

CAH5740: HISTORY AND HISTORICAL SOURCES IN A CHANGING WORLD

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

History and Historical Sources in a Changing World

Subject Code

CAH - Chinese and History

Course Number

5740

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

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course guides students through the fundamentals of historical research, including historical theories, research methods, and the basic development and nature of Chinese historical sources. The course will equip students with the critical capacity to make historical reflections and conduct research on issues in history, especially on the history of China. It introduces basic themes in historical research, including the longstanding cultural tradition of historical writing, as well as modern debates surrounding historical study in China. Students will explore core historical theories, methodologies, and the evolution of Chinese historical sources--from oracle bone inscriptions and bamboo manuscripts to contemporary digitized sources. The course examines the longstanding cultural tradition of historical writing in China, as well as modern debates surrounding the discipline. Through close engagement with textual, archaeological, and other sources, students will develop essential skills in historical interpretation and analysis. They will be equipped with the conceptual and analytical tools to critically reflect on the nature and making of history and historical sources.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs	Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1 Students will generate fundamental explanations of the production of historical sources and historical knowledge, especially in a Chinese context, and reflect on them.	25	x		
2 Students will apply the fundamental skills for effectively reading and comprehending historical evidence (such as historical documents), and identify how they could be applied in scholarly analyses.	25		x	
3 Students will think about the nature and range of history as a profession, its relevance as an important component of culture, and its recent trends in the Chinese-speaking world and beyond.	25	x	x	
4 Students will create and formulate findings on history in well-written pieces of writing or in other formats, as well as in oral presentations and discussions in an in-person or online setting.	25			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	In-class guided learning	In-class learning activities devoted to facts, themes, theories, and research findings relevant to history and historiography, especially in China. Students will have to a) immerse into the tradition of historical writing in China; b) discuss approaches to historical study; and c) gain training of the basics of the historian's craft. Interactive in-class activities include hands-on sessions and video clips as well.	1, 2, 3
2	Tutorials	Team-based discussions and presentations are required in the tutorials. Students will strengthen their analytical and communication skills, as well as their understanding of the course content and assigned readings. Students will work in groups to present on assigned topics. The teacher(s) will assess their performance and the resultant discussions in the tutorials.	1, 2, 3, 4
3	Reading and reflection	Students will read and analyze books and articles as well as materials in other media related to the course topics, such as digital media.	1, 2, 3

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("-" for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Presentations and analyses: Assessment of this is based on the oral presentations or analysis pieces of students, either individually or in groups, as well as their relevant preparation and follow up work.	1, 2, 3, 4	40	AI literacy is important to the learning of this assessment task, as AI-generated content is a new type of historical source and artefact. Adequate explanation of the parameters of AI use for this and ample guidance will be provided.	Yes
2	In-class and online performance: Students should proactively contribute to class and online learning activities by reacting to viewpoints, offering ideas and/or asking questions consistently both in lectures and tutorials. They should listen attentively when others speak, both in groups and in class, and prepare for class by gaining a good grasp of the required readings and relevant materials.	1, 2, 3, 4	20	AI literacy is important to the learning of this assessment task, as AI-generated content is a new type of historical source and artefact. Adequate explanation of the parameters of AI use for this and ample guidance will be provided.	Yes

3	Individual course assignment: Based on their understanding of the course content, students will give their findings systematically on history and historical inquiry in a piece of writing or in other formats, as assigned by the teacher(s).	1, 2, 3, 4	40	This assessment involves historical theory and methodology, where the use of AI could support the development of diverse theoretical perspectives and innovative thinking by helping with the students' brainstorming without compromising core creativity. Adequate explanation of the parameters of AI use for this and ample guidance will be provided.	Yes
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Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Presentations and analyses (for students admitted in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

This assessment is graded according to the content and fluency of the presentation or analysis pieces as well as its organization and coherence. The members delivering the work must have thoroughly researched their topic and worked as a team on the gathering, reading, selection, integration, and analysis of the relevant scholarly resources, either self-selected or assigned by the teacher(s). They should lead classmates into the discussion, to explain with an excellent grasp of the materials with in-depth and extensive knowledge of the subject matter. Their work should also demonstrate rigorous organization, coherent structure, balanced composition, and an ability to criticize and analyze.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

Strong evidence of:

- Rich content, excellent grasp of the materials with in-depth or extensive knowledge of the subject matter;
- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, and balanced composition throughout;
- Critical analysis, convincing statements, and creative comments both orally or in writing throughout;
- Superior presentation skills: good pronunciation, fluent expression, and appropriate diction, as well as excellent time-management.

Good

(B+, B, B-)

Some evidence of:

- Rich content, excellent grasp of the materials with in-depth or extensive knowledge of the subject matter;
- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, and balanced composition throughout;
- Critical analysis, convincing statements, and creative comments both orally or in writing throughout;
- Superior presentation skills: good pronunciation, fluent expression, and appropriate diction, as well as excellent time-management.

Fair

(C+, C, C-)

Limited evidence of:

- Rich content, excellent grasp of the materials with in-depth or extensive knowledge of the subject matter;
- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, and balanced composition throughout;
- Critical analysis, convincing statements, and creative comments both orally or in writing throughout;
- Superior presentation skills: good pronunciation, fluent expression, and appropriate diction, as well as excellent time-management.

Marginal

(D)

- Loose organization, but mostly appropriate and acceptable content offered in the presentation;
- Indication of some understanding of the readings and some grasp of the general ideas, but with limited or irrelevant use of scholarly references;
- Simplistic and unilateral comments, without clear explanation or analysis orally or in writing;
- Acceptable pronunciation and expression but with glitches; a few mistakes in diction, but no serious influence on general delivery of the presentation.
- Room for improvement in planning and time-management.

Failure

(F)

- Severely limited familiarity with the facts in the readings and their relations; unsystematic ideas which cannot express the subject matter or relevant themes;
- Very loose organization of scholarly references;
- Devoid of personal comment and/or unreasonable opinion orally or in writing; Very poor originality;
- Overly soft/ incomprehensible voice, indistinct pronunciation, and improper diction, or seriously problematic time-management.

Assessment Task

In-class and online performance (for students admitted in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Students need to actively participate in discussions, debates, and other class activities in both the tutorials and lectures. They should demonstrate an ability to interpret, illustrate, and criticize both insightfully and innovatively based on the class content.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

Strong evidence of:

- Active in-class participation, positive listening, and ability to engage in class discussions and comment on other people's views.
- Sufficient pre-class preparation and familiarity with the views from peers and other materials.

Good

(B+, B, B-)

Some evidence of:

- Active in-class participation, positive listening, and ability to engage in class discussions and comment on other people's views.
- Sufficient pre-class preparation and familiarity with the views from peers and other materials.

Fair

(C+, C, C-)

Limited evidence of:

- Active in-class participation, positive listening, and ability to engage in class discussions and comment on other people's views.
- Sufficient pre-class preparation and familiarity with the views from peers and other materials.

Marginal

(D)
Marginally satisfies the basic requirements of participating in in-class activities. A noticeable lack of meaningful participation.

Failure

(F)
Failing to meet the minimum requirements of participating in in-class activities. A serious lack of participation.

Assessment Task

Individual course assignment (for students admitted in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

This assessment is graded according to the content, organization, and fluency of the assignment. The teacher(s) will determine whether the students turn in a written paper or an assignment in another format to suit specific learning needs. In it students should demonstrate the ability to make use of appropriate scholarly resources and references, to deliver sound arguments and analyze critically, apply appropriate research methods skilfully, as well as arrive at a convincing and insightful conclusion.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

Strong evidence of:

- Rich content, ability to integrate various scholarly resources;
- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, and systematic composition;
- Creative and insightful ideas;
- Demonstration of the ability to interpret the relevant opinions;
- Utilizing adequate and well-organized references that are relevant to the topic;
- Accurate and fluent expression in written form, a good sense of the historical context, and the ability to use various research methods and writing skills to make the assignment convincing and coherent.

Good

(B+, B, B-)

Some evidence of:

- Rich content, ability to integrate various scholarly resources;
- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, and systematic composition;
- Creative and insightful ideas; - Demonstration of the ability to interpret the opinions
- Utilizing adequate and well-organized references that are relevant to the topic;
- Accurate and fluent expression in written form, a good sense of the historical context, and the ability to use various research methods and writing skills to make the assignment convincing and coherent.

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Limited evidence of:

- Rich content, ability to integrate various scholarly resources;
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- Utilizing adequate and well-organized references that are relevant to the topic;
- Accurate and fluent expression in written form, a good sense of the historical context, and the ability to use various research methods and writing skills to make the assignment convincing and coherent.

Marginal

(D)

- Marginally adequate content, and ability to integrate some scholarly resources, but only showing very limited or irrelevant use of resources;
- Loose organization;
- Ability to express some relevant but insubstantial points;
- References are insufficient;
- Demonstration of the ability to provide some personal comments, but no clear demonstration of fact-based and systematic analysis;
- The sentence fluency and diction are marginally acceptable, but far from perfect.

Failure

(F)

- Vague and devoid of content, and very weak ability to integrate the limited scholarly resources
- Very loose or chaotic organization;
- Unsystematic ideas, and/or ideas that are irrelevant to the subject matter or themes;
- Some form of summary of references, but no sign of personal analysis and/or unreasonable comments;
- Seriously insufficient/no references at all;
- Although the expression is not clear, part of the student's ideas could be identified; overuse or misuse of existing quotations and relevant research;
- Inability to turn in the assignments on time for evaluation.

Assessment Task

Presentations and analyses (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

This assessment is graded according to the content and fluency of the presentation or analysis pieces as well as its organization and coherence. The members delivering the work must have thoroughly researched their topic and worked as a team on the gathering, reading, selection, integration, and analysis of the relevant scholarly resources, either self-selected or assigned by the teacher(s). They should lead classmates into the discussion, to explain with an excellent grasp of the materials with in-depth and extensive knowledge of the subject matter. Their work should also demonstrate rigorous organization, coherent structure, balanced composition, and an ability to criticize and analyze.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

Strong evidence of:

- Rich content, excellent grasp of the materials with in-depth or extensive knowledge of the subject matter;
- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, and balanced composition throughout;
- Critical analysis, convincing statements, and creative comments both orally or in writing throughout;
- Superior presentation skills: good pronunciation, fluent expression, and appropriate diction, as well as excellent time-management.

Good

(B+, B)

Some evidence of:

- Rich content, excellent grasp of the materials with in-depth or extensive knowledge of the subject matter;
- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, and balanced composition throughout;
- Critical analysis, convincing statements, and creative comments both orally or in writing throughout;
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- Loose organization, but mostly appropriate and acceptable content offered in the presentation;

- Indication of some understanding of the readings and some grasp of the general ideas, but with limited or irrelevant use of scholarly references;
- Simplistic and unilateral comments, without clear explanation or analysis orally or in writing;
- Acceptable pronunciation and expression but with glitches; a few mistakes in diction, but no serious influence on general delivery of the presentation.
- Room for improvement in planning and time-management.

Failure

(F)

- Severely limited familiarity with the facts in the readings and their relations; unsystematic ideas which cannot express the subject matter or relevant themes;
- Very loose organization of scholarly references;
- Devoid of personal comment and/or unreasonable opinion orally or in writing; Very poor originality
- Overly soft/ incomprehensible voice, indistinct pronunciation, and improper diction, or seriously problematic time-management.

Assessment Task

In-class and online performance (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Students need to actively participate in discussions, debates, and other class activities in both the tutorials and lectures. They should demonstrate an ability to interpret, illustrate, and criticize both insightfully and innovatively based on the class content.

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Strong evidence of:

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(B-, C+, C)

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Failure

(F)

Failing to meet the minimum requirements of participating in in-class activities. A serious lack of participation.

Assessment Task

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

Criterion

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Strong evidence of:

- Rich content, ability to integrate various scholarly resources;
- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, and systematic composition;
- Creative and insightful ideas;
- Demonstration of the ability to interpret the relevant opinions;
- Utilizing adequate and well-organized references that are relevant to the topic;
- Accurate and fluent expression in written form, a good sense of the historical context, and the ability to use various research methods and writing skills to make the assignment convincing and coherent.

Good

(B+, B)

Some evidence of:

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- Creative and insightful ideas;
- Demonstration of the ability to interpret the opinions
- Utilizing adequate and well-organized references that are relevant to the topic;
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Marginal

(B-, C+, C)

- Marginally adequate content, and ability to integrate some scholarly resources, but only showing very limited or irrelevant use of resources;
- Loose organization;
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- Some form of summary of references, but no sign of personal analysis and/or unreasonable comments;
- Seriously insufficient/no references at all;
- Although the expression is not clear, part of the student's ideas could be identified; overuse or misuse of existing quotations and relevant research;
- Inability to turn in the assignments on time for evaluation.

Additional Information for AR

Not applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Historical research; Historical sources; Historical theory; Historical method; Chinese historical writing; Modern Chinese historiography; Chinese book history; Oracle bones and bronze vessel inscriptions; Bamboo and silk; Manuscript culture; Print culture; Archival documents; Historical data; Digital history; Digital humanities; Archaeology; Oral history; Public history; Historiophoty; Representations of history; Historical memory

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	N/A

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Jo Guldi and David Armitage. <i>The History Manifesto</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. (Chinese version: 喬·古爾迪、大衛·阿米蒂奇：《歷史學宣言》，上海：格致出版社，2017年。)
2	Endymion Wilkinson. <i>Chinese History: A New Manual</i> , 5th ed. Cambridge, MA: Endymion Wilkinson (c/o Harvard University Asia Center), 2018. (Chinese version: 魏根深：《中國歷史研究手冊（全三冊）》，北京：北京大學出版社，2016年。)
3	榮新江：《學術訓練與學術規範：中國古代史研究入門》，北京：北京大學出版社，2017年。
4	Tsien, Tsuen-hsui. <i>Written on Bamboo and Silk: The Beginnings of Chinese Books and Inscriptions</i> , 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004. (Chinese version: 錢存訓：《書於竹帛：中國古代的文字記錄》，上海：上海書店出版社，2006年。)
5	Tsien, Tsuen-Hsui. <i>Science and Civilisation in China. Vol. 5: Chemistry and Chemical Technology. Part 1: Paper and Printing</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985. (Chinese version: 錢存訓：《中國紙和印刷文化史》，桂林：廣西師範大學出版社，2004年。)
6	Peter Burke. <i>History and Social Theory</i> , 2nd ed. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005. (Chinese version: 彼得·伯克：《歷史學與社會理論（第2版）》，上海：上海人民出版社，2019年。)
7	蔣竹山編：《當代歷史學新趨勢》，臺北：聯經出版事業股份有限公司，2019年（或成都：四川人民出版社，2024年）。
8	Adam Budd. <i>The Modern Historiography Reader: Western Sources</i> . London: Routledge, 2009.
9	Huaiyin Li. <i>Reinventing Modern China: Imagination and Authenticity in Chinese Historical Writing</i> . Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2013. (Chinese version: 李懷印：《重構近代中國：中國歷史寫作中的想象與真實》，北京：中華書局，2013年。)
10	王學典：《二十世紀中國歷史學》，北京：北京大學出版社，2009年。
11	羅志田主編：《20世紀的中國：學術與社會·史學卷》，濟南：山東人民出版社，2001年。
12	劉龍心：《學術與制度：學科體制與現代中國史學的建立》，臺北：遠流，2002年。
13	Brian Moloughney and Peter Zarrow (eds). <i>Transforming History: The Making of a Modern Academic Discipline in Twentieth-Century China</i> . Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2012.
14	朱福強：《檔案管理全攻略——創立及管理一個小型歷史檔案館》，香港：雲起文化，2019年。
15	Paul Thompson & Joanna Bornat. <i>The Voice of the Past: Oral History</i> , 4th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. (Chinese version: 保羅·湯普遜：《過去的聲音——口述歷史》，香港：牛津大學出版社，1999年/瀋陽：遼寧教育出版社，2000年。)
16	黃進興：《後現代主義與史學研究》，北京：生活·讀書·新知三聯書店，2008年。
17	Faye Sayer. <i>Public History: A Practical Guide</i> , 2nd ed. London: Bloomsbury, 2019.
18	皮國立：《跟史家一起創作：近代史學的閱讀方法與寫作技藝》，臺北：遠足文化，2020年。

19	蔣竹山：《This Way 看電影：提煉電影裡的歷史味》，台北：蔚藍文化，2016。(Or: 蔣竹山：《看電影，學歷史》，上海：上海人民出版社，2021。)
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