

CHIST 4055: History of Modern China 1800-2000
Lesley University, Spring 2014, (6 students)

Course Description

I taught the two-day-a-week course in Modern China at Lesley in the same semester as a one-day-a-week version at Connecticut College. This was the only Chinese studies course offered at Lesley apart from language, so I had the responsibility to introduce basic concepts and context.

In order to help students build their knowledge as a class, I encouraged them to start every session with questions. I used their questions to structure that day’s class meeting, and while I had specific lesson plans prepared for each day, it became easy to use their confusion over some matter in the reading as a point of departure. According to midterm feedback, students felt very comfortable speaking up. All of them gained mastery over the material and confidence in speaking about it over the course of the semester.

Final Evaluations

Qualitative

- “Hands down the BEST course I have ever taken at Lesley. That material was challenging but made me think in ways I have never done so before. The discussions we had in class were genuine, deeply engaging and thought provoking.”
- “He was incredible at empowering students.”
- [The strengths of the course were:] “Professor taught in an engaging manner through use of articles, white board, discussion, and media resources.”
- [Comments about the instruction:] “Mediation of classroom discussions / asking question that probed student knowledge.”
- “I have never felt more comfortable to share and ask questions [than] in his class. I felt confident in my understanding of Chinese history.”

Quantitative (scale: “1: Seldom” to “5: Almost Always”)

Prompt	Rating
The course challenged/engaged/deepened my thinking	4.833
The course objectives were clear	4.500
The course addressed these objectives	4.667
The course was well-organized	4.833
The readings and/or assignments were relevant	4.333
The course enriched my understanding of the subject	4.833
The overall quality of the course	4.833
The instructor communicated well	4.600
The instructor made the methods of assessment/grading clear	4.000
The instructor provided constructive feedback when appropriate	4.167
The instructor was available for consultation and assistance	4.833
The overall quality of the instruction was	4.833