



Econ2128A 570
Economics of China
Fall 2026

Instructor: Jason Dean, PhD
Email: jdean26@uwo.ca

Course Information

Mode of Instruction: In-Person

Calendar Description:

This course examines economic development of the People's Republic of China since 1949. It analyses China's economic successes and failures during the Maoist era and the reform period. Topics include state versus private ownership, foreign trade and investment in China, rural and urban reforms, inequality and poverty, and human development.

Pre-requisite(s): Economics 1021A/B and Economics 1022A/B, or Economics 2001A/B, or with permission from the Department.

Anti-requisite(s): Economics 3311F/G and Economics 2174F/G, if taken in 2021-22 or 2022-23.

Extra Information: 3 lecture hours.

Course Weight: 0.50

Breadth: Category A

Subject Code: ECONOMIC

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Syllabus

Economics of China
ECON 2128A (Sec 570)
Fall 2026



Professor	Dr. Jason Dean
Contact	jidean26@uwo.ca
Office Hours	Fridays, 10:00 to 11:00 a.m., and by appointment in person or on Zoom. Office location is posted on the course OWL site.
Mode of Instruction	In person
Course Website	OWL Brightspace. Class times, room assignment, lesson notes, quizzes, and grades are posted there.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers a structured, empirical analysis of China's economic transformation beginning in the late 1970s. It examines how institutional reform, policy experimentation, and incremental market development generated sustained growth and reallocated resources across sectors. Key topics include the dual-track system, urban and rural segmentation, and the mechanisms that drove productivity gains and large-scale poverty reduction. Students will analyse demographic transition, income distribution, and labour market dynamics using tools such as Lorenz curves and Gini coefficients, while evaluating how state institutions have coordinated and constrained growth. The course situates China's development within a broader international context, considering trade integration, foreign investment, and industrial upgrading. It also investigates contemporary constraints such as population ageing, environmental degradation, and technological dependence, and considers how these shape the trajectory of future reform. Students will emerge with a historically informed, institutionally aware understanding of China's economic trajectory and its relevance for development policy and the global economy.

PREREQUISITE(S): Either 1) Economics 1021A/B (or Economics 2050A/B) and Economics 1022A/B, or 2) Economics 2001A/B, or permission of the Department.

ANTIREQUISITE(S): Economics 3311F/G, and Economics 2174F/G if taken in 2021-22 or 2022-23.

EXTRA INFORMATION: 3 lecture hours

COURSE WEIGHT: 0.50

BREADTH: Category A

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Analyse China's transition from a command to a market economy, evaluating institutional reforms, development strategies, and their impact on growth, productivity, and poverty reduction.

- Assess demographic, labour market, and income distribution trends using empirical tools such as Lorenz curves and Gini coefficients, with attention to human capital and inequality.
- Interpret China's global economic integration, including its trade relationships, foreign investment patterns, industrial upgrading, and economic ties with Canada.
- Critically compare economic systems and development models, synthesizing China's historical trajectory with broader principles of economic efficiency, coordination, and policy experimentation.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND MATERIALS

Naughton, B. J. (2018). *The Chinese Economy: Adaptation and Growth*, 2nd edition. MIT Press. ISBN 9780262534796.

- Approximate cost: \$86.00 for the print edition at the Western Bookstore. This figure is approximate, and exact current pricing for the print and electronic versions is on the publisher and bookstore pages below.
- It is essential to purchase the second edition. The first edition lacks key updates, revised data, and essential context on China's current economy.
- Second-hand copies of the second edition are welcome.

Publisher pricing and format options: [MIT Press product page for The Chinese Economy, 2nd edition](#)

Campus pricing: [Western Bookstore](#)

Weekly lesson notes, lecture slides, required supplemental readings, videos, and ungraded practice problem sets are posted on OWL at no cost. There are no additional fees, field trips, or required software purchases in this course.

Technology Requirements

You will need a laptop or smartphone with a stable internet connection to take part in the in-class Socrative quizzes and to complete the weekly OWL quizzes. No registration or purchase is required to use Socrative. For the video assignments you will need a device capable of recording video and audio, such as a smartphone or a computer with a webcam and microphone. A non-programmable calculator is required for the midterm and final examinations.

IMPORTANT DATES

Date	Event
September 9, 2026	First day of classes, Fall Term
September 17, 2026	Last day to add a Fall half course or a full course
September 30, 2026	National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (non-instructional day)
October 10 to 18, 2026	Fall Reading Week (no classes, no assessments due)
October 12, 2026	Thanksgiving (College closed)
November 30, 2026	Last day to drop a Fall half course or a full course without academic penalty
December 9, 2026	Last day of classes, Fall Term
December 10, 2026	Study day
December 11 to 22, 2026	Mid-year examination period

EVALUATION PLAN

Assessment	Weight	Date
Socrative Quizzes (participation)	10%	During each lecture
Weekly OWL Quizzes	10%	Due Mondays by 11:59 p.m. See the weekly schedule
Video Assignments (2 at 10 percent each)	20%	Assignment 1: October 1. Assignment 2: November 26
Midterm Examination	20%	October 22, in class
Final Examination	40%	Scheduled by the Office of the Registrar, December 11 to 22
TOTAL	100%	
<i>Note: Your best 9 of 11 Socrative quiz scores and your best 9 of 11 OWL quiz scores count toward your final grade. The midterm examination is the one assessment in this course designated as requiring formal supporting documentation for academic consideration.</i>		

Interactive Socrative Quizzes (10 percent)

- Brief interactive quizzes at the end of each lecture, run on Socrative, reinforce your understanding of the key concepts covered that day.
- You need a laptop or smartphone. No registration or purchase is required.
- There are 11 quiz opportunities. Your grade is based on your best 9 scores, so the two lowest results, including any missed through absence, are dropped.
- Because this flexibility is built in, no further academic consideration is normally required for a missed Socrative quiz.

Weekly OWL Quizzes (10 percent)

- Eleven multiple-choice quizzes, based on the textbook readings, lesson notes, and practice problem sets.
- Each quiz is due by 11:59 p.m. on the date listed in the weekly schedule. Treat them as timed assessments and complete the assigned materials before you begin.
- Your grade is based on your best 9 of 11 scores, so the two lowest results are dropped. Because this flexibility is built in, no further academic consideration is normally required for a missed OWL quiz.
- Each quiz opens after its lesson and closes on the Monday listed in the weekly schedule. No quiz is due during Fall Reading Week, so Quiz 5 closes on Monday, October 19.

Video Assignments (20 percent, 10 percent each)

Two assignments ask you to apply course concepts critically. Full instructions and marking rubrics are posted on OWL in the first two weeks of term.

Assignment 1, individual, due Thursday October 1 by 11:59 p.m.

- Produce a 10-minute explainer video on a specific economic concept from the course.

Assignment 2, groups of 2 to 3, due Thursday November 26 by 11:59 p.m.

- In groups, record a 15-minute structured debate on a contentious economic topic related to China, using a generative AI tool to develop initial arguments and then critically refining them.
- You must submit a short appendix documenting the prompts you used, what the AI produced, and what you changed and why. See the generative AI policy below.

Late submissions are not accepted. If you receive approved academic consideration for a missed video assignment, an extension will be granted with a new deadline set by the instructor, normally within one week.

Midterm and Final Examinations

- The midterm examination is held in class on Thursday, October 22, 2026 and covers Lessons 1 to 5.
- The final examination is scheduled by the Office of the Registrar during the mid-year examination period, December 11 to 22, 2026.
- You are required to write both examinations in person at the scheduled time.
- Academic consideration for the midterm examination requires formal supporting documentation. Students granted consideration write a make-up midterm. Make-ups are held on Fridays, and the date is arranged through the Academic Advising Office and confirmed on OWL.
- Academic consideration for the final examination is handled by the Academic Advising Office through the Special Examination process described in the appended General Course Policies.
- Examinations consist of multiple-choice questions covering conceptual, knowledge-based, and quantitative or graphical content. Specific coverage and format will be provided in advance.
- Only non-programmable calculators are permitted. If you are unsure whether your calculator qualifies, ask the instructor before the examination.
- All other electronic devices, including cell phones, smart watches, and programmable calculators, are prohibited during examinations.

Ungraded Practice Problem Sets

After each lesson, practice problems are posted on OWL. Completing these problems after reviewing the lesson materials, meaning the OWL notes and the textbook, is expected preparation for the weekly quizzes and the examinations.

TENTATIVE WEEKLY SCHEDULE

This schedule is tentative. Any change will be announced in class and posted on OWL.

Week	Date	Lesson	Topic	Reading	Assessments
1	Sep 10	Lesson 1	Introduction. The Chinese economy in context: economic systems, GDP, and growth	Ch. 1, sections 1.3 to 1.6	OWL Quiz 1 due Sep 14
2	Sep 17	Lesson 2	The geographic setting	Ch. 2	OWL Quiz 2 due Sep 21
3	Sep 24	Lesson 3	The Chinese economy before 1949	Ch. 3	OWL Quiz 3 due Sep 28
4	Oct 1	Lesson 4	The socialist era, 1949 to 1978: big push industrialization and policy instability	Ch. 4	Video Assignment 1 due Oct 1. OWL Quiz 4 due Oct 5

Week	Date	Lesson	Topic	Reading	Assessments
5	Oct 8	Lesson 5	Market transition: strategy and process	Ch. 5	OWL Quiz 5 due Oct 19
October 10 to 18: Fall Reading Week. No class, no assessments due.					
6	Oct 22	Midterm	Midterm Examination, covering Lessons 1 to 5		Midterm Examination (20%)
7	Oct 29	Lesson 6	The urban-rural divide and Chinese-style urbanization	Ch. 6	OWL Quiz 6 due Nov 2
8	Nov 5	Lesson 7	Growth and structural change	Ch. 7	OWL Quiz 7 due Nov 9
9	Nov 12	Lesson 8	Population: demographic transition, the demographic dividend, and the one-child policy	Ch. 8	OWL Quiz 8 due Nov 16
10	Nov 19	Lesson 9	Labour and human capital	Ch. 9	OWL Quiz 9 due Nov 23
11	Nov 26	Lesson 10	Living standards: income, inequality, and poverty	Ch. 10	Video Assignment 2 due Nov 26. OWL Quiz 10 due Nov 30
12	Dec 3	Lesson 11	International trade	Ch. 16	OWL Quiz 11 due Dec 7
December 11 to 22: Final examination period. The final examination is scheduled by the Office of the Registrar.					

Note 1. Weekly lesson notes and lecture slides are posted on OWL, along with required supplemental readings and videos.

*Note 2. Textbook readings refer to Naughton, B. J. (2018), *The Chinese Economy: Adaptation and Growth*, 2nd edition, MIT Press.*

Note 3. Weekly OWL quizzes are completed online and close at 11:59 p.m. on the Monday shown. No quiz is due during Fall Reading Week, so Quiz 5 closes on Monday, October 19.

GRADE DESCRIPTORS

Grade	Range	Descriptor
A+	90 to 100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80 to 89	Superior work which is clearly above average
B	70 to 79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60 to 69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50 to 59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	below 50	Fail

USE OF GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Generative artificial intelligence tools, including ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Copilot, translation tools, and grammar checkers, may be used in this course only to polish work you have already produced. Polishing means editing for clarity, grammar, structure, and readability. The ideas, the arguments, the analysis, and the interpretation must be your own. You have to do the legwork yourself.

You may not use these tools to generate ideas or arguments that you then submit as your own, to produce an answer you have not reasoned through, or to summarize material you have not read. Work built that way is easy to recognize, because it reads as broad, generic, and superficial. Superficial analysis is marked down heavily in this course. Marks are earned through depth, specificity, engagement with the actual readings and data, and evidence that you worked the problem yourself.

If you use an AI tool for any permitted purpose, acknowledge it and state what it did. Generative AI is not permitted at any point during the midterm or final examination. Unauthorized use of AI will be subject to academic discipline under the Western Scholastic Discipline policy referenced in the appended General Course Policies.

One exception applies. Video Assignment 2 asks you to use a generative AI tool to produce a first set of debate arguments and then to critique and rebuild them. For that assignment you must submit a short appendix recording the prompts you used, what the tool produced, and what you changed and why. You are graded on the quality of your critique and revision, not on the AI output. An appendix showing only light or cosmetic changes to what the tool produced will be marked accordingly.

KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

2026-2027

1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences

Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found [here](#) Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities. Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course.

Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course.

For further information, please see:

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

Absences from Final Examinations

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under Special Examinations).

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

2. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King's University College:

<https://kings.uwo.ca/community/library/services/accessibility/>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/campus-life/student-supports/>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help:

<https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental-health/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King's University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-resources/>

GBSV Support:

King's (Western) is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website:

Mental Health and Wellness at King's - King's University College

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing Care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by email or by calling 519-661-3568.

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing Care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see https://kings.uwo.ca/sites/2025/assets/files/about/governance/policies/board/Board%20Policy%203_1%20Code%20of%20Student%20Responsibilities%20and%20Conduct.pdf

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

4. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with your instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality Reports - TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

5. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

6. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

7. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.