

CAH5751: CHINESE CULTURAL HISTORY

Effective Term

Semester B 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Chinese Cultural History

Subject Code

CAH - Chinese and History

Course Number

5751

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 examines the relationship between Chinese culture and its political, religious, literary, philosophical, and kinship systems. By clarifying key concepts and elaborating relevant theories, it provides a concise review of the intellectual

content and spiritual traits of Chinese culture, clarifies its subjectivity, fosters students' interest and capacity for appreciating it, and enables them to grasp its core tenets while reflecting on its past, present, and future development within an evolving context. This course also examines "new cultural history" approaches that have emerged since the 1980s, using some of them as analytical frameworks to rethink China's rich cultural histories. Rather than treating culture as a static record of facts, the course guides students in defining and explaining culture as a dynamic, evolving process shaped by power dynamics and intersecting forces. Through key case studies spanning premodern to modern Chinese history, students will gain a more rigorous and sophisticated understanding of the making and interpretation of culture.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if DEC-A1 DEC-A2 DEC-A3 app.)			
1	Students will engage with knowledge of new cultural history approaches and the relevant social, cultural, and historiographical frameworks	25	x		
2	Students will explain the ways in which new cultural history approaches have been applied to the analyses of important themes and key cases in Chinese history	25	x	x	
3	Students will observe and critique cultural historical inquiry, and apply these insights to the student's understanding of culture in general	25	x	x	x
4	Students will apply the appropriate skills to the organization and presentation of findings on Chinese cultural history in well-written pieces of writing, as well as in oral presentations and discussions	25		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	Lectures	The lectures include in-class learning activities devoted to theories, analytical frameworks, research findings, and scholarly resources relevant to cultural history, especially taking premodern to modern China as the focus. These are designed to a) explain new cultural history approaches and insights; b) investigate exemplary case studies about Chinese history that have adopted said approaches; and c) enable students to analyse cultural histories.	1, 2, 3
2	Tutorials	Group discussions and presentations are required in the tutorials. Students will hone their analytical and communication skills, as well as their grasp of the course content and assigned readings. Students will work in small groups to present on assigned topics about Chinese cultural history. 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 analyse books and articles and materials in other media related to the course topics.	1, 2, 3

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?	
1	1. Oral presentations: Assessment of this is based on the oral presentations of the tutorial groups and their relevant preparation and follow up work.	1, 2, 3, 4	40	-	No
2	2. In-class performance: Students should proactively contribute to class 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 material.	1, 2, 3, 4	20	-	No
3	3. Essay: Based on their understanding of the course content, students will explain and describe their findings on Chinese cultural history systematically in a piece of writing or the equivalent in other media formats.	1, 2, 3, 4	40	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Assessment Rubrics (AR)

Assessment Task

Oral presentations (for students admitted in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

This assessment is graded according to the content and fluency of the oral presentation as well as its organization and coherence. The students delivering the presentation must thoroughly research their topic and work 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 on Chinese cultural history 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 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 course tutorials and lectures. They should demonstrate an ability to interpret illustrate, and criticize both insightfully and innovatively based on the class content about Chinese cultural history.

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 initiate 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 initiate 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 learning activities. A noticeable lack of meaningful participation.

Failure

(F)

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

Assessment Task

Essay (for students admitted in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

The essay is graded according to its content, organization, and fluency. In it students should demonstrate the ability to make use of appropriate scholarly resources and references for cultural history, 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.

Fair

(C+, C, C-)

Limited 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.

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 essay on time for evaluation.

Assessment Task

Oral presentations (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 oral presentation as well as its organization and coherence. The students delivering the presentation must thoroughly research their topic and work 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 on Chinese cultural history 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;
- Superior presentation skills: good pronunciation, fluent expression, and appropriate diction, as well as excellent time-management.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C)

- 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 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 course tutorials and lectures. They should demonstrate an ability to interpret illustrate, and criticize both insightfully and innovatively based on the class content about Chinese cultural history.

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)

Some evidence of:

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

Marginal

(B-, C+, C)

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

Failure

(F)

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

Assessment Task

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

Criterion

The essay is graded according to its content, organization, and fluency. In it students should demonstrate the ability to make use of appropriate scholarly resources and references for cultural history, 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)

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.

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;
- 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 essay on time for evaluation.

Additional Information for AR

Not applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Cultural history; New cultural history; Cultural theories; Chinese cultural history; Culture and power; Urban life; Material culture and commodity cultures; Intellectual history; Nationhood; Ritual; Global history; Literary culture; Book history; Gender; Historical memory; Popular culture; Oral and written cultures

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	N/A

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Peter Burke. What is Cultural History?, 3rd ed. London: Polity, 2019. (Chinese version: 彼得·伯克：《什麼是文化史》，北京：北京大學出版社，2009年。)
2	Peter Burke. Varieties of Cultural History. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997. (Chinese version: 彼得·伯克：《文化史的風景》，北京：北京大學出版社，2013年。)
3	Anna Green. Cultural History. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.
4	Alessandro Arcangeli, Jörg Rogge, Hannu Salmi (eds.). The Routledge Companion to Cultural History in the Western World. London: Routledge, 2020.
5	Lynn Hunt (ed.). The New Cultural History. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989. (Chinese version: 林·亨特：《新文化史》，臺北：麥田，2002年。)
6	Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunt (eds.). Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999. (Chinese version: 理查德·比爾納其等：《超越文化轉向》，南京：南京大學出版社，2008。)
7	陳建守編：《時代的先行者：改變歷史觀念的十種視野》，臺北：秀威資訊，2014年。
8	周兵：《新文化史：歷史學的「文化轉向」》，上海：復旦大學出版社，2012年。
9	蔣竹山：《當代史學研究的趨勢、方法與實踐：從新文化史到全球史》（修訂版），臺北：五南，2018年。
10	蔣竹山編：《當代歷史學新趨勢》，臺北：聯經，2019年（或成都：四川人民出版社，2024年）。
11	Simon Gunn. History and Cultural Theory. New York: Routledge, 2014.

12	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。)
13	Clifford Geertz. <i>The Interpretation of Cultures</i> , 3rd ed. New York: Basic Books, 2017. (Chinese version: 克利福德·格爾茨：《文化的解釋》，北京：譯林出版社，2008年。)
14	葛兆光：《思想史研究課堂講錄》（增訂版三卷本），北京：生活·讀書·新知三聯書店，2019年。
15	王笛：《從計量、敘事到文本解讀——社會史實證研究的方法轉向》，北京：社會文獻出版社，2020年。
16	王笛：《碌碌有為：微觀歷史視野下的中國社會與民眾》，北京：中信出版社，2022年
17	趙世瑜：《歷史人類學的旨趣：一種實踐的歷史學》，北京：北京師範大學出版社，2020年。
18	李孝悌編：《中國的城市生活》，臺北：聯經，2005年（或其他版本）。
19	王鴻泰：〈從經濟民到聲色犬馬——二十年來臺灣社會文化史研究的回顧與展望〉， <i>Ming Studies</i> 63 (April 2011): 18-37。
20	邱仲麟主編：《中國史新論：生活與文化分冊》，臺北：聯經，2013年。
21	Frank Dikotter. <i>Exotic Commodities: Modern Objects and Everyday Life in China</i> . New York: Columbia University Press, 2007.
22	楊瑞松：《病夫、黃禍與睡獅：「西方」視野的中國形象與近代中國國族論述想像》（增訂版），臺北：政大出版社，2016年。
23	王明珂：《華夏邊緣：歷史記憶與族群認同》，上海：上海人民出版社，2020年。
24	Susan L. Mann. <i>Gender and Sexuality in Modern Chinese History</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
25	Robert Culp. <i>The Power of Print in Modern China: Intellectuals and Industrial Publishing from the End of Empire to Maoist State Socialism</i> . New York: Columbia University Press, 2019.
26	洪長泰：《新文化史與中國政治》，臺北：一方出版社，2003年。
27	吳俊雄、張志偉編：《閱讀香港普及文化：1970-2000》，香港：牛津大學出版社，2002年。
28	Yiu-Wai Chu. <i>Hong Kong Cantopop: A Concise History</i> . Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2017.