Structures of Governance: China
Overview

• Three Branches of Government
  • Executive most powerful
  • Legislative rubber stamp
  • No independent judiciary

• No Universal Suffrage
  • Voting in theory but decisions reserved for limited elites

• Political Divisions
  • 23 Provinces
  • 4 Municipalities
  • 5 Autonomous Regions
  • 2 Special Administrative Regions
The Chinese Communist Party - CCP

• **Democratic Centralism**
  • Society is best led by an elite vanguard party with a superior understanding of the Chinese people and their needs

• Hierarchical structure
  • Village/township
  • County
  • Province
  • Nation

• Head of the party is General Secretary
The Chinese Communist Party - CCP

• National Party Congress
  • More than 2000 delegates
  • Meets every 5 years
  • Rubberstamps decisions made by party leaders
  • Elects members of Central Committee

• Central Committee
  • About 340 members
    • Elected for 5 year term by National Party Congress
    • Secret ballot/candidates limited
  • Meets annually (plenums)
  • Carries out business of National Party Congress between sessions
The Chinese Communist Party - CCP

• **Politburo**
  • Chosen by Central Committee
  • Dictates government policies
  • Meets in *secret*
  • About 25 members

• **Standing Committee**
  • Most powerful political organization in China!
  • Elite of the elite (7 members), chosen by Politburo
  • Membership is mirror of faction influence

• **General Secretary** is chosen from the Standing Committee
  • Head of the CCP
  • Recent Secretaries have been educated (technocrats)
Factionalism

• Guanxi ("connections")
  • Chinese term that means "connections" or "relationships"
  • Describes personal ties between individuals based on such things as common birthplace or mutual acquaintances
  • Key to getting things done (cut red tape), but can feed corruption

• Factions
  • Conservatives (hard-liners)
  • Reformers/open door
  • Liberals (out of power since 1989)
  • Princelings: aristocracy of families with revolutionary credentials from days of Mao (Xi Jinping)
  • Shanghai Gang – associates of former leader Jiang Zemin - emphasis on guanxi
  • Chinese Communist Youth League (Hu Jintao)
The State/Government

- 3 branches BUT all branches controlled by party
  - Not independent
  - No checks/balances
The Executive

• Head of State
  • President
  • Serve 5 year terms, limited to 2
  • At least 45 years old (same for VP)
  • Senior Party Leaders
    • Recently General Secretary and President are the SAME

• Head of Government (Le Keqiang)
  • Premier (like a PM)
  • Formally appointed by Pres, but always from Standing Committee
  • Directs the State Council (like a cabinet)
    • Made up of ministers who direct bureaucracy
The Bureaucracy

• Exists on all levels
  • Immense in size and scope

• Made up of cadres – 30 million!
  • Person who exercises a position of authority in communist government
  • May or may not be Party members
  • Most must now retire between ages of 60-70

• China recruits leaders through Cadre List (nomenklatura)
  • System of choosing cadres from lower levels of party hierarchy for advancement based on their loyalty/contributions to party

• Dual Role
  • Bureaucracy is supervised by higher bodies in govt and comparable bodies in CCP
The Legislature

- National **People’s Congress**
  - “Formal” authority of government to rule on people’s behalf
  - Meets once a year in March for two weeks
  - 3,000 members – “deputies”, 5 year terms
  - Chosen from lower people’s congresses
  - Chooses President/VP – but only one candidate for each
  - Has little power, but announces Politburo’s policies
The Judiciary

• Peoples Court System
• Peoples Procuratorate – supplies lawyers
• No rule of law under Mao, but acknowledged today
  • Business liberalization has demanded it
• Party uses system as a weapon
• Criminal Justice system works quickly and harshly – 99% conviction rate
• World leader in use of death penalty
Source

- Mrs. Silverman