



Global China Program

Chinese Civilization: An Introduction

(中国文明导论)

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Language of Instruction: English

Contact Hours: 56 course hours. One course hour is 45 minutes.

Recommended Credit: 3

Semester: Spring 2024

Course Description

This is an introductory course to multiple sociocultural aspects of China as an old civilized country undergoing a critical economic and political transition. With the understanding that contemporary Chinese sociocultural issues might be better interpreted and comprehended in the background of China's abundant but complicated tradition, this course mainly covers the part of Chinese historical tradition and is dedicated to the question that what we can learn from the history of Chinese civilization in the modern development. This course starts from a general introduction to some basics of China, with a highlight on the brief depiction of China's history. Based on the Chinese history framework, it is further followed by the elaborations on several important topics of China's tradition and culture.

This course aims to present a diversified vision about China's development, selectively raising some key topics concerning China's change in both ideological and material spheres, in the hope of helping students acquire some basic understanding about China and develop fields to their own interest. Students are required to bring one or two questions about China's traditional culture into the class discussion and final essay, and present their viewpoints, interpretations and analyses accordingly. The Lecture-Reading – Discussion method is applied to provide a better understanding of Chinese history and social culture.

Course Hours:

56 course hours. One course hour equals to 45 mins.

Recommended Textbook:

Sun Xiaoyu. 2009. A Chinese History Reader, Cengage Learning Asia

http://www.amazon.com/Chinese-History-Reader-Sun-Xiaoyu/dp/9814281700/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1406781196&sr=8-1&keywords=A+Chinese+History+Reader



Course Requirements and Grading

All required work must be completed to pass the course. Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

- Attendance: 10%
- Participation (group discussion and in-class presentation included): 30%
- Final oral presentation: 10%
- Final essay: 50%

Attendance Policy

- Students are required to get permission from the ECNU-GEC Office (ECNU Global Education Center) and your instructor.
- Coming late or leaving early consistently without the permission is regarded as an absence.
- For each unexcused absence you will be deducted 1 point from your final grade.
- Absences over one third of the semester for one course, no matter what reasons you have (sickness, travel, etc.), will result in failing that course;
- On days that you are sick, you are required to submit a slip noting your absence .

Academic Integrity Policies

- Plagiarism, cheating, fabricating, facilitating academic dishonesty, and other behaviors will not be tolerated and will result in failing the assignment
- Sanctions could include: written warning, deducting or failing grades, expulsion from the program, and letter of reprimand to students' origin institutions.

Participation

Participation of each member of the class is of utmost importance to the success of the course, and will constitute a part of your final grade. Unexcused and unexplained absence will have a negative influence on your final grade.

It is essential that you participate actively in class discussion. Each of you should bring to class one or two intelligent question(s) or comment(s) to facilitate class discussion.

In-class Presentation

A list of presentation topics related with Chinese traditional cultures will be available in the first week for your reference. You may pair with another one or two students in class to present a 20 min presentation on any topic you are interested in from the provided topic list, or you may prepare another relevant topic beyond the list for your presentation. You need



to discuss with the instructor before you start your preparation for the presentation.

Final Essay

The essay is required to be related with any topic of Chinese ancient culture and history, with sufficient information to showcase your full understanding of and your personal comment on it.

It is not expected to be presented as a formal academic paper, but should have **title, abstract, introduction, main body, conclusion and bibliography** in the end. As a part of format, please use 12 font, Arial and double space to input.

It is due in class on _____. Please bring the hard copy to class and also send your e-paper to: jmtao@hanyu.ecnu.edu.cn, thank you. No Late Paper Accepted. In case of any question, please feel free to let me know in advance.

Weekly Schedule

Week One

China in brief I: *course introduction*
core concepts of China

Week Two

Chinese Cultural History I: *Some View on China's History*

Week Three

Chinese Cultural History II: *The Mythical and Legendary Times (1)*

Week Four

Chinese Cultural History II: *The Mythical and Legendary Times (2)*

Week Five

Chinese Cultural History III: *Pre-Qin times: Cultures of Xia, Shang and Zhou Dynasties*
Chinese characters and the Three Perfections

Week Six

Chinese Cultural History IV: *Early Chinese religions and philosophical Schools*
Confucianism & Taoism



Week Seven

Chinese Cultural History V: *Qin & Han times: Filial Piety and Wuxing*

Week Eight

Chinese Cultural History VI: *Wei & Jin times and the Southern and Northern Dynasties
Neo-Taosim and arrival of Buddhism*

Week Nine

Chinese Cultural History VII: *The zenith of Chinese civilization: Sui & Tang times
the Silk Road and Tang Poems*

Week Ten

Chinese Cultural History VIII: *Song times:
the Chinese Landscape Paintings and Neo-Confucianism
Nature within Walls: Chinese classical garden culture*

Week Eleven Field trip I: *Yu Garden or Suzhou Garden Exploration*

Or:

Chinese Cultural History IX: *Chinese Cultural History IX: Yuan & Ming:
the Mongol interruption and the restoration and
consolidation of Ming (1)*

Week Twelve

Chinese Cultural History X: *Yuan & Ming:
the Mongol interruption and the restoration and consolidation
of Ming (2)*

Qing times:

summit and decline of the empire under the impact of the West

Week Thirteen

Student Final Essay Oral presentation (Essay due)

**Note: All schedules are subject to change in the time of need.*

Recommended Readings



- John King Fairbank and Merle Goldman. 2006. *China: a new history* —2nd. enl. ed. Cambridge: Massachusetts, the Belknap Press of Harvard University Press
- Kam Louis. 2008. *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Chinese Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Elizabeth J. Perry & Mark Selden (ed). 2010. *Chinese Society: Change, conflict and resistance* (3rd ed). New York. Routledge
- Chen Lai, 2017, *The Core Values of Chinese Civilization*, Springer Nature Singapore Pte Ltd. and SDX Joint Publishing