

SEST 583
China and its Military

Fall 2019
Office Hours: 4:00 – 4:45pm Mondays
and by appointment

Professor Oriana Skylar Mastro
Email: om116@georgetown.edu
Office: Mortara Center Room 206

Description

China and its Military is a course that covers the PRC's thinking about defense issues, the status and history of military modernization, the development of "counter intervention" capabilities, and the Chinese military's role at home and abroad. Throughout the course, students will assess the strategic implications of tactical and operational changes in the Chinese military.

China and its Military has three main goals. First, the course will provide students with an understanding of China's security environment and its security policy responses. This includes an overview of PRC thinking on major concepts in security studies such as the nature of the international system, the role of power, deterrence, the use of force, coercion, and the utility of asymmetric strategies. Second, students will gain an understanding of the history and trajectory of ground, naval, air, space, and conventional and nuclear missile forces modernization as well as the strengths and weaknesses of China's defense industry. Lastly, students will analyze the contemporary security challenges the Chinese military presents to the United States and the region; as well as how other actors, including the US, could respond to China's more assertive security policies and capabilities such as in cyberspace.

Instructional Methodology

The predominant means of instruction in this course is by lecture, in combination with seminar-style discussions and the use of other medium to include videos, debates and in-class analysis of key policy documents. Students are welcome, and indeed encouraged, to ask questions and initiate discussion. Emphasis will be placed on analysis of the strategic level implications of tactical and operational changes in the Chinese military.

Course Requirements and Means of Assessment

Students will be required to complete three course requirements: a policy brief, a power point briefing, and a research paper. **In addition to providing students an opportunity to apply their knowledge, the course will also provide formal training in policy writing, briefing, and long form writing through these exercises.** For the policy memo, students will be required to choose one question of those provided and write a three-page policy memo in response. This exercise is designed to evaluate students understanding of Chinese strategic thinking. The technical intelligence briefings will be seven minutes or less and cover a Chinese military platform or weapons system. The first week of class I will provide a list of appropriate platforms from which students can choose - these will take place during Part II of the course. The research paper will be 5,000 words of a relevant topic of the student's choosing. Templates, training and best practices for all three types of products will be covered in class.

Final grades for the course will be based on:

- Policy Memo: 25%
- TIB Briefing 20%

- Research Paper 40%
- In-class Participation 15%.
- Key dates: Policy memos are due Sept 30 and the Research Paper will be due December 11. The TIBs will take place during the second section of the course on military modernization.

SCHEDULE

Part I: Strategic Overview

Class 1. Chinese Grand Strategy (please note this is a Wednesday!)

Class 2. Party-Military Relations

Class 3: Strategy, Doctrine, and Patterns in Use of Force

Class 4. Territorial Disputes

Part II: Military Modernization

Class 5. Ground Modernization (Policy Memo due)

Class 6. Naval Modernization

Class 7. Air Modernization

Class 8. Strategic Rocket Force (Conventional and Nuclear Capabilities)

Part III: Contemporary Security Challenges

Class 9. Space and Counterspace

Class 10. Cyber, Espionage and AI

Class 11. Chinese Forces Abroad and Emerging Threats

Class 12. Regional Responses

Class 13. U.S. Assessments