

CHIN9522 Exploration of major cultural themes across Chinese history (6 credits)

Course Duration

4 hours per week, 48 contact hours in total

Offered in the 1st semester

Course Description

This course aims to familiarize international/exchange/visiting students with Chinese culture and history. Rather than placing traditional emphasis on memorizing historical figures, the course provides a clear timeline of China, its culture, its language, and its complexity through legends, historical events, and cultural themes. It seeks to stimulate students' interest in gaining a deeper understanding of China, its people, its history, and its culture in the global context. Students are encouraged to participate in group discussions and to use cross-references to other parts of the world to learn lessons from history.

Course Objectives

1. Introduce international students to Chinese history, culture, and civilization achievements;
2. Foster interest in exploring China's people, history, and culture from a global perspective.
3. Highlight cultural differences and similarities between Chinese and other societies.
4. Establish a foundation for students to independently delve into Chinese studies and culture.

Study Load

Course Activities	Number of Hours
Class contact hours	48
Writing homework	32
Revision / Self-study	30
Presentation - Preparation	10
Total	120

Assessment

100% coursework

Mode of Assessments	Weighting (100%)
Class Participation	10%
Written Test	30%
In-class Presentation	15%
Written report	15%
Essay Writing	30%

Course Content & Topics

1. Introduction: The Timeline of Chinese History (Week 1)
2. Myth and Legends (Week 2)
3. The Significant Historical Events in the Dynastic Period (Week 3)
4. Chinese Thoughts and Virtues (Week 4-5)
5. Ancient Chinese Writing (Week 6)
6. Arts and Literature (Week 7)
7. Technological and Cultural Innovations (Week 8)
8. Food Culture (Week 9)
9. Festivals and Customs (Week 10)
10. Cultural Exchange between China and Foreign Countries (Week 11)
11. Conclusion and reflection: Understanding the Impact of Chinese History (Week 12)

Course Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate a fundamental understanding of the Chinese history timeline, including key historical events and influential figures that have significantly impacted the course of Chinese history.
2. Articulate well-informed opinions and insights about specific historical figures and cultural themes, incorporating background information gleaned from selected reading materials to highlight their significance in shaping Chinese society.
3. Analyze the rich diversity of China's people, history, and culture by considering various perspectives and global contexts, demonstrating an appreciation for the complexity and nuance of Chinese cultural heritage.
4. Employ critical thinking skills to explore and evaluate different aspects of Chinese culture, fostering a curiosity for further learning and independent research in Chinese studies.

Required / Recommended Readings & Online Materials

1. Bai, Shouyi: *An Outline History of China (revised edition)*, Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1998.
2. Barraclough, Geoffrey, et al: *The Times Atlas of World History*, Times Books Limited, London, 1979.
3. Birrell, Anne. *Chinese mythology : an introduction*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993.
4. Chan, Wing-tsit: *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008.
5. Gascoigne, Bamber: *A Brief History of the Dynasties of China*, London: Constable & Robinson Ltd, 2003.
Hong Kong Chronicles Institute, *Hong Kong Chronicles*, Hong Kong: Chung Hwa Book Co., H.K. Ltd , 2022 First edition. (The first volume of the book, ‘Overview and Chronology’, is available online at <https://www.hkchronicles.org.hk/en/overviewchronology.php>)
6. Hsiao, Kung-chuan, *History of Chinese Political Thought, Volume 1 : From the Beginnings to the Sixth Century, A.D.*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015, 1st ed..
7. Huang, Renyu: *China: a Macro History*, Lian Jing Publisher, Taipei, 1993.
8. Lindqvist, Cecilia. *China, empire of the written symbol*. Translated From Swedish by Joan Tate. London: Harvill, 1991.
9. Liu, Yuejin, ed., *Concise reader of Chinese literature history*. Singapore : Palgrave Macmillan, 2024.
10. Luo, Yuming, *A concise history of Chinese literature*. Translated by Ye Yang. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011.
11. Roberts, J. A. G., *A Concise History of China*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999.
12. Ropp, Paul S.. *China in World History*, Oxford; Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 2010.
13. San, J. H.. *Ancient China's Inventions*. Hong Kong: The Commercial Press, 1984.
14. Shaughnessy, Edward L. ed.. *China, Empire and Civilization*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
15. Shi, Zhongwen and Chen, Qiaosheng. *China's Culture*. Singapore: Cengage Learning Asia Pte Ltd, 2011.
16. Tan, Qixiang, ed., *Concise Historical Atlas of China*. Beijing: Zhongguo di tu chu ban she, 1991.
17. The Institute of History and Philology. “Chinese Civilization in Time and Space.” Accessed August 1, 2024. https://ccts.sinica.edu.tw/intro_e.html

18. The University of Chicago. "The Chicago Manual of Style Online," Accessed August 1, 2024. https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html
19. Toynbee, Arnold: *Mankind and Mother Earth, A Narrative History of the World*, Oxford U. Press, New York and London, 1976
20. Weatherhead East Asian Institute at Columbia University, Asia for Educators. "CHINA—Timeline of Historical Periods." Accessed August 1, 2024. https://afe.easia.columbia.edu/timelines/china_timeline.htm
21. World History Publishing and World History Foundation "World History Encyclopedia." Accessed August 1, 2024. <https://www.worldhistory.org/image/16124/warring-states-of-china-and-qin-conquest-c-250-bce/>
22. Zhang, Qizhi ed., *Traditional Chinese Culture*, Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2004.
23. Lee, Kihoon. *The Origin of Chinese characters : an illustrated history and word guide*. New York: Algora Publishing, 2018.
24. Cooper, Arthur. *The Other Greek: An Introduction to Chinese and Japanese Characters, Their History and Influence*. Ed. Imre Galambos. Leiden: Brill, 2018.