

Spring 2025

**HUMA2400 Approaches to Humanities in China Studies:
Research Methodologies for Humanities**

Tuesday & Thursday 15:00-16:20

2304, Academic Building

I. Instructors and TA

Instructors

Discipline	Professor	Email	Phone	Room	Office Hrs
Literature	MA Xiaolu 馬筱璐	hmxlma@ust.hk	23588921	3377	Tue & Thur 17:00 – 18:00
Linguistics	QIN Zhen Quentin 秦震	hmzqin@ust.hk	23587797	3368	Thur 13:00 – 14:45
Anthropology	LIN Zhuyun 林珠云	hmzlin@ust.hk	66875410	TBC	Tue & Thur 17:00 – 18:00

Teaching Assistant

Discipline	TA	Email	Room	Office Hrs
Linguistics	LIU Kangdi 劉康迪	kliubc@connect.ust.hk	3001	Wed 14:00–15:00

II. Course Description

This course is designed to train students with the **skills of academic research** in the field of humanities in general, but with special reference to anthropology, arts, history, linguistics, literature, and philosophy of China, in particular. The course will pay attention to the following few key questions:

- 1) What constitute data and source materials?
- 2) How and where to collect them?
- 3) How data and source materials are processed and analysed?

- 4) What research questions are asked?
- 5) What conceptual and theoretical approaches are applied?

By focusing on the common human experiences of love, hatred, life and death, and how they are studied in each discipline, students will be guided to compare the distinctive approaches to humanities in China Studies.

Three modules, Anthropology, Linguistics and Literature, will be covered in this course this semester.

III. Intended Learning Outcomes

On completion of this course, students should be able to

- Comprehend the basic research methods of particular disciplines in Humanities;
- Understand human endeavours and appreciate their creative expressions through the different approaches to Humanities in China studies;
- Develop cultural sensitivity toward human experiences and conditions;
- Write a research proposal with a basic framework related to research methods

IV. Course Assessment & Requirements

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| • Module assessments (30 marks x 3) | 90 marks |
| • Attendance | 10 marks |
| • Total: | 100 marks |

(Each module includes multiple assignments, such as discussions, presentations, reports, and summaries. Specific details for each assignment will be provided within the respective module.)

Attendance policy

You should regularly attend class and actively participate in class discussions.

- (a) 0.5 mark will be **deducted** for one absence starting from the third absence after the add/drop period. Noted that being late or leaving early (e.g., longer than 15 mins) without permission will also result in a mark deduction.
- (b) If you cannot attend class for valid reasons, you need to get **advance** permission (that is, before class) from instructors to waive absences. Explanation and **proof** documents (e.g., medical certificates, interview notification letters, etc.) are required for permission.
- (c) According to the university policy, RVC recordings will be released only to students in need. Students should not expect to get “attendance” credit by viewing recordings.

- (d) During the class, the use of electronics (e.g., laptop) is allowed **exclusively** for notetaking. Food is not recommended in class.

Assignment policy

As a general rule, **NO** late submission will be accepted for credits unless:

- (a) You got **advance** permission (before the due) from instructors.
- (b) You could not submit the assignment on the day the assignment is due because of a serious illness or emergency. You need to contact instructors with a written explanation of the situation and provide **proof** (e.g., medical certificates).
- (c) We go with “Restrict ways of using generative AI tools for assessment”. For instance, you can use generative AI tools (e.g., chatGPT) for assisting your understanding of materials. However, you are **prohibited** from using the GenAI tools to produce any content related to essay assessments (e.g., article summary).

V. Class Schedule, Topics and Readings

Introduction: Feb 4

Module	Dates
Literature (8 sessions)	Feb. 6, 11, 13, 18, 20, 25, 27, Mar. 4
Linguistics (8 sessions)	Mar. 6, 11, 13, 18, 20, 25, 27 Apr 8
Anthropology (8 sessions)	Apr. 10, 15, 17, 22, 24, 29 May 6, 8

1) Course introduction

Feb 4

2) Module of Literature

Feb 6

Topic: How to write a research proposal? I

Feb 11, 13

- **Topic: Comparative Literature as a field I**

- **Readings:**

The [Levin Report](#) (1965)

The [Greene Report](#) (1975)

The [Bernheimer Report](#) (1993)

Feb 18, 20

- **Topic: Comparative Literature as a field II**

- **Readings:**

Haun Saussy, ed., *Comparative literature in an age of globalization* (selected)

David Damrosch, "World Literature as Figure and as Ground"

<https://stateofthediscipline.acla.org/entry/world-literature-figure-and-ground-0>

Haun Saussy, "Comparative Literature: The Next Ten Years"

<https://stateofthediscipline.acla.org/list-view>

Feb 25, 27

- **Topic: Global Chinese Literature**

- **Suggested Readings:**

Haun Saussy, *The Making of Barbarians: Chinese Literature and Multilingual Asia*

Jing Tsu and David Der-wei Wang, ed., *Global Chinese Literature*

(Full text available in our library. Please check them online.)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9EFfqELjyzo&ab_channel=AmericanAcademyinBerlin

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OHhO2nt7o1Q&t=1404s&ab_channel=FairDonglaiSHI

March 4

Topic: How to write a research proposal? II (first round of research proposal submission due on March 2)

Article Summary Due – 12 pm noon, March 23 (Sunday)

3) Module of Linguistics

Mar 06, 11

- **Topic 1: Introduction to the Chinese Language**

- **Required Readings :**

DeFrancis, J. (1984). *The Chinese language — fact and fantasy*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press. Chapter 3, pp.53-pp.66.

Norman, J. (1988). *Chinese*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1, pp.1-pp.22.

In-class Group Discussion 1

March 13, 18, 20

- **Topic 2: A Phonetics Topic about Chinese Tones**

- **Readings:**

Lin, Yen-Hwei. 2007. "Tone", *The Sounds of Chinese*, Cambridge University Press. Chapter 4, pp.88-pp.102.

Wang, Y., Jongman A., and Sereno J. (2001). Dichotic perception of Mandarin tones by Chinese and American listeners. *Brian and Language* 78: 332-348.

In-class Group Discussion 2

Mar 25, 27

- **Topic 3: Empirical Studies on Chinese Tones**

- **Required Readings:**

Hao, Y. C. (2012). Second language acquisition of Mandarin Chinese tones by tonal and non-tonal language speakers. *Journal of Phonetics*, 40(2), 269–279.

Wang, Y., Jongman A., and Sereno J. (1999). Training American listeners to perceive Mandarin tones. *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* 106, 3649-3658.

In-class Group Discussion 3

Apr 08

- **Summary Writing Workshop and Module Conclusion**

- The suggested articles in PDF format will be uploaded to Canvas for students' choice.

Article Summary Due – 12 pm noon, April 30 (Wed)

4) Module of Anthropology

Apr. 10 Thur

Topic: Anthropological study of emotion and relationships in cultural institution and holistic contexts

- **Required Readings:**

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).

Apr. 15 Tue

Topic: Concept of culture and anthropological fieldwork:

- **Required Readings:**

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

Burstow, B. 2016. Introduction to the project: IE researchers take on psychiatry. *Psychiatry interrogated: An institutional ethnography anthology*, pp. 1-20. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Apr. 17 Thur

Topic: Death and its rituals

- **Required Readings:**

Watson, James L. 1982. "Of Flesh and Bones: The Management of Death pollution in Cantonese Society." In *Death and the Regeneration of Life*, eds. Maurice Bloch & Jonathan Parry. London: Cambridge University Press, pp. 155-86.

Watson, Rubie S. 1988. "Remembering the Dead: Graves and Politics in Southeastern China." In *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China*, eds. James Watson and Evelyn Rawski. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 203-227.

- **Selected Reading:**

Biehl, J. G. 2001. *Vita: life in a zone of social abandonment*. Social Text, 19(3), 131-149.

Apr. 22 Tue

Topic: Fieldwork presentation: Hong Kong culture in Ching Ming Festival

Apr. 24 Thur

Topic: Women's conception and construction of family

- **Required Readings:**

Margery Wolf. 1972. "Chapter 3: Uterine Families and the Women's Community." In *Women and the Family in Rural Taiwan*, pp. 32-41. Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press.

Jack M. Potter. 1970. "Land and Lineage in Traditional China." In *Family and Kinship in Chinese Society*, ed. Maurice Freedman. Stanford: Stanford University

Apr. 29 Tue

Topic: Headhunting— cross-cultural understanding of hatred and sorrow

- **Required Readings:**

Fiskesjö, Magnus. 2021. *Stories from an ancient land : perspectives on Wa history and culture*. New York, New York : Berghahn Books. (Chapter 6: War, Headhunting, and the Erasure of Wa History, pp. 142-174)

May 6 Tue

Topic: Love and intimacy

- **Required Readings:**

Yan, Yunxiang. 2002. *Courtship, Love and Premarital Sex in a North China Village*. *The China Journal*, 48:29-53

Martin, E. (1991). *The egg and the sperm: How science has constructed a romance based on stereotypical male-female roles*. *Signs: journal of women in culture and society*, 16(3), 485-501.

May 8 Thur

Fieldtrip: Tai O Fishing Village

Report Due – 10 pm, May 31 (Saturday)