

HMMA 5001 Fundamentals of Chinese Culture

Fall 2023

Instructors: CHAN, Charles Wing-hoi (hmwhchan@ust.hk; room 3357)
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Class Time: Fridays, 15:00-17:50
Classroom: Room 1409

I. Course Description:

This is an integrated multidisciplinary course on Chinese culture. It aims at providing students with a broad understanding of the perspectives and methodologies of humanistic studies on Chinese culture across various disciplines, including anthropology, history, linguistics, literature, philosophy, and religion. In each offering of the course, 4 out of these 6 disciplines will be offered, with an emphasis placed on the introduction to fundamental concepts and general methodological/theoretical underpinnings of the studies of Chinese culture in humanities. This is a mandatory foundation course for all students in the MA Program in Chinese Culture.

II. Course Objectives:

Upon the completion of the course, students may be expected to attain the following attributes:

- 1) A broad understanding of the nature, scope and value of the studies of Chinese culture from humanities perspectives;
- 2) Better appreciation of the basic concepts, theories and methods in different humanities disciplines essential to the building of a holistic, dynamic and integrated understanding of Chinese culture;
- 3) Ability to respond critically to Chinese cultural texts and issues of various natures;
- 4) Strengthened skills in humanistic inquiry pertaining to Chinese culture, such as questioning, analyzing, interpreting, making connections and constructing arguments.

III. Course Assessment:

- 1) Attendance & in-class participation: 20%

Students are expected to complete the reading assignment PRIOR to coming to class and be ready to discuss and engage in class.

All assigned reading materials are either in electronic form or posted on Canvas, with the full-length books or additional reference materials placed on reserve in the library under this course code.

2) 4 short module papers: 80% (20% per module)

Normally, students are required to write a short paper for each of the four modules. Each module paper should be 1,400-1,600 words long, neatly typed and double-spaced, and is due 3 weeks after the completion of respective module.

Marks will be deducted from paper either shorter or longer than is required, with 5% for every hundred words.

Penalty will also be applied to late paper, with a daily deduction of 5%. Note that unless exceptional contingencies, request for extension will not be entertained.

The topic of each module paper varies, depending on the content of individual module and instructor's requirement.

Note that students might be required to write a book review and/or a report, rather than a paper, subject to the specific requirement of individual module.

IV. Class Schedule:

Modules	Dates	Instructors
Introduction	Sept 1	Charles CHAN
Philosophy	Sept 8, 15, 22	Charles CHAN
Literature	Sept 29, Oct 6, 13	MA, Xiaolu
Anthropology	Oct 20, 27, Nov 3	CHEUNG, Siu-woo
History	Nov 10,17, 24	David CHANG

V. Module Description:

1) Philosophy Module: Chinese Approaches to the Meaning of Life

The three lectures on Chinese philosophy will be devoted to Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, the so-called “Three Teachings”, respectively. Notwithstanding the frequent interactions among them in the long history of China, they represent three distinctively different approaches to human predicament and human destiny and orientations toward life. Following a chronological order, each of these lectures will

concentrate on some of the most influential philosophers or representative schools of the three teachings. Through examining one after the other their metaphysics, philosophical anthropology, spiritual discipline and ethical theory, the lectures will demonstrate how the three teachings distinguish one from another in their views on the very nature of the ultimate reality, the intricate relationships between that reality and humanity, the uplifting program through which a union, or a reunion, of them can be achieved and a fulfilling and noble life attained. It is only based on this comparison can we begin evaluating what specific legacies these teachings might leave to posterity.

Sept 8: The Confucian Approach

- ♦ *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*. Tran & comp. Wing-tsit Chan. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969, pp. 3-83, 115-135.

<https://web-p-ebshost-com.lib.ezproxy.hkust.edu.hk/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=c4d74a51-fac4-46d6-b453-f32b1173e416%40redis&bdata=#AN=78391&db=nlebk>

Sept 15: The Taoist Approach

- ♦ *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*. Tran & comp. Wing-tsit Chan. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969, pp. 136-210, 314-335.

<https://web-p-ebshost-com.lib.ezproxy.hkust.edu.hk/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=c4d74a51-fac4-46d6-b453-f32b1173e416%40redis&bdata=#AN=78391&db=nlebk>

Sept 22: The Buddhist Approach

- ♦ *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*. Tran & comp. Wing-tsit Chan. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969, pp. 357-449.

<https://web-p-ebshost-com.lib.ezproxy.hkust.edu.hk/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=c4d74a51-fac4-46d6-b453-f32b1173e416%40redis&bdata=#AN=78391&db=nlebk>

About the paper:

- ♦ There are altogether three sets of reading for philosophy module, among which students are to choose one, study it carefully and write a paper on it.
- ♦ The paper should demonstrate a complete mastery of the set of reading being chosen and a good understanding of the philosophical tradition it represents.
- ♦ In order to write a good paper, students might also need to consult other secondary sources, including academic monographs and journal articles.
- ♦ Submit your paper as a word document. Name your file in a way that indicates the approach (Buddhist, Confucian or Taoist) you have chosen, the title of your paper and your name, before submitting it through e-mailing.

2) Literature Module: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Literary Studies

Is literary study a stand-alone discipline with a clear or unique methodological approach, or does it require a well-versed understanding of different disciplinary traditions within the field of humanities as a whole? This module will take this question to the heart of its discussion and give special attention to reflecting how modern Chinese literature is approached, understood and articulated in both Chinese and Western academia.

Sept 14: Choreography and Chinese Modern

- ♦ Emily Wilcox, *Revolutionary Bodies: Chinese Dance and the Socialist Legacy* (Selected)
(Emily Wilcox will give a book talk on September 14. Please check Canvas announcement for the details about this talk. Your attendance is mandatory. If you cannot attend this talk, please watch the video recording of this event.)

Oct 6: Crime and Punishment

- ♦ Haiyan Lee, *A Certain Justice: Toward an Ecology of the Chinese Legal Imagination* (Selected)

Oct 13: China and the Other

- ♦ Adhira Mangalagiri, *States of Disconnect: The China-India Literary Relation in the Twentieth Century* (Selected)

3) Anthropology Module: Field Research and Understanding Chinese Culture and Society

One of the key tools for studying human societies in anthropology is fieldwork. Anthropologists live in the community that they study and participate in people's daily life. Through the method of participant observation, they collect field data and experience the local ways of life. Adopting the holistic approach, a fieldworker tries to understand how local people make their living, organize their society, and interact with the supernatural world. This approach also requires putting the local community in the wider regional and global contexts, to make sense of the data that the fieldworker have collected. In this section, students will be introduced to this anthropological research method, guided to practise field observation and interview in two nearby Hakka and fishermen communities in Saikung, and through these Hong Kong cases are to engage with anthropological readings on the diversity and unity of Chinese culture and society in folk models, imperial culturalism, and modern nationalism.

Oct 20: Anthropological concept of culture and fieldwork research

- ♦ Peoples, James and Garrick Bailey. 2012. *Humanity: An Introduction to Cultural Anthropology* (9th ed.). Wadsworth, Cengage Learning. (Chapter 2: Culture; Chapter 5: Methods of Investigation).

- ♦ Whyte, William Foote. 1994. “Learning to be a Participant Observer.” In his *Participation Observer: An Autobiography*, pp. 67-84. Ithaca: ILR Press.

Oct 27: Field study in Yimtintsai Hakka Village and Kausai Fishermen Village, Saikung

- ♦ Watson, James L. and Rubie S. Watson. 2004. “Fieldwork in Hong Kong New Territories (1969-1977).” In *Village Life in Hong Kong: Politics, Gender, and Ritual in the New Territories*, pp. 3-18. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press.
- ♦ Barbara E. Ward. 1965. “Varieties of the Conscious Model: The Fishermen of South China.” In Michael Banton, ed., *The Relevance of Models for Social Anthropology*, pp. 113-138. London: Tavistock Publications.

Nov 3: The Diversity and Unity of Chinese Cultural Identity

- ♦ James L. Watson. 1993. “Rites or Beliefs? The Construction of a Unified Culture in Late Imperial China.” In Lowell Dittmer and Samuel S. Kim, eds., *China’s Quest for National Identity* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press), pp.80-103.
- ♦ Myron L. Cohn. 1991. “Being Chinese: The Peripheralization of Traditional Identity.” *Daedalus* 120 (2): 113-134.
- ♦ Cheung Siu-woo. 2012. “Appropriating Otherness and the Contention of Miao Ethnic identity in Southwest China.” *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 13, No. 2, pp. 142-169.

4) History Module: The Historian, the Sources, and the Craft

History is the study of the past. A historian’s task is to ask historical questions, locate, evaluate, and analyze sources, and develop arguments and narratives. Good history writing is a craft that requires exacting scholarship and effective storytelling. In this module, we will examine how historians use a wide variety of sources to build compelling narratives. Students will be required to (1) write a book review; (2) find an oral history interviewee, conduct a preliminary interview, create a chronology/timeline of the interviewee’s life history, and prepare a draft questionnaire for follow-up interviews.

Nov 10: The Historian and the Sources

- ♦ E. H. Carr, “The Historian and His Facts,” in *What is History?* (1961), pp. 3-35.
- ♦ Jonathan Spence, *The Death of Woman Wang* (1979), Preface.
- ♦ 高華, “敘事視角的多樣性與當代史研究——以五十年代歷史研究為例,” 《歷史筆記》(香港: 牛津大學出版社, 2014), pp. 315-332.

Nov 17: The Historian and the Craft

- ♦ Jonathan Spence, *The Death of Woman Wang* (1979), Ch. 1 “The Observers” and “Epilogue: The Trial.”

- ♦ Gao Hua, *How the Red Sun Rose: The Origins and Development of the Yan'an Rectification Movement, 1930-1945*, translated by Stacy Mosher and Guo Jian (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2018), Ch. 11, “Forging the ‘New Man’: From Rectification to Cadre Examination” (pp. 419-470), and Postscript (pp. 707-718). Online access (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvbtzp48>)

Nov 24: *The Use of Memoirs and Oral History*

- ♦ Chi Pang-yuan, *The Great Flowing River: A Memoir of China, from Manchuria to Taiwan*, edited and translated by John Balcom with an introduction by David Der-wei Wang (Columbia University Press, 2018), Introduction by David Wang (pp. XIII-XXVIII), and Ch.4 “At The Confluence Of Three Rivers: University Life” (pp. 129-177). Online access (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7312/chi-18840>)
- ♦ David Cheng Chang, *The Hijacked War: The Story of Chinese POWs in the Korean War* (Stanford University Press, 2019), Introduction, Ch. 2 “Fleeing or Embracing the Communists in the Chinese Civil War,” Ch. 3 “Desperados and Volunteers,” and Ch. 7 “The Fifth Offensive Debacle.”

VI. Academic Integrity:

The whole University is very serious about upholding academic integrity. Students are required to comply with the Academic Honor Code adopted by the Senate, which is as follows:

- 1) Honesty and integrity are central to the academic work of HKUST. Students of the University must observe and uphold the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty in all the work they do throughout their program of study.
- 2) As members of the University community, you have the responsibility to help maintain the academic reputation of HKUST in its academic endeavors.
- 3) Sanctions will be imposed on students, if they are found to have violated the regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.

For more information, please visit:

<https://registry.hkust.edu.hk/resource-library/regulations-student-conduct-and-academic-integrity>