

# CHINESE CULTURE

## **Course Description**

This course traces the history of Chinese culture and cultural influences, with special attention to the impact of political structures, economics, and religion, beginning with ancient times, and spanning the various dynasties, culminating in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The aspects of culture that are examined include language, history, customs, folklore, marriage, arts, literature, architecture, science and technology, philosophical ideas, religion, beliefs, and aesthetics.

## **Instructor**

Dingman Wu is the author of *A Panoramic View of Chinese Culture* (Nanjing, 2010).

## **Course Objectives**

By the end of this course, students will be able to

- A. to have an overall picture of traditional Chinese culture in the following four aspects
  - a. factual aspect: languages, scenic and historic spots, etc.
  - b. customs: Chinese cuisines, table manners, folklore, handcrafts and marriage customs, etc.
  - c. achievements: in arts and literature, science and technology, etc.
  - d. values: philosophical ideas, beliefs, and aesthetics.
- B. to find out essence and characteristics of Chinese culture and the universal values this culture shared with others;
- C. to understand contemporary events, ideas and issues in China based on Chinese traditional concepts.



**Instructions for the Study Guide:** Please use the questions to develop a deeper understanding of the text and to review the concepts. As you read, consider the questions. Keeping careful notes or a journal will help you prepare to write the essays at the end of each section as well as the final essay. Your required and supplemental readings can be found in the "Readings" file.

**Instructions for Essays:** Please write a 1,250 – 1,500 word essay that responds to the essay questions. Then, send your essay to your professor. You may send an outline and drafts to your instructor for feedback and guidance before you send your finished essay.

**Instructions for Final Essay:** Please write a 5,000 word essay that responds to the essay questions. Then, send your essay to your professor. You may send an outline and drafts to your instructor for feedback and guidance before you send your finished essay.

### **Required Texts**

Dingmin Wu, *A Panoramic View of Chinese Culture*, Nanjing: Yilin Publishing House, 2010

Lang Ye & Zhu Liangzhi, *Insights into Chinese Culture*, Foreign Language Teaching and Research press, Beijing, 2008

Ebrey Patricia Buckley, *Chinese Civilization: A Sourcebook*, 2nd Ed, 1993

## I 1-4 Origin and Heritages

### 1. The Origin of Chinese Culture 中国文化溯源

#### *The Emergence of Chinese Culture*

Along with ancient Egypt, Babylon, and India, China is one of the four great ancient civilizations of the world. China boasts a history rich in over 5,000 years of artistic, philosophical, political, and scientific advancement.

The Xia Dynasty (21st-16th century BC) was China's first dynastic government. This was followed by the Shang Dynasty (16th-11th century BC) and the Western Zhou Dynasty (11th century-771 BC), which further refined the national system of governance.

China's Spring & Autumn Period (722-481 BC) / Warring States Period (403-221 BC) saw a great upsurge in science and technology, as well as in ideology and culture. China produced, during this time, a number of great scholars who possessed abundant ideas and extensive knowledge, including Kongzi (Confucius), Laozi, Mozi, Xunzi, and Mengzi (Mencius). They left future generations a valuable legacy in philosophy, politics, education, and the military and had a profound influence on the culture of China and the entire world.

#### Questions

1. The representatives of the greatest scholars in China's Spring & Autumn Period were Laozi, Confucius, and Xunzi. What are their thoughts and doctrines?
2. What are the differences between Confucian thoughts and Laozi's thoughts?
3. Why is Sunzi's Art of War regarded as source for all books on war and is even used in business interaction?

#### *Chinese Mythology 神话传说*

Chinese mythology began in 12th century B.C. (close to the time of the Trojan War). The myths and legends were passed down in oral format for over a thousand years, before being written down in early books such as Shui Jing Zhu 《水经注》 and Shan Hai Jing 《山海经》. Other myths continued to be passed down through oral traditions such as theatre and song, before being recorded in the form of novels such as Fengshen Yanyi 《封神演义》. A unique characteristic of Chinese culture is the relatively late appearance in Chinese literature of creation myths. The stories exist in several versions, with the creation of the first human being variously ascribed to Nüwa 女娲, and the universe to Pangu 盘古.

The Chinese dragon is one of the most important mythical creatures in Chinese mythology, considered to be the most powerful and divine creature symbolizing great power. Chinese people sometimes use the term "Descendants of the Dragon" as a sign of their ethnic identity.

#### Questions

1. In Chinese mythology how did Pangu create the heaven, earth, mountains, rivers and human beings?
2. What are the differences between the dragon in Chinese culture and that in western culture?
3. What is Bruce Lee's Chinese name? Does it have something to do with Chinese myths?

### *24 Solar-terms, Heavenly Stems & Earthly Branches*

In approximately the 21st century BC, a primitive agricultural society first appeared in the areas around China's Yellow and Yangtze rivers, where animal husbandry joined hunting and fishing as a means of human sustenance. For agricultural activities Chinese ancestors created a unique calendar which divides the whole year into 24 solar-terms. The traditional calendar, also known as the Jiazi (甲子) calendar, counts the years in sixty-year cycles by combining two series of numbers—the ten Heavenly Stems and the twelve Earthly Branches. And the twelve Earthly Branches refers to twelve years as a cycle, with each year corresponding to one of the 12 animals, such as mouse, ox and tiger.

#### Questions

1. Jiazi (甲子) calendar had been used in China for chronology in history books. Why is Chinese revolution of 1911, overthrowing Qing Dynasty, the last feudal dynasty, called Xinhe Revolution 辛亥革命?
2. Compare the animal signs of the Chinese zodiac with the star signs of the western zodiac.

## **2. Language as a Uniting Factor 汉语**

### *Oracle Bone Inscriptions and the Bronze Inscriptions*

The earliest examples of Chinese writing date to the late Shang period (1200 BC). These are the so-called Oracle Bone Inscriptions (甲骨文). The Oracle Bone Inscriptions are the earliest Chinese writing scripts discovered by far. They were found in Anyang, Henan province at the end of 19th century. The second stage of the development of written Chinese is the bronze inscriptions. The Bronze Inscriptions were cast or engraved on bronze vessels. Starting from about the fifth century BC, Chinese people wrote the characters on bamboo strips, which were tied together with strings to form a roll. Besides bamboo strips, texts were also written on wooden tablets and silk cloth.

#### Questions

1. What are the main contents of oracle bone inscriptions and bronze inscriptions?
2. When and how were the oracle bone inscriptions found?

### *The Written Language as a Uniting Factor*

There are seven major dialects in Chinese spoken language. Mandarin or Standard Chinese is the official language of China. Beijing dialect forms the basis of Standard Chinese, which is also referred to as Pǔtōnghuà(普通话) literally "common speech". Despite the existence of many dialects of Chinese spoken languages, the written form, including grammar and vocabulary are almost identical. In fact, as early as the 3rd century BC, Qin Shi Huang, the first emperor of China, united the writing forms that existed in China at the time.

#### Questions

1. Why is the Chinese written language regarded as one factor in Han ethnic unity?
2. In China Cantonese is considered a dialect of Chinese language, but some people think it is another language in China. What is your opinion? Please give reasons.

### *Chinese Calligraphy*

Chinese language is called Hanyu. Similarly, Chinese characters, used to write the language, are called Hanzi or "Han characters. Character writing with writing brush (Chinese Calligraphy) has been long considered a cornerstone of Chinese culture and

one of the imperial courts' standards for selecting officials. It has been consistently practiced as a major aesthetic expression from the 5th cent. B.C. Shu (calligraphy), Hua (painting), Qin (a string musical instrument), and Qi (a strategic board game) are the four basic skills and disciplines of the Chinese literati.

#### Questions

1. Chinese Characters is poetic symbols and symbols of sentiment. How were characters reshaped into graceful Olympic Symbols of the Olympic Games of 2008?
2. Practicing calligraphy is said to be helpful in promoting one's longevity. Why?
3. What are the rhythms of calligraphy displayed in Wang Xizhi's masterpiece "Preface to Langting pavilion"?

### 3. Ancient Capitals and Heritages 古都与文化遗产

#### *Ancient Capitals and Historical Sites*

The Four Great Ancient Capitals of China traditionally refers to Beijing, Luoyang, Nanjing, and Xi'an. After the 1920s as more discoveries were made, other historical capitals were added to the list, including Kaifeng, Hangzhou, and Anyang.

There are several historical constructions in Beijing such as the Forbidden City, the Temple of Heaven, and numerous other construction projects. Beijing is also the best place to visit the Great Wall. Luoyang is regarded as cradle of the Chinese civilization. Xi'an was the capital of 13 dynasties and well-known for the Terracotta Army ("Soldier and Horse Figures"), inside the Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor. The present-day city wall of Nanjing was built more than 600 years ago during the Ming dynasty, and it is the longest surviving city wall in the world. Kaifeng was the capital of Northern Song dynasty. Hangzhou is known for its beautiful scenery. Anyang was a capital of Shang dynasty 3,300 years ago where the oracle bones inscriptions were excavated.

#### Questions

1. The Great wall is regarded as a wonder of the world. It witnesses the separation and integration in Chinese history. Who built it and for what purposes?
2. The Forbidden City is a glorious and awe-inspiring royal palace. Compare it with royal palaces of western countries, what are the differences?
3. How was the Terracotta Army discovered? How were the soldier and horse figures sculptured? What are their features in terms of art and technology?

#### *Tourist Resources in China*

There are some tourist resources in China on the list of world cultural and natural sites. Mount Taishan is admired by Chinese as paramount among the Five Sacred Mountains. Grottoes filled with precious murals and sculptures are concentrated along the ancient Silk Road in Gansu Province. The best known are the Mogao Caves which are called "treasure house of oriental art". The Shaolin Temple, the birthplace of Chinese Zen Buddhism, is famous for its Shaolin kungfu martial arts. Suzhou and Hangzhou, long known as "paradise on earth," are crisscrossed with rivers, lakes, bridges and villages, as beautiful as paintings.

#### Questions

1. What are the most famous five mountains in China? Why did Chinese emperors worship Mt. Taishan so much?
2. What are the unique features of the gardens south of Yangtse River? What are the differences between the gardens and the gardens in western countries in terms of

architecture and the concepts?

#### 4. Exchanges with Foreign Countries 中外往来述要

##### *Silk Road*

The Silk Road, or Silk Route is an interconnected series of routes through Asia traversed by caravan connecting Chang'an (today's Xi'an), China, with Antioch, Asia Minor, as well as other points. It connected the Yellow River Valley to the Mediterranean Sea and passed through places such as Chinese Gansu and Xinjiang and present-day countries Iran, Iraq and Syria. Its influence carried over into Japan and Korea. These exchanges were significant not only for the development and flowering of the great civilizations of China, ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, Persia, India and Rome but also helped to lay the foundations of the modern world. Silk Road includes overland routes and overseas.

##### Questions

1. Who was the trail blazer of the Silk Road? And when and where did the road begin?
2. There are murals grottos in several places along the Silk Road. Where are they? What are the significance of these murals in terms of culture and cultural exchanges?
3. How did the Silk Road develop on the sea? Why is it also called Porcelain Route? What is its contribution to cultural exchanges?

##### *The Tea Horse Road 茶马古道*

The Tea Horse Road, tucked in the verdant landscape of southwestern China, is a lesser-known route that parallels the Silk Road in cultural and historical importance. This other ancient route spans a not unimpressive 2,350 kilometers, traversing some of the most diverse and mutable terrains in the world. For thousands of years, travelers have been lured across its snow-capped mountains, precipitous canyons and lively streaming rivers to discover some of the most beautiful landscapes in all of China.

##### Questions

1. Why is the southern Silk Road called the Tea Horse Road? How was it formalized?
2. What is Pu'er Tea? Why is it badly wanted by ancient Tibetan people?

##### *Zheng He's Voyages to the Western Seas 郑和下西洋*

Decades before Christopher Columbus sailed the ocean blue in search of a water route to Asia, a Chinese mariner was exploring the Indian Ocean and Western Pacific with seven voyages of his magnificent "Treasure Fleet". The Treasure Fleets were commanded by a powerful admiral named Zheng He. Zheng He, who ranks as perhaps the China's foremost adventurer, helped transform China into the region's, and perhaps the world's, superpower of his time.

##### Questions

1. How many times did Zheng He lead the Chinese Treasure Fleet to make far-ranging voyages to the West, which lasted 28 years? What were the routes of his voyages?
2. What is the significance of Zheng He's voyages?
3. Zheng He's voyages were earlier than Christopher Columbus'. What are the different purposes between their voyages? Make a comparison.

##### *Did Zheng He Discover the World? 郑和发现了世界?*

Gavin Menzies, a retired submarine commander of the British Royal Navy, is the author of the controversial book 1421: The Year China Discovered the World which asserts that ships from the fleet of Chinese admiral Zheng He travelled to the Americas prior to Christopher Columbus' arrival in 1492.

The PBS aired a documentary 1421: The Year China Discovered America? It consists of two parts. The first part presents the historical facts of Zheng He's voyages. The second part tries to find evidences to test Gavin Menzies' theory.

Questions

1. What is the evidence Mr. Gavin Menzies has found to support his 1421 hypothesis?
2. What is Great Ming Amalgamated Map(大明混一图)?
3. Do you agree with the 1421 hypothesis? Why or why not?

**Essay**

1. When did Chinese culture originate? What are the creation stories told in Chinese mythology? What did the Chinese language originate and how it differs from other languages in the world? When and why the Great Wall was constructed? What is the spirit displayed in this great wonder? Who were the most important thinkers in Chinese history and how do their thoughts influence Chinese culture for thousands of years? How did Chinese culture develop in the process of intercontinental trade in history?

## **II 5-8 Customs and Living Style**

### **5. Chinese Cuisine and Drinking 中国烹饪与饮料**

*Eight Branches of Chinese Cuisine*

Chinese cuisine is widely seen as representing one of the richest and most diverse culinary cuisines and heritages in the world. It originated from different regions of China and has become widespread in many other parts of the world.

Chinese cuisine involves eight branches. Based on different regions, they are cuisines of Shandong, Sichuan, Guangdong, Fujian, Jinagsu, Zhejiang, Hunan, and Anhui. Their features are related to the geography, climate, local product and eating habit.

Questions

1. A meal in Chinese culture is typically seen as consisting of two or more general components. What are they?
2. What are the differences between Chinese cuisine and western cuisine?
3. What are the differences between Chinese table manners and those in western nations?

*Food Symbolic Meanings*

In Chinese culture some food have symbolic meanings. For example, Noodles are the symbol of longevity. They are as much a part of Chinese birthday celebration as a birthday cake with lit candles in many countries, so that youngsters or seniors all will have a bowl of Long Life Noodle in expectation of a healthy life. Since noodles symbolize long life, it is considered very unlucky to cut up a strand.

Questions

1. How warmth and hospitality are expressed by food in China?
2. The reunion dinner on Chinese New Year's Eve always includes fish. At a Chinese wedding banquet, chicken's feet and lobster are served together. What do they symbolize?

*The Philosophy of Yin and Yang in Food*

The philosophy of yin and yang lies at the heart of Chinese culture. Taken literally, yin and yang mean the dark side and sunny side of a hill. People commonly think of yin and yang as opposing forces. However, it is really more appropriate to view them as complementary pairs. The Chinese believe problems arise not when the two forces are battling, but when there is an imbalance between them in the environment.

Chinese medicated diet is a special diet made from Chinese drugs, food and condiments under the theoretical guidance of diet preparation based on differentiation of symptoms and signs of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). It has not only the efficiency of medicine but also the delicacy of food, and can be used to prevent and cure diseases, build up one's health and prolong one's life.

#### Questions

1. How does the concept of yin and yang relate to food?
2. What are the characteristics of Chinese medicated diet?

#### *Chinese Tea*

Chinese tea—like Chinese silk and china—has become synonymous worldwide with refined culture. China is a country of ceremony and decorum. Whenever guests visit, it is necessary to make and serve tea to them. Savoring tea" is not only a way to discern good tea from mediocre tea, but also how people take delight in their reverie and in tea-drinking itself. Making a kettle of tea, securing a serene space, and imbibing it slowly in small sips can help banish fatigue and make you appreciate the subtle allure of tea-drinking. A tranquil, refreshing, comfortable and neat locale is desirable for drinking tea.

In traditional Chinese culture, cold beverages are believed to be harmful to digestion of hot food, so items like iced water or soft drinks are traditionally not served at meal-time. Besides soup, if any other beverages are served, they would most likely be hot tea or hot water. Tea is believed to help in the digestion of greasy foods.

#### Questions

1. What are the magical functions of tea? What are the ways of savoring tea?
2. What are the folk customs related to tea drinking?

## **6. Crafts and Skills 传统工艺**

#### *Bronze Ware and Jade*

China has a long history and glorious history in traditional crafts. The most representative are Bronze Vessels, Jade, Silk, Embroidery, Porcelain, Pottery, Cloisonné, Lacquer Ware, Kites, Paper-Cuttings, Seals, and Folk Toys.

The earliest stoneware in China was found in 3000 B.C. The Shang and Zhou dynasties ushered China into the height of the Bronze Age. During this period the making of bronze ware reached its zenith.

Ancient Chinese bronze wares fall into three types: ritual vessels, weapons, and miscellaneous objects.

In ancient China the making of bronze ware was dominated by the imperial families and aristocrats. And the possession of such wares was regarded as a status symbol.

Jade-loving is special in Chinese culture, as the Chinese saying goes "Gold has a value; jade is invaluable." The Chinese loves jade because of not only its beauty, but also more

importantly its culture, meaning and humanity.

#### Questions

1. In comparison with counterparts in other parts of the world, the Chinese bronze wares stand out. What are the reasons?
2. "Galloping Horse Overtaking a Flying Swallow" 马踏飞燕 is a bronze artwork of the Eastern Han Dynasty. It was chosen as a symbol of Chinese tourism. Why?
3. What does jade symbolize in Chinese culture?

#### *Silk and Embroidery*

It is well known that silk is discovered in China as one of the best materials for clothing. Silk dates back to the 30th Century BC when Huang Di (Yellow Emperor) came into power. In the Han dynasty, Chinese silk spread to Europe by the Silk Road. Romans became crazy for Chinese silk. It was a symbol of wealth and high social status for them to wear silk clothes.

Like silk, porcelain has also been one of the earliest artworks introduced to the western world through the Silk Road. The most prominent porcelain is blue and white porcelain.

#### Questions

1. According to the legend, how did the method of raising silkworms spread to western countries?
2. "A silkworm spins all its silk till its death and a candle won't stop its tears until it is fully burnt." This Tang poem accurately describes the property of the silkworm. Do you know how long the life span of a silkworm is? How many meters of silk can be produced from one cocoon and how many cocoons are used for a man's tie and a woman's blouse?
3. Chinese embroidery has four famous traditional styles. What are they?

#### *Porcelain --- Calling Card of Chinese Culture*

Like silk, porcelain has also been one of the earliest artworks introduced to the western world through the Silk Road. The development of porcelain in the Han Dynasty began to accelerate and before long the artworks were introduced westward. The most prominent porcelain is blue and white porcelain developed in the Yuan Dynasty and the Ming Dynasty.

#### Questions

1. In English china means porcelain and later it was used to refer to the country, China. Do you know why is porcelain called china (It was originally a name of a town)?

## **7. Festivals and Customs 节日与习俗**

#### *Traditional Festivals of China*

Traditional Chinese festivals compose an important and brilliant part of Chinese culture. Spring Festival is Chinese new year that is as important to the Chinese people as Christmas to westerns. The festival traditionally begins on the first day of the first month in the Chinese lunar calendar and ends on the 15th, the lantern festival. Qingming, or Tomb-sweeping Day, usually falls around April 5 each year. People honor their ancestors by sweeping their tombs on the day, and they often go outdoors and fly kites. Dragon boat festival falling on the 5th day of the 5th lunar month, usually in June, is an occasion to commemorate the patriotic poet, Qu Yuan, who drowned himself on the day after the conquest of his state in the Warring States period (476-221 B.C.).

People usually watch dragon boat races and eat zongzi, or the steamed glutinous rice in bamboo leaves in memory of the great poet. On the 7th day of the 7th lunar month, usually August, this festival celebrates an ancient love story, in which a girl weaver and a herd boy loved each other, but were only allowed to see each other on this day every year. Mid-Autumn is on the 15th day of the 8th lunar month, usually September or October. It evolved into an occasion for families to get together, watch the full moon and eat moon cakes. Double Ninth Festival falls on the 9th day of the 9th lunar month, usually in October. In Chinese culture the digit "9," or "jiu", denotes "eternity", making it an auspicious date.

#### Questions

1. How do Chinese people celebrate Spring Festival?
2. China's Lunar Exploration Program is called Chang'e Project 嫦娥工程 based on a fairy story of Mid-autumn Festival. What is the story? And who is Chang'e?
3. The digit "9", homophone of "jiu" (久) in Chinese pronunciation, denotes "eternity". And double-nine indicates 99 years old. This festival is a festival for the elderly. Actually, "8" is also a favorite number in China. Do you know why?

#### *Festivals of Chinese Minorities*

There are 56 nationalities living in this vast land of China, including 55 minorities. They have different customs, cultures and festivals from Han nationality.

#### Questions

1. What is the most magnificent yearly festival on the Mongolian grasslands? How do people celebrate it?
2. What is the most important festival in the Tibetan Buddhism and how is it usually celebrated?

#### Auspicious Animals and words

The people of China have a long held belief that they are descendents of the dragon, a tradition that is firmly embedded in their culture and one that is encountered across all aspects of Chinese society and in the minds of its people. In China the dragon is held in high esteem for its dignity and power.

#### Questions

1. What are the other auspicious animals?
2. Do you know any of Chinese auspicious words?

## **8. Chinese Aesthetics 审美**

#### *Classical Chinese Garden*

Influenced by the idea of attaining harmony between human beings and nature in Chinese philosophy, the aesthetic presences of Chinese art is simplicity and natural purity. Chinese aesthetics see recovering one's original purity and simplicity as the highest state of beauty. Chinese classical garden is a good example that represents Chinese aesthetic. It recreates natural landscapes in miniature. The style has evolved for more than three thousand years, and includes both the vast gardens of the Chinese emperors and smaller gardens built by scholars, poets, and former government officials. A typical classical Chinese garden is enclosed by a wall and has one or more ponds, a rock garden, trees and flowers, and an assortment of halls and pavilions within the garden, connected by winding paths and zig-zag galleries. While walking in the garden, visitors can enjoy a series of carefully-composed scenes unrolling like a scroll of

landscape paintings

Questions

1. Why did the men of letters and the retired civil servants construct the gardens?
2. How were cultural spirit, aesthetics and Taoist philosophy embodied in Classical Chinese gardens?
3. What are the differences you may find from classical Chinese garden and the gardens in western countries?

*Traditional Chinese Painting*

Chinese traditional painting bears its own characteristics and has formed a style of its own. The mainstay of traditional Chinese painting is landscapes in which emphasis was placed on the spiritual qualities of the painting and on the ability of the artist to reveal the inner harmony of man and nature, as perceived according to Taoist and Buddhist concepts.

A unique genre of traditional Chinese painting is ink and wash. It uses little or no color but applies black ink in different shades to white paper or silk. Chinese artists have a special, fervent love for the black-and-white world. According to Chinese philosophy, external splendor and prosperity cannot necessarily represent the truth of the world. The common-looking black-and-white world well expresses people's yearning for a pure and simple world. Technically, Chinese painting is not restricted by the focal point in its perspective.

Questions

1. Fan Kuan was a Chinese landscape painter of the Song Dynasty (960–1279) considered among the great masters of the tenth and eleventh centuries. One of his best known works is *Travelers among Mountains and Streams*, a large hanging scroll. What philosophical ideal is established in this painting?
2. How was Chinese painting techniques exemplified in the picture *A Riverside Scene at Qingming Festival* (清明上河图), painted by Zhang Zeduan, one of the Song Dynasty's greatest artists?
3. What are the differences between Chinese traditional painting and oil painting in the west?

*Chinese Architecture*

Chinese ancient architecture represents a profound influence of Fengshui (风水) which emphasizes the harmonious unity of human beings with nature.

Ancient Chinese architecture, no matter the royal palace or folk residence is mainly timberwork. The main structure is located on the central axis of a court while less-important structures are located to the left and right. The whole layout is symmetrical. Compared with European architectural style which is open and shut, a Chinese courtyard is like a hand scroll of painting which can be unfolded little by little. The scenery is different in each courtyard. Even in moving several steps within the court yard, you will be surprised at the changing of prospects.

Questions

1. In the Forbidden City these are three halls, the Hall of Supreme Harmony (太和殿), the Hall of Central Harmony (中和殿), and the Hall of Preserving Harmony (保和殿). It means that three kinds of harmony were pursued. What are they?
2. There are four architectural styles in Chinese civil residence, Siheyuan in Beijing, the folk residence in ancient town of Lijiang, Yunnan Province, the civil residence of white walls and black tiles in southern part of Anhui Province, and the residence of serene

water world in Xitang town, south of lower reaches of Yangtze River. What are the beauties they represent? And what ideal that ancient Chinese people pursued can be found in these civil residences?

3. The Beijing National Stadium and National Aquatics Centre, well-known as Bird's Nest(鸟巢) and Water Cube(水立方), are the Beijing Olympic Games' landmark buildings, which embodies the Chinese national spirit, traditional culture and modern science and technology. Why was the Aquatics Centre designed in cubic shape while Bird's Nest in a circle? What philosophic concepts does each of them represent?

Essay

2. China is located in the eastern part of Asia. Geographically, it is separated from other parts of the world by the ocean in the east and south, deserts and snow-capped mountains in the west and north. As a result, ancient Chinese people developed their own living style, customs, and aesthetics. What is the uniqueness you have found in this culture? What interest you most? Why?

### III 9-13 Achievements

#### 9. Traditional Sports and Athletics 传统运动与竞技

##### *Chinese Kung Fu*

Traditionally the Chinese love sports as an essential method for keeping fit as well as for entertainment, like the dragon-boat races during the Dragon-boat Festival, and climbing mountains during the Double-ninth Festival. People also relate sports to an enhanced insight into life, such as with go (*weiqi* encirclement chess) and Chinese chess. As a country with diverse cultural traditions passed down from one generation to another over a long history, China has developed a variety of sports, including martial arts, taijiquan, qigong, Chinese chess and *weiqi* encirclement chess (the game of go). Among these, martial arts can be regarded as the "super" skills of China. Martial arts is known as Kung fu (功夫) internationally, that has become synonymous to Chinese martial arts. However, wushu is a more precise term, which refers to general martial activities. Sophisticated theories of martial arts are based on the opposing ideas of yin and yang, and the integration of "hard" and "soft" techniques

Questions

1. What does the Chinese term 武术 literally mean? The character 武 has two components 止 and 戈, alluding the purpose or essence of Kung fu practice. Can you tell, after reading the textbook, the literal meanings of the two components?
2. Traditional martial arts have a system of ethics, wude (武德) in Chinese, literally mean "martial morality". Wude (武德) deals with two aspects; "morality of deed" and "morality of mind". Martial morality is always emphasized in Kung Fu movies. Can you tell them or use Kung Fu movies as examples to illustrate them in detail?
3. Why does Shaolin Temple enjoy a great reputation for its style of martial arts?

##### *Shadow Boxing (Tai chi chuan) and Qigong*

Taiji Quan (太极拳) is an internal Chinese martial art. It is considered a soft style martial art, an art of applying as deep relaxation or "softness" in the musculature as possible, to distinguish its theory and application from that of the hard martial art styles which use a degree of tension in the muscles. Variations of Taiji Quan's basic training forms are well known as the slow motion routines. The slow, repetitive work involved in the process of learning how that leverage is generated gently and measurably increases and opens the internal circulation. Taiji also boosts aspects of the immune system's function very significantly, and has been shown to reduce the incidence of anxiety,

depression, and overall mood disturbance. Therefore, Taiji Quan is often promoted and practiced as a martial arts therapy for the purposes of health and longevity.

Qigong (气功) is an aspect of Traditional Chinese medicine involving the coordination of different breathing patterns with various physical postures and motions of the body. Qigong is mostly taught as a means of therapeutic intervention.

#### Questions

1. How does Taiji Quan incorporate Taoist principles into its practice?
2. What does Qigong mean? How does it function in therapeutic intervention?

#### *Cuju and Go*

Cuju (蹴鞠) or cuqiu, is an ancient sport similar to soccer, played in China. In Chinese, 蹴 ("Cu") means kick while 鞠 ("ju") means ball. Although disputed, in 2004, football's governing body Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) officially acknowledged that China was the birthplace of football.

"Go" is an important board game with origins in China from more than 4,000 years ago. It was introduced to the Korean peninsula and Japan over 1,000 years ago, and has since become a favorite pastime of many people there. Go is not only a competitive event but also a game of entertainment. In the old days, literati would usually have a set of go pieces on the desk.

#### Questions

1. How did cuju develop and fade away in China?
2. A game of go has many implications for real life and represent wisdom at play. What do the number and the colors of the pieces represent? Why are there 19 horizontal lines and 19 vertical lines crisscrossing each other?

## **10. Ancient Science and Technology 中国古代科技**

### *The History of Science and Technology in China*

The history of science and technology in China is both long and rich with science and technological contribution. In antiquity, independent of Greek philosophers and other civilizations, ancient Chinese philosophers made significant advances in science, technology, mathematics, and astronomy. The first recorded observations of comets, solar eclipses, and supernovae were made in China. The four Great Inventions of ancient China were among the most important technological advances, not known in Europe until the end of the Middle Ages. Much of the early Western work in the history of science in China was done by Joseph Needham.

#### Questions

1. In architecture, the pinnacle of Chinese technology manifested itself in the Great Wall of China, under the first Chinese Emperor Qin Shi Huang between 220 BC and 200 BC. Also in the Qin Dynasty something developed which later became the mainstream weapon in Europe. What is it? What is the archeological finding that proves it?
2. One of the early technological achievements in China was the invention of the South pointing Chariot by Ma Jun (200-265AD). Which device of the chariot can be found in all modern automobiles?
3. Who invented the first seismograph detector? How does the device work?
4. Who developed the escapement mechanism of the clock which did not appear in clockwork in Europe until two centuries later?
5. What is the earliest known printed document in the world?

## 6. When were the first banknotes produced in China?

### *The Four Great Inventions of Ancient China*

The "Four Great Inventions of ancient China" are the compass, gunpowder, papermaking, and printing. Paper and printing were developed first. Printing was recorded in China in the Tang Dynasty, although the earliest surviving examples of printed cloth patterns date to before 220. Pin-pointing the development of the compass can be difficult: the magnetic attraction of a needle is attested by the Louen-heng 《论衡》, composed between AD 20 and 100, although the first undisputed magnetized needles in Chinese literature appear in 1086. Gunpowder was a byproduct of Taoist alchemical efforts to develop an elixir of immortality. By AD 300, Ge Hong (葛洪), an alchemist of the Jin Dynasty, conclusively recorded in his book the chemical reactions caused when saltpetre, pine resin and charcoal were heated together. In the 11th century Bi Sheng (毕升) invented of ceramic movable type printing .

### Questions

1. The Four Great Inventions had an enormous impact on the development of Chinese civilization. What are the far-reaching global impacts they have made?

### *Contacts with Europe*

The Jesuit China missions of the 16th and 17th centuries introduced Western science and technology to China. Meanwhile the Jesuits were very active in transmitting Chinese knowledge to Europe. Confucianism works were translated into European languages through the agency of Jesuit scholars stationed in China.

### Questions

1. Who was Matteo Ricci? What contribution did he make for the exchange of the Chinese culture and western culture?
2. Some outstanding European scholars began to be interested in Confucius doctrines after Confucianism works were translated into European languages. How were they influenced by Confucius and his works?

## **11. Operas and Music 戏曲与音乐**

### *Chinese Opera*

Chinese Opera is a popular form of drama and musical theatre in China with roots going back as far as the third century AD. There are numerous regional branches of Chinese opera. Among them Kunqu Opera, listed as one of the Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2001, boasts a 600-year history and is known as the "teacher" or "mother" of a hundred operas, because of its influence on other Chinese opera forms, including Beijing opera. Currently Chinese operas continue to exist in 368 different forms, and the most famous one is Beijing opera which is regarded as China's national opera. Chinese opera are full of Chinese cultural facts, presenting the audience with an encyclopedia of Chinese culture, as well as unfolding stories, beautiful paintings, exquisite costumes, graceful gestures and martial arts. They are quite different from western opera.

### Questions

1. What are the differences between Chinese opera and western opera in terms of music instruments, stage decoration, costumes, roles, and ways of acting? Make a comparison between them.

2. Masks are used in the opera; each color has a specific meaning. They are used to portray a character's role and illustrate their emotional state and general character. Can you tell what the different colors of masks, red, white, green, etc. mean?
3. Main roles in Beijing Opera fall into four categories. What are they?
4. What happened to Chinese opera during the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976?

### *Chinese Music 中国音乐*

Traditionally the Chinese believed that sound influences the harmony of the universe. The ancient Chinese belief that music is meant not to amuse but to purify one's thoughts finds particular expression in the cult of the qin (琴), a 7-stringed long zither. The Chinese proverb, High Mount Flowing Water, originated from a story of friendship between Yu Boya (俞伯牙), a famous music master and Zhong ziqi, a woodcutter. It refers to the elegant music and bosom friends. Most Chinese music is based on the five-tone scale (gong, shang, jiao, zhi, yu), but the seven-tone scale is also used. In 1978, Chinese archeologists unearthed a large amount of valuable musical instruments. Among the excavations, there are 64 articles of bronze chime bells preserved in good condition. Its total volume range covers five octaves. It can virtually play all of the 12 semitones, as well as melodies from pentatonic to diatonic scale. Since the first half of the 20th century, Chinese music has been considerably influenced by the music of the West. Some music composers successfully combine the western composing method with Chinese classics. The best example is the Violin Concerto: Butterfly lovers.

### Questions

1. Can you tell the story of High Mount Flowing Water?
2. When were the 64 articles of bronze chime bells made in ancient China?
3. What is the story of Butterfly Lovers?
4. Like Butterfly Lovers, Legend of the White Snake is also well-known to everyone in China. The story has been adapted into numerous regional branches of Chinese opera. Can you tell the story?

### *Quyí 曲艺*

Quyí is a general term that covers several different types of performances in which speech, singing or both are used. Like Chinese opera, their repertoires present the audience with an encyclopedia of Chinese culture and history. Quyí take speaking and singing as their main artistic modes of expression.

### Questions

1. What are the five characteristics of Quyí and their performance?
2. What is the most important form of joke-telling? And what are the four basic techniques it requires?

## **12. Classical Literature and the New Culture Movement 古代文学与新文化运动**

### *Highlights of Chinese Classical Literature*

The history of classical literature dates back several thousand years. Important early works include classics texts such as Analects of Confucius, The Book of Changes (the I Ching), and the Art of War. Poems in China originated very early in history. Work songs, prayers in religious ceremonies and songs of romantic love could all be both sung and recited. Ancient myths and legends, the earliest epics, were a great source of the literature of the country. Poems of the Tang Dynasty and Ci poetry of the Song Dynasty

are the most colorful chapter of Chinese literature. Chinese prose before the Qin and Han Dynasties was mostly concerned with history and philosophy. Works describing the various schools of thought of the Pre-Qin Period, and related historical accounts have been generally of high quality.

#### Questions

1. Who was Si Maqian? What are the criteria he made for the tradition of historical writings in China?
2. Who was Qu Yuan and what is his most important works?
3. Who were Li Bai (Li Po 李白) and Du Fu? What are the similarities and differences in their lives and poems?

#### *The Four Great Classical Novels of Chinese Literature*

It is impossible to talk about Chinese culture without references to works like the Romance of the Three Kingdoms, the Journey to the West 《西游记》, the Water Margin 《水浒传》 and the Dream of the Red Chamber 《红楼梦》. The stories of all these novels are well-known to all Chinese people, and widely adapted into operas, dramas, films and even computer games. Many Chinese proverbs are derived from these novels. To understand Chinese values in all its complexity, one can do no better than to read these novels.

#### Questions

1. Red Cliff is a Chinese epic war film based on the Battle of Red Cliffs (208-209 AD). It was released from 2008 to 2009. Red Cliff is the most expensive Asian-financed film to date. The first part of the film grossed US\$124 million in Asia and broke the box office record previously held by Titanic in mainland China. Which novel is the film based on? Why did the producer invest such a big amount of money in the production of the film?
2. How you ever heard of the story of Monkey King? In which of the above-mentioned novel is the story told?
3. Which novel is the Chinese equivalent of Robin Hood and His Merry Men?
4. The Dream of the Red Chamber is regarded as an encyclopedia of Chinese feudal society. Why?

#### *The New Culture Movement*

The New Culture Movement of the mid 1910s and 1920s sprang from the disillusionment with traditional Chinese culture following the failure of the Chinese Republic, founded in 1912 to address China's problems. Scholars like Chen Duxiu, Cai Yuanpei, Li Dazhao, Lu Xun, Zhou Zuoren, and Hu Shih, had classical educations but began to lead a revolt against Confucianism. They called for the creation of a new Chinese culture based on global and western standards, especially democracy and science.

#### Questions

1. What is the May Fourth Movement? And how was it related to the New Culture Movement?
2. What did the younger followers of the New Culture Movement call for? And what impact did it make on the traditional and modern Chinese culture?

### 13. Ancient Education and examination system 古代教育与科举考试

#### *Education in Ancient China 中国古代教育*

A good education has always been highly valued in China, as people believe that education ensures not only the future and development of the individual but also the family and the country as a whole. Passed down from ancient times, the maxim from the Three-Character Scripture (三字经) that says "if no proper education is given to children, their nature will go bad" has proved to be true. The great master Confucius taught us that "it is a pleasure to learn something and to try it out at intervals". Similarly, numerous students have been convinced that "reading books excels all other careers". The records tell us that Mencius' mother became an example to millions of mothers who were keen for their children to be talented as she moved her home three times in order to choose a good neighborhood for the education of her son.

#### Questions

1. What was the highest state educational institution in ancient China? What is "piyong" (辟雍)?
2. When was the western-styled university introduced to China? And what kind of institute it was?
3. The book *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* tells a story of Chinese way of parenting in the United States. It is somewhat like the story of Mencius' mother who moved her home three times. From these stories one can see the different ways in children's education between Chinese culture and western one. What is your opinion?

#### *The Imperial Examination System*

China has a long tradition in talent selection from grass roots. There were many talent selection systems in Chinese history. Among these systems, the Imperial Examination had the longest history lasting for more than 1300 years. Chinese imperial examination system had extensive influence throughout East Asia. It was used as a model in Korea, Vietnam and Japan in some dynasties. In addition, this system had important influences on the reform of the Civil Service in British India and later in the United Kingdom. At present, China still follows the traditional system to select the officials of civil service though it is based on different criteria.

#### Questions

1. What are the merits and demerits of the imperial examination?
2. Make a comparison between the imperial examination system in Chinese history and the Inheritance system of medieval Europe.
3. The imperial examination system has been argued to be an important cause of the Great Divergence, in which China's scientific and economic development diverged from Europe, since the imperial examination system is argued to have removed the incentives of the Chinese intellectuals to learn mathematics or to conduct experimentation. What is your opinion?

#### Essay

3. Ancient Chinese made many achievements in various fields, such as arts and literature, science and technology, sports and the system of selecting the talent. Jack Turner, host of a documentary *What the Ancients Knew, Chinese on Discovery Channel*, says: "Twenty-first century China is modernizing at a neck-breaking speed. For the last century or so, it seemed that China was merely trying to catch up with the standard of science and technology set by the west. But if you take a longer view, if your perspective is not a few hundred years, but a few thousand years, by any measure

China was a vanguard of science and technology. In fact, it turns out that many western inventions were not inventions but borrowings from China. If we want to explain the blossoming of knowledge in the west, it pays to look east to what the Chinese knew. " Do you agree with his opinion? What are the contributions that ancient Chinese made to the world?

#### **IV 14-15 Thoughts and Beliefs**

#### **14. Thoughts and Beliefs 思想与信仰**

##### *Thought of Hundred Schools*

The majority of traditional Chinese philosophy originates in the era of Spring and Autumn and Warring States era, during a period known as the "Hundred Schools of Thought", which is characterized by significant intellectual and cultural developments. Although much of Chinese philosophy began in the Warring States period, elements of Chinese philosophy have existed for several thousand years; some of which can be found in the Yi Jing (the Book of Changes), an ancient compendium of divination, which dates back to at least 672 BC. It was during the Warring States era that the major philosophies of China, Confucianism, Mohism, Legalism, and Taoism arose, along with philosophies that later fell into obscurity, like Agriculturalism, Chinese Naturalism, and the Logicians.

##### Questions

1. What is the basic philosophic question that Chinese philosophers pursue?
2. What are the core ideas of Confucianism, Mohism, Legalism, and Taoism?
3. Sun Wu and his descendant, Sun Bin, wrote two treatises on the art of war. What were their attitudes towards war?

##### *Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism*

Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism constitute the essence of the traditional Chinese culture. The interrelationship among the three has been marked by both contention and complementation in history, with Confucianism playing a more dominant role. Confucius stresses "ren" (benevolence, love), and "li" (rites, referring to respect for the system of social hierarchy.) Taoism was created by Laozi, who believes the dialectical philosophy of inaction. Taoism weighs as much as Confucianism in Chinese culture, while Confucianism plays a more role in Chinese politics. The profoundness of Taoism theory provides a headspring for almost all the other Chinese philosophy traditions. Buddhism was created by Sakyamuni in India and was introduced into China through Central Asia around the time Christ was born. After a few centuries of assimilation, Buddhism evolved into many sects and became localized.

##### Questions

1. How did Taoism influence Chinese art, painting, literature, and carving?
2. Chinese intellectuals either believed in Confucianism or in Taoism. Why?
3. How was Buddhism localized in Chinese history?

##### *Harmony of Man with Nature*

As early as in 2,500 B.C. Chinese began astronomical observation and geographical survey, and gradually formed a world outlook of an "integration of the universe and humanity." (Harmony of Man with Nature) Chinese philosophy, by contrast with Western thinking, has from the start emphasized immanence and unity. Where Western dualism led to an opposition between man and nature, Chinese monism led to a

harmony between the two. Most of Chinese philosophers share this unique view no matter how different their views may be. The theory, as a basic notion in Chinese philosophy, insists that the politics and ethics of human beings are a direct reflection of nature. The concept of “天人合一” influence Chinese art in almost all aspects.

#### Questions

1. The proposition of harmony between the heaven and human 天人合一(Tiān rén hé yī) is a Chinese idiom. What does it mean?
2. And how is the idea harmony between the heaven and human presented in Chinese painting and architecture?

#### *Religions*

Religion in China has been characterized by pluralism since the beginning of Chinese history. Taoism is the indigenous religion in China. Taoism probably took shape as a religion during the second century, based on the philosophy of Laozi. Buddhism was introduced to China from India approximately in the 1st century AD, and became increasingly popular and the most influential religion in China after the 4th century. Besides, since China is a country with 56 ethnic groups, there is a great diversity of religions and faiths, such as Islam, Christianity, Shamanism, Eastern Orthodox Christianity and Dongba religion.

#### Questions

1. How were other religions, like Islam and Christianity introduced to China in history?
2. What are the four most famous Buddhist Mountains in China?
3. What are the most famous Taoist mountains?

#### *Heaven Worship and Ancestor Worship*

The Heaven worship was the bureaucratic belief system subscribed to by most dynasties of China until the overthrow of the Qing Dynasty (1911). The ancient Chinese believed that Heaven manifested itself through the powers of the weather and natural disasters. Its dogmas supported the basements of the imperial hierarchy.

Chinese veneration of ancestors dates back to the prehistory. Chinese culture, Confucianism, and Chinese Buddhism all value filial piety as a top virtue, and the act is a continued display of piety and respect towards departed ancestors.

#### Questions

1. Where is the Temple of Heaven? And what did it function in the feudal Chinese society?
2. Who was regarded as the ancestor of all Chinese people? In what way do they worship him?

#### *Feng Shui*

Feng Shui (风水) is an ancient art relating to the law and order of the universe, and the power of nature. It's a system based on the elements of astronomy, astrology, geology, physics, mathematics, philosophy, psychology and intuition. Feng Shui has its roots in the Chinese reverence for nature and belief in the oneness of all things. The assumption is that the key to living a harmonious life is to reflect the balance of nature in their daily lives. This is most easily understood by the following concepts: Yin and Yang, qi, and the Five Elements.

All capital cities of China followed rules of Feng Shui for their design and layout. Mausoleums and tombs also followed rules of Feng Shui. Actually, in China, Feng Shui

is also a special and important element in architecture and it usually links the whole process from site selection, design, construction and inner and outer decorating.

Questions

1. The site of the Ming Dynasty Imperial Tombs was carefully chosen according to Feng Shui principles. How was the site selected for Ming Tombs in suburban area of Beijing?
2. Bank of China Tower in Hong Kong was designed by architect I. M. Pei. Its distinctive look makes it one of Hong Kong's most identifiable landmarks today. However, there are some controversies of its design in terms of Feng Shui criteria. What is the argument?

## **15. Medicine and Herbology 中医中药**

### *Traditional Chinese Medicine*

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) developed over several thousand years. Its practices include theories, such as yin and yang, five elements, and meridian system, diagnosis and treatments such as herbal medicine, massage, acupuncture and moxibustion. In China, TCM treatments may be prescribed to counter the side effects of chemotherapy, cravings and withdrawal symptoms of drug addicts, and a variety of chronic conditions. TCM reckons that the human body is a small universe with a set of complete and sophisticated interconnected systems, and that those systems usually work in balance to maintain the healthy function of the human body. TCM theory asserts that processes of the human body are interrelated and in constant interaction with the environment. Signs of disharmony help the TCM practitioner to understand, treat and prevent illness and disease.

Questions

1. TCM theory is based on a number of philosophical frameworks. What are they?
2. How does TCM differentiate itself from western anatomical model which divides the physical body into parts?
3. Make a comparison between TCM and western medicine. How do they differ in diagnostic skills and treatment methods?

### *The Concepts of Yin and Yang*

The concepts of Yin and Yang originate in ancient Chinese philosophy and metaphysics, which describes two primal opposing but complementary forces found in all things in the universe. Most forces in nature can be seen as having Yin and Yang states, and the two are usually in movement rather than held in absolute stasis. Yin and Yang can transform into one another.

Questions

1. Can you summarize the concepts of Yin and Yang?
2. How are the concepts of Yin and Yang presented in the Diagram of Tai Chi?
3. Yin and Yang can be found in many aspects of Chinese culture. How do the concepts present in TCM, Tai Chi Chuan, the game of Go?

### *The Five Elements (五行)*

Like the concept of yin and yang, the Five Elements Theory is a cornerstone of Chinese culture. In traditional Chinese philosophy, natural phenomena can be classified into the Five Elements (五行): wood (木), fire (火), earth (土), metal (金), and water (水). These elements were used for describing interactions and relationships between phenomena. The doctrine of Five Elements (five phases) describes both a generating (生) cycle and

an overcoming or restraining (克) cycle of interactions between the phases.

#### Questions

1. How do the five elements work with each other in a generating and overcoming cycle? How do Chinese herbalists use the concepts to treat patients?
2. The concept of Five Elements was adopted and adapted into the design of mascots of Beijing Olympic Games. What element does each of them symbolize? What are the other concepts embedded in the design of the mascots except the five elements?

#### *Meridian System*

In traditional Chinese medicine theory, the meridians - or channels carry and distribute qi and blood to all parts of the body, connect the organs, limbs and joints. When this flow of vital energy is disrupted, disease and poor health follow. Acupuncture evolved as a way of keeping channels open and energy flowing.

#### Questions

1. What are the two groups of meridians? What are the differences between them? How do they work together?

#### *Chinese Herbology*

Chinese Herbology (中药学) or zhōngyào (中药), is also based on traditional Chinese medicine theory. It includes Chinese crude medicine, prepared drug in slices of Chinese materia medica, traditional Chinese patent medicines and simple preparations, etc. Chinese physicians used several different methods to classify herbs: the Four Natures (四性) and the Five Tastes (五味)

#### Questions

1. What are the Four Natures of herbs? How do they associate with the concept of Yin and Yang?
2. What are the five tastes? What are their different functions?

#### Essay

4. Chinese way of thinking seems quite different from western one. These differences manifest themselves in thoughts and beliefs, especially in Chinese traditional medicine (TCM). What are the differences between TCM and western medicine in the explanation of disease, the ways of diagnosis and the treatment of disease? Some people think that TCM is unscientific and Feng shui is superstitious and that they should be abolished. What is your opinion?

## **VI Final Essay**

### Review, and Research Paper

#### Final Essay

Please choose one question from the selections below for your final essay.

#### Question

1. What is the essence of traditional Chinese thinking and what are the major characteristics of Chinese culture?
2. What are the major differences and similarities between Chinese culture and western culture? (Or any other cultures you are familiar with.) Make a comparison.

3. Based on what you have learned from the course, what are the connections you have found between modern China and ancient China in terms of culture?
4. Along with ancient Egypt, Babylon, and India, China is one of the four great ancient civilizations of the world. Unlike the other three civilizations which faded away in their original places, Chinese culture has existed in China for more than 5,000 years. What are the factors that facilitate its continuity?

## Syllabus

### Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students should be able to do the following:

1. Discuss the meanings and manifestations of culture found in the subject of the course.
2. Identify unique theoretical underpinnings and influential thinkers in the course topic.
3. Analyze the relationship between the various aspects of cultural texts and the particular social, cultural, and biographical contexts of their production.
4. Research and critically evaluate cultural productions.
5. Use secondary sources and close reading skills to produce a substantive critical essay relating one or more specific cultural productions to the economic, social, cultural, or biographical contexts of its production.
6. Demonstrate a balanced perspective and a deepened understanding of the cultures, times, people, and situations that produce these works.
7. Write coherent historical arguments that explore the relationships of various concepts and texts, and which provide a clear synthesis.

### Course Goals:

1. To provide students with a broad perspective of approaches to world culture and an understanding of the various ways in which they manifest themselves and to assess students' ability to express their perspectives through exams and essays.
2. To provide students with a deeper understanding of diverse cultural and interdisciplinary traditions the course focus and to express this deepened understanding in written tests and a critical essay.
3. To provide an overview of cultural analysis and interpretation methods and help students apply these skills in writing essay examinations and a critical essay.
4. To read widely and critically in a variety of cultural texts in order to explore potential meanings and to demonstrate the depth and breadth of this reading in essay examinations and a critical essay.
5. To do library research on a particular trend, event, concept, an individual theorist, or an issue in the area of comparative culture and to write a critical essay which incorporates this research.

### Course Content:

1. Cultural developments and texts that have been designated as being produced within the category of the course topic.
2. Discussion of the theoretical, social, philosophical and biographical contexts in which those works were produced.

3. Historical movements in various periods.
4. Discussion of the cultural issues and questions related to theoretical, social, philosophical, and biographical approaches to the study of the course topic.
5. Key ideas about how to evaluate and interpret cultural events, texts, and approaches.
6. Criticism and reflection upon political and economic systems as reflected in culture.
7. Discussion of the relevance of course readings to the understanding of contemporary cultural issues.
8. Critical analysis and interpretation of culture.
9. Conducting scholarly research on and off-line.

### **Course Outline:**

For the detailed course outline, please see the study guide.

### **Course Readings:**

The course readings for this course will be available through the Online Library, which will provide students access to selected journal articles, book chapters, and reference materials.

### **Course Preparedness:**

This course is a history course which requires analysis, research, and writing. It assumes the mastery of prerequisite college-level skills in spelling, grammar, punctuation, paragraphing, and essay writing. It also assumes the ability to read and analyze literary texts. This course provides instruction in history and does not address remedial writing issues at the sentence, paragraph, or essay level. The California Department of Education "English-Language Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools" offers context for understanding the standard for writing at the college level. Students who do not meet the standards outlined in the "English-Language Arts Content Standards" will not pass this course.

In short, this course assumes that students already "write with a command of standard English conventions, write coherent and focused texts that convey a well-defined perspective and tightly reasoned argument, and use clear research questions and creative and critical research strategies" (California Standards, Grades Nine and Ten). This course focuses on texts and analysis and requires college-level writing skills that exceed those required at the secondary level.

### **Course Workload:**

In accordance with accreditation standards, requires approximately two hours of outside work for every contact hour. For a 3-hour course, there are 48 contact hours, plus a minimum of 96 hours outside work. For a sixteen-week course, students can expect to devote a minimum of 6 hours of independent study per week in order to complete the coursework.

### **Grading Factors:**

#### **Discussion Board (20%)**

The Discussion Board provides the learner a place to respond to questions on the topic and to exchange ideas, reactions and analyses of the texts. Discussion questions concentrate on ideas, themes, and characters in literary works. There will be one question per week. Discussion Board questions will be responded to by all learners in the course and will be evaluated by the instructor. The Discussion Board is not available for OCW courses.

### **Journal (20%)**

Your journal consists of your responses to questions in the Study Guide. These questions require you to reflect on the material and to write a one to two-paragraph response. At the end of the course, you will gather together all of your Study Guide responses and will turn them in as a final portfolio.

### **Essay (20%)**

You will write an essay on one of the topics provided to you by your instructor in which you apply a critical paradigm from theorists or issues raised by the Study Guide questions. You should start your paper with a succinct thesis statement, describe the critical paradigm and the text(s) being analyzed. Be sure to cite critical passages to demonstrate support for your argument.

Length: 1,000—1,500 words. Essay topics will be assigned by the instructor and will reflect material covered in the Study Guide and the readings.

### **Exam (40%)**

Students must complete the assignments, submit them, and take the proctored exam.

### **Definition of Grades:**

#### **Graduate Courses**

- A** Outstanding Achievement
- B** Commendable Achievement
- C** Marginal Achievement
- D** Unsatisfactory \*
- F** Failing \*

\* Students receiving this grade in a course that is required for his/her degree program must repeat the course.

- I Incomplete** A grade given at the discretion of the instructor when a student who has completed **at least two-thirds of the course class sessions** and is unable to complete the requirements of the course because of uncontrollable and unforeseen circumstances. The student must convey these circumstances (preferably in writing) to the instructor prior to the final day of the course. If an instructor decides that an "Incomplete" is warranted, the instructor must convey the conditions for removal of the "Incomplete" to the student in writing. A copy must also be placed on file with the Office of the Registrar until the "Incomplete" is removed or the time limit for removal has passed. An "Incomplete" is not assigned when the only way the student

could make up the work would be to attend a major portion of the class when next offered.

An "I" that is not removed within the stipulated time becomes an "F." No grade points are assigned. The "F" is calculated in the grade point average.

**W Withdrawal** Signifies that a student has withdrawn from a course after beginning the third class session. **Students who wish to withdraw must notify their admissions advisor before the beginning of the sixth class session in the case of graduate courses, or before the seventh class session in the case of undergraduate courses.** Instructors are not authorized to issue a "W" grade.

### **Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's ideas or work as one's own. Students must give credit for any information that is not either the result of original research or common knowledge. If a student borrows ideas or information from another author, he/she must acknowledge the author in the body of the text and on the reference page. Students found plagiarizing are subject to the penalties outlined in the Policies and Procedures section of the Catalog, which may include a failing grade for the work in question or for the entire course. The following is one of many websites that provide helpful information concerning plagiarism for both students and faculty:  
<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>

### **Ethics:**

Ethical behavior in the classroom is required of every student. The course will identify ethical policies and practices relevant to course topics.

### **Technology:**

Students are expected to be competent in using current technology appropriate for this discipline. Such technology may include word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software. Use of the internet and e-mail may also be required.

### **Diversity:**

Learning to work with and value diversity is essential in every class. Students are expected to exhibit an appreciation for multinational and gender diversity in the classroom.

### **Civility:**

As a diverse community of learners, students must strive to work together in a setting of civility, tolerance, and respect for each other and for the instructor. Rules of classroom behavior (which apply to online as well as onsite courses) include but are not limited to the following:

- Conflicting opinions among members of a class are to be respected and responded to in a professional manner.
- Side conversations or other distracting behaviors are not to be engaged in during lectures, class discussions or presentations
- There are to be no offensive comments, language, or gestures

**Students with Disabilities:**

Students seeking special accommodations due to a disability must submit an application with supporting documentation, as explained under this subject heading in the General Catalog. Instructors are required to provide such accommodations if they receive written notification from the University.

**Writing Across the Curriculum:**

Students are expected to demonstrate writing skills in describing, analyzing and evaluating ideas and experiences. Written reports and research papers must follow specific standards regarding citations of an author's work within the text and references at the end of the paper. Students are encouraged to use the services of the University's Writing Center when preparing materials.

The following website provides information on APA, MLA, and other writing and citation styles that may be required for term papers.

**Online Library:**

Our Online Library supports academic rigor and student academic success by providing access to scholarly books and journals electronically.