A Japanese colony for fifty years and under America’s protective wing for a subsequent fifty plus years, Taiwan has evolved from poverty and totalitarianism into a prosperous and substantially democratic society. Taiwan’s transformation has taken place in the context of the island’s uncertain political status. Historically and culturally Chinese, the vagaries of Chinese civil conflict and of the Cold War brought about Taiwan’s separation from mainland China some fifty years ago. Against China’s unwavering insistence on Taiwan’s eventual restoration to the mainland, most of Taiwan’s population wish to preserve the island’s separate status for the foreseeable future; a vocal and politically influential minority advocate formal independence for Taiwan. In the midst of this, the United States periodically proclaims fealty to the principle of one China, but combines this with warnings to China about the need to settle Taiwan’s future peacefully.

The Taiwan issue has been a major irritant in U.S.-China relations, periodically bringing the two close to conflict. In recent years, Taiwan’s substantial and growing economic ties with a more open and prosperous China has created a new dynamic.

The peace of the region and the well-being of Taiwan, China, and the United States depends on whether the three actors deal prudently and wisely with this complex issue. This course will examine the background and the present state of play of the Taiwan issue with emphasis on Taiwan’s political, social, and economic transformation. We shall seek insight as to whether wisdom and prudence will prevail or whether disaster awaits.

Requirements:
Mid-term examination 30%
Attendance and participation in class discussions 30%
End of term research paper 10 pages 40%

Texts
Edmonds & Goldstein (editors), *Taiwan in the Twentieth Century: A Retrospective View* (Cambridge University Press).


Dickson and Chao (editors), *Assessing the Lee Teng-hui Legacy in Taiwan’s Politics* (M.E. Sharpe).

Reading Assignments
April 8 Introduction: Physical Setting and Historical Background

April 10 Under Japanese Rule

April 15 Under Japanese Rule

https://acad.carleton.edu/curricular/POSC/classes/Posc232/S03/index.htm
April 17 The American Embrace


April 22 From Rags to Riches

Dickson & Chao (eds.), *Assessing the Lee Teng-hui Legacy in Taiwan's Politics*, pp. 91-106

April 24 Mid-term Exam

April 29 Political Transformation

April 29 The Troublesome Triangle: U.S.-China-Taiwan

May 1 Culture and Society

May 6 The Contemporary Political Scene

May 8 The Troublesome Triangle: U.S.-China-Taiwan