

# China's Modern Economy

Department: Fudan International Summer Session 2026

Course Code	GEIS30003						
Course Title	China's Modern Economy						
Credit	2	Experiment (including Computer) Credit		Practice Credit		Aesthetic Education Credit	
Credit Hours Per Week	9 credit hours per week, 36+3 credit hours in total	Education on The Hard-Working Spirit Credit Hours		Language of Instruction		Honors Course	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Core General Education Course <input type="checkbox"/> Specific General Education Course <input type="checkbox"/> Basic Course in General Discipline <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Others			2+X Major :			
				<input type="checkbox"/> Professional Core Course <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Advanced Course Non 2+X Major : <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Compulsory Course <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Elective Course			
Course Objectives	Successful students will: Understand the history and the characteristics of Chinese economy, culture and politics; Understand how to critically think about the effectiveness of Chinese government policies; Develop research ideas on Chinese economy.						
Course Description	<p>Beginning in 1978, economic reforms guiding China from a planned economy toward a market-oriented economy have led China to become the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest economy in a span of four decades. We will start with the historical background of this transition process with a selective survey of two centuries of modern Chinese economic history. It aims to shed lights on the critical questions that pertain to the long two centuries with episodes of expansion and stagnation, the rise and fall or even collapse, ultimately her spectacular ascendancy during the past four decades. The course provides a selective survey on some crucial debates and case studies particularly on historical turning points such as the opening of China during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the collapse of Qing in 1911, the rise of Communist rule in the 1950s and the adoption of reform policy since the late 1970s. For the reform period, the course will turn to major ideology and policy reform paradigms that are critical for understanding the transformation of Chinese economy. It will cover topics such as demography, hukou system, regional inequality, macro and financial reform.</p>						

**Course Requirements:**

**Prerequisites:**

Introductory micro- and macro-economics;  
Basic knowledge of Chinese history and economy.

**Teaching Methods:**

Lectures and discussions.

**Course Director's Academic Background:**

**Instructor's Academic Background:**

Dr. Debin Ma received his Phd from University of North Carolina. He is currently a Distinguished Professor in the School of Economics at Fudan University and quondam fellow of All Souls College, Oxford University, Dr. Ma has taught Chinese economy and economic history at Oxford University, London School of Economics, Hitotsubashi (Tokyo, Japan) as well as other academic institutions in China and US. His main research interest is in the economic history of China and East Asia in a comparative context. He has published extensively in academic journals and is the co-editor of the two volume Cambridge Economic History of China.

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**Members of Teaching Team**

Name	Gender	Professional Title	Department	Responsibility

**Course Schedule** (Please supply the details about each lesson):

1. Chinese economy: a long-run overview.
2. China's forced opening in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century: Western impact and Chinese response;
3. Economic change and transformation in the late Qing and Republican era
4. The founding of the People's Republic and the rise of the planned economy.
5. The Impact of Political Radicalism in the pre-Reform era.
6. The beginning of the Chinese economic reform in the late 1970s.
7. Growing out of the plan: major policy paradigms and agenda.
8. Economic change and opening: the rise of an economic miracle.
9. Four decades of Chinese reform: success and failures.
10. Lessons of Chinese economic miracle.
11. Student Presentations and in class-discussions.
12. Discussion and conclusions.

The design of class discussion or exercise, practice, experience and so on:  
Students are encouraged to ask questions, and propose research ideas during the class.

If you need a TA, please indicate the assignment of assistant:

**Grading & Evaluation** (Provide a final grade that reflects the formative evaluation process):

Class participation: 10%  
In Class presentations: 30%  
Final exam(closed-book): 60%  
Passing grade: 60  
No make-up test

**Usage of Textbook:**  Yes(complete textbook information form below)  No

**Textbook Information** (No more than two textbooks) :

Title	Author	ISBN	Publishing Time	Publisher	Type I	Type II
					<input type="checkbox"/> Self-compiled Textbook (Published) <input type="checkbox"/> Non-mainland Textbook <input type="checkbox"/> Other Textbook (Published)	<input type="checkbox"/> National Planning Textbook <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial and Ministerial Planning Textbook <input type="checkbox"/> School Level Planning Textbook <input type="checkbox"/> Others
					<input type="checkbox"/> Self-compiled Textbook (Published) <input type="checkbox"/> Non-mainland Textbook <input type="checkbox"/> Other Textbook (Published)	<input type="checkbox"/> National Planning Textbook <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial and Ministerial Planning Textbook <input type="checkbox"/> School Level Planning Textbook <input type="checkbox"/> Others

**Teaching References** (Including author, title, publisher, publishing time,ISBN):

Basic reading:  
Brandt, L., Debin Ma and Thomas Rawski “From Divergence to Convergence: Re-evaluating the History Behind China’s Economic Boom” *Journal of Economic Literature* 2014, 52(1), 45–123.  
Debin Ma and Richard von Glahn *Cambridge Economic History of China* volume 2, Cambridge University Press, 2022.  
Naughton, Barry. *The Chinese Economy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, MIT press, 2018.  
Isabella M. Weber *How China Escaped Shock Therapy, the Market Reform Debate*, Routledge Press, 2021.

Table column size can be adjusted according to the content.