

# OLLI BOULDER: MODERN CHINA

**OVERVIEW:** This class provides a comprehensive perspective of China's stature in the modern world, relating in the process, the very difficult position it was in 40 years ago, the economic miracle it has achieved since 1979, how Chinese society has changed, the many challenges facing the government, the strategy it is employing internationally, how its military stacks up, its current economic strengths and vulnerabilities, and where the trade difficulties with the U.S. are likely to lead.

## PLANNED CONTENT:

\*Week one: Review of "The 100 Years of Humiliation" relating the terrible economic and psychological position the Chinese people were in when Mao died in 1976. The economic recovery plan as developed and implemented by Deng Xiaoping, part one.

\*Week two: Continuation of the implementation of the economic recovery plan. Beginning of foreign investment, secret Taiwanese involvement in the Chinese development plan. The importance of the development of shipping containers and transportation. The key role of Walmart. Special Economic Zones (SEZ's). How Chinese conduct business compared to Western practices. Migration to the cities.

\*Week three: The critical importance of infrastructure: China's leadership role in air and rail travel, and the importance of highways, subways, and ports. Chinese residual paranoia about potential Western moves to block Chinese progress. Chinese cities: vertical living vs the West's horizontal living. Chinese economic structure: State-Owned Enterprises (SOE's), vs private or public (listed on stock market) companies and their respective roles in the economy. China's raw material resources vs their needs, how that shapes economic policy. How China's international consumer product marketing compares to that of Japan and South Korea.

\*Week four: Asian and Chinese geography: how it has influenced Chinese economic and human development over thousands of years. Chinese people: The various ethnicities in China, how the minorities are being treated. China`s attitude toward immigrants. The effects of the one child policy on society, reversing population growth. How will China pay for retiree pensions with insufficient taxes being paid by current workers? The remarkable emergence of the middle class: their expectations and aspirations, how it is changing China.

\*Week five: Continuation of discussion of changes in the lives of Chinese people with economic change. Social and economic aspects of vertical living. Higher education: Family pressure starts in pre-school and culminates with the critical test which determines one`s future. City living and people`s rights and attitudes. Air and water pollution and the government`s role. Public health.

\*Week six: Chinese government: “Socialism with Chinese characteristics”. The role of the government in people`s lives. Land and property confiscation for development projects. People`s attitudes about these policies. President Xi and the fundamental changes he has implemented. The future of the “contract” between the government and the people to provide full employment. Tiananmen Square, public pushback, and government policy. Chinese military: its strengths and weaknesses. Government attitude about potential military aggressiveness—threats vs actual military action. The potential for a future space war.

\*Week seven: Chinese major trade programs: The “Belt and Road” initiative and “Made in China 2025” program. China`s response to the U.S. “retreat” from world multilateral agreements and world involvement. America`s traditional trade relationship with China and how that has changed under President Trump. How our trade deficit with China compares to trade deficits with Germany, Japan, South Korea, Canada and Mexico. Updates on latest events in the “war”.

