures:**

1. Applicants should submit an application form and supporting documents (such as language proficiency certificates, a list of Chinese and/or English publications, Chinese and/or English research plan, etc.) via email no later than April 10th, 2017. Two recommendation letters should be sent via email (to [lhui@fudan.edu.cn](mailto:lhui@fudan.edu.cn)) by the referees (identical to the referees named in the application form) before the application deadline

as well.

2. The Harvard-Yenching Institute and the School of International Relations and Public Affairs, Fudan University will review all applications and send out admission notices via email by April 20th, 2017.

3. Applicants are expected to reply with confirmation of attendance within 10 days of receiving the admission notice. Failure to confirm will be considered a decision not to attend and admission may be offered to alternate candidates. A confirmation of attendance will be taken as a promise to attend the entire workshop and obey all the rules and regulations of the Workshop.