

# CAH5711: CHINESE WRITTEN CHARACTERS, LITERARY CHINESE, AND EAST ASIAN HISTORY

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**Effective Term**

Semester A 2025/26

## Part I Course Overview

**Course Title**

Chinese Written Characters, Literary Chinese, and East Asian History

**Subject Code**

CAH - Chinese and History

**Course Number**

5711

**Academic Unit**

Chinese and History (CAH)

**College/School**

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

**Course Duration**

One Semester

**Credit Units**

3

**Level**

P5, P6 - Postgraduate Degree

**Medium of Instruction**

Chinese

**Medium of Assessment**

Chinese

**Prerequisites**

Nil

**Precursors**

Nil

**Equivalent Courses**

CTL5711 Essential Concepts in Chinese Language

**Exclusive Courses**

Nil

## Part II Course Details

### Abstract

1) This course will introduce the roles and functions of Chinese characters as the common writing medium in East Asian history (China, Korea, Viet Nam, and Japan), and the roles of literary Chinese (wenyanwen) as their common writing system before the modern time as well. 2) It will introduce the students the general knowledge on Chinese written characters as the most important starting point and basis as we think about East Asian traditions and cultural heritage. 3) It will also lecture on the shift to the modern writing vernaculars in the transition of modern East Asian context. 4) It will also introduce the brief history of the vernacular writing movements in East Asia as well as the Japanese influence to the rest of East Asia in this regard. 5) The course will also introduce the linguistic and cultural policies and politics on Chinese characters in modern Japan and China in an ideological perspective. 6) The cross cultural factors such like the East Asia's encounter with the West, and the influence by the linguistic nationalism of Europe also will be introduced. 7) Some essential key concepts will be introduced for a critical rethinking of the concept of "Chinese language" itself.

### Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Describe the definition, position role and major characteristics of the Chinese characters and literary Chinese in histories of East Asian countries like Korea, Vietnam and Japan.	30	x	x	
2	To give an account of the brief history of modern East Asian countries specially China from the perspective of Chinese written characters and literary Chinese.	20	x	x	x
3	Analyze critically how linguistic modernity has transformed modern history, scholarship and culture in East Asia including China from a perspective of linguistics and a global history.	20	x	x	x
4	Reflect critically on some key concepts concerning Chinese language and its relations to modernity in perspective of a global, in particular, an East Asian history.	30		x	x

#### A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

#### A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

#### A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

### Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

	LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lecture	<p>1) Students will engage in formal lectures and gain knowledge about the brief cultural history of Chinese characters as the common writing medium in pre-modern East Asian history.</p> <p>2) Students will gain knowledge about how colonialism linguistic and cultural nationalism, and modernism as well, have changed East Asian history and how the modern writing systems have transformed East Asian history and culture like Viet Nam, Korea, Japan and China.</p> <p>3) Students will engage in lectures to be able to theorize about the nationalization of languages and cultures as the "Origin" of East Asia's modernity.</p> <p>4) Students will apply important theoretical concepts to analyze history and cultures of East Asia.</p> <p>5) Students will gain a conceptual overview of Chinese language.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4	2 hours/week
2	Tutorial	<p>Students will form a number of tutorial groups. Each group is responsible for an oral presentation based on a selected topic. An individual written report based on the development of one's own discoveries in the tutorial, rather than a single paper by all the group members, will be submitted for assessment. Students will prepare for each session and give feedback on fellow students' presentations.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4	1 hour/week

**Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)**

	<b>ATs</b>	<b>CILO No.</b>	<b>Weighting (%)</b>	<b>Remarks ("- " for nil entry)</b>	<b>Allow Use of GenAI?</b>
1	Individual term paper	1, 2, 3, 4	35	-	Yes
2	Test Final test (1 hour) Students will be tested on (1) the topics discussed throughout the course; (2) their critical opinions of specific issues related to the subject taught in the class.	1, 2, 3, 4	45	The form of multiple choices will not be taken in the test.	No
3	Class participation and performance that based on motivations of students' learnings.	1, 2, 3, 4	20	-	Yes

**Continuous Assessment (%)**

100

**Assessment Rubrics (AR)****Assessment Task**

Individual term paper (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 &amp; thereafter)

**Criterion**

Demonstrating the evidence(s) of one's own discoveries and one's investigation of concerning literature will be assessed.

**Excellent**

(A+, A, A-)

1. Excellent command of knowledge in the subject.
2. Excellent critical thinking ability in reviewing research reports/research articles related to the subject.
3. Excellent application of theories in the subject.
4. Excellent ability in knowledge application.

**Good**

(B+, B, B-)

1. Good command of knowledge in the subject.
2. Good critical thinking ability in reviewing research reports/research articles related to the subject.
3. Good application of theories in the subject.
4. Good ability in knowledge application.

**Fair**

(C+, C, C-)

1. Fair command of knowledge in the subject.
2. Fair critical thinking ability in reviewing research reports/research articles related to the subject.
3. Fair application of theories in the subject.
4. Fair ability in knowledge application.

### **Marginal**

(D)

1. Marginal command of knowledge in the subject.
2. Marginal critical thinking ability in reviewing research reports/research articles related to the subject.
3. Marginal application of theories in the subject.
4. Marginally acceptable ability in knowledge application.

### **Failure**

(F)

1. Unsatisfactory command of knowledge in the subject.
  2. Unsatisfactory critical thinking ability in reviewing research reports/ research articles related to the subject.
  3. Unsatisfactory application of theories in the subject.
  4. Unsatisfactory ability in knowledge application.
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### **Assessment Task**

Test (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

### **Criterion**

A test will be given to evaluate students' understanding of the subject. They will be tested on (1) the topics discussed throughout the course; (2) their critical opinions of certain issues related to the subject taught in the class. (3)The form of multiple choices will not be taken.

### **Excellent**

(A+, A, A-)

1. Excellent command of knowledge in the subject.
2. Excellent critical thinking ability in analysing the questions.
3. Excellent application of theories in the subject.
4. Excellent ability in knowledge application.

### **Good**

(B+, B, B-)

1. Good command of knowledge in the subject.
2. Good critical thinking ability in analysing the questions.
3. Good application of theories in the subject.
4. Good ability in knowledge application.

### **Fair**

(C+, C, C-)

1. Fair command of knowledge in the subject.
2. Fair critical thinking ability in analysing the questions.
3. Fair application of theories in the subject.
4. Fair ability in knowledge application.

### **Marginal**

(D)

1. Marginal command of knowledge in the subject.
2. Marginal critical thinking ability in analysing the questions.
3. Marginal application of theories in the subject.
4. Marginally acceptable ability in knowledge application.

### **Failure**

(F)

1. Unsatisfactory command of knowledge in the subject.
2. Unsatisfactory critical thinking ability in analysing the questions.

3. Unsatisfactory application of theories in the subject.
  4. Unsatisfactory ability in knowledge application.
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### **Assessment Task**

Class participation and performance that based on motivations of students' learnings. (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

### **Criterion**

Performances in both lecture and tutorial classes. The records of in-class discussions will be kept for an objective assessment.

### **Excellent**

(A+, A, A-) Excellent performances in both lecture and tutorial classes.

### **Good**

(B+, B, B-) Good performances in both lecture and tutorial classes.

### **Fair**

(C+, C, C-) Satisfactory performances in both lecture and tutorial classes.

### **Marginal**

(D) Marginally acceptable performances in both lecture and tutorial classes.

### **Failure**

(F) Unsatisfactory performances in both lecture and tutorial classes.

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### **Assessment Task**

Individual term paper (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

### **Criterion**

Demonstrating the evidence(s) of one's own discoveries and one's investigation of concerning literature will be assessed.

### **Excellent**

(A+, A, A-)

1. Excellent command of knowledge in the subject.
2. Excellent critical thinking ability in reviewing research reports/research articles related to the subject.
3. Excellent application of theories in the subject.
4. Excellent ability in knowledge application.

### **Good**

(B+, B)

1. Good command of knowledge in the subject.
2. Good critical thinking ability in reviewing research reports/research articles related to the subject.
3. Good application of theories in the subject.
4. Good ability in knowledge application.

### **Marginal**

(B-, C+, C)

1. Marginal command of knowledge in the subject.
2. Marginal critical thinking ability in reviewing research reports/research articles related to the subject.
3. Marginal application of theories in the subject.
4. Marginally acceptable ability in knowledge application.

### **Failure**

- (F)
1. Unsatisfactory command of knowledge in the subject.
  2. Unsatisfactory critical thinking ability in reviewing research reports/ research articles related to the subject.
  3. Unsatisfactory application of theories in the subject.
  4. Unsatisfactory ability in knowledge application.
- 

### **Assessment Task**

Test (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

### **Criterion**

A test will be given to evaluate students' understanding of the subject. They will be tested on (1) the topics discussed throughout the course- (2) their critical opinions of certain issues related to the subject taught in the class. (3)The form of multiple choices will not be taken.

### **Excellent**

- (A+, A, A-)
1. Excellent command of knowledge in the subject.
  2. Excellent critical thinking ability in analysing the questions.
  3. Excellent application of theories in the subject.
  4. Excellent ability in knowledge application.

### **Good**

- (B+, B)
1. Good command of knowledge in the subject.
  2. Good critical thinking ability in analysing the questions.
  3. Good application of theories in the subject.
  4. Good ability in knowledge application.

### **Marginal**

- (B-, C+, C)
1. Marginal command of knowledge in the subject.
  2. Marginal critical thinking ability in analysing the questions.
  3. Marginal application of theories in the subject.
  4. Marginally acceptable ability in knowledge application.

### **Failure**

- (F)
1. Unsatisfactory command of knowledge in the subject.
  2. Unsatisfactory critical thinking ability in analysing the questions.
  3. Unsatisfactory application of theories in the subject.
  4. Unsatisfactory ability in knowledge application.
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### **Assessment Task**

Class participation and performance that based on motivations of students' learnings. (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

### **Criterion**

Performances in both lecture and tutorial classes. The records of in-class discussions will be kept for an objective assessment.

### **Excellent**

(A+, A, A-) Excellent performances in both lecture and tutorial classes.

**Good**

(B+, B) Good performances in both lecture and tutorial classes.

**Marginal**

(B-, C+, C) Marginally acceptable performances in both lecture and tutorial classes.

**Failure**

(F) Unsatisfactory performances in both lecture and tutorial classes.

## Part III Other Information

**Keyword Syllabus**

Sinosphere; East Asian cultural sphere; East Asian history; Chinese written characters (hanzi hantu hanja kanji); Chinese vernacular writing (baihuawen or plain speech writing); literary Chinese (or classical Chinese, wenyawen guwen, hanmun, Hán Vãn, Kanbun); localized East Asian classical written system (Sino-Korean writing system, Sino-Vietnamese writing and Sino-Japanese); Chinese orality and literacy; Chinese language in relation to Chinese literary history, or vice versanational language; colonization and language reform in East Asia; linguistic nationalism; linguistic modernist ideology; phoneticization; Westernized modernity, nationalism, and their relationship with phonocentrism.

**Reading List**

**Compulsory Readings**

Title	
1	N/A

**Additional Readings**

Title	
1	N/A