

CAH5750: CULTURAL HISTORY OF MEDICINE IN CHINA

Effective Term

Semester A 2026/27

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Cultural History of Medicine in China

Subject Code

CAH - Chinese and History

Course Number

5750

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

The course is to explore medicine and diseases in Chinese history from cultural perspective. The history of medicine comprises the history of human responses to natural environment and diseases, cultural exchanges, medical development and the interpretations of body. The course will discuss different aspects of medicine such as medical canons, traditions, Materia Medica, surgery, patient and healer relationship, ophthalmology, public health, religious healing and fatal diseases. **Throughout the semester it will also evaluate the complex connection between medicine and culture, politics, society and religion.** Students will learn historical thinking which is helpful to develop their essential skills to formulate questions, collect evidence, assess historical source materials, review historical interpretations, and construct a historical analysis from various viewpoints. The course will inevitably involve certain key concepts and terminologies in medical science and Chinese medicine, but there will be nothing technical.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if DEC-A1 app.)		DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Demonstrate the complex connection between medicine and culture, politics, society as well as religion	20	x		
2	Explain the historical spread of diseases and medical development in Chinese history	20	x		
3	Examine critically the characteristics and historical development of Chinese medicine.	30		x	
4	Create insights into the connection between the medicine, human body and culture.	30			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	In order to promote active learning and encourage new discovery, besides normal lectures, students will engage in in-class group activities, e.g. group discussions and debates.	1, 2, 3	
2	Reading	Students will engage with books and articles related to the topic.	1, 3	

3	Written assignments for analysis of primary sources and texts	Through written assignments in class, students will learn how to analyse and examine primary sources and ancient texts in order to improve their research skills.	2, 3, 4	
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Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Test: Students will demonstrate the depth of knowledge and the application of methods.	2, 3	20	-	No
2	Written assignments: Students will complete and submit assignments.	1, 2, 3, 4	25	-	No
3	Research proposal (10%) and final paper (25%): Students will complete one research proposal and one final paper in academic format. Students will develop their own views and perspective to use the primary sources and to apply research methods.	1, 2, 3, 4	35	-	No
4	In-class discussion: Students will learn and discover new perspectives on the subjects discussed, and express their academic analysis on primary sources and research materials.	1, 2, 3	20	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

Assessment Rubrics (AR)

Assessment Task

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

Criterion

This assessment will be graded on content. Students must have thoroughly studied and researched the topics on the collection, reading, selection, integration, analysis of the resources. They should explain with rich content and excellent grasp of the materials with in-depth or extensive knowledge of the subject matter. They should demonstrate rigorous organization, coherent structure, balanced composition and an ability to criticize and analysis with cogent arguments and creative comments.

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, balanced composition;
- Critical analysis, convincing statement and creative comment;
- Superior writing skills: fluent expression, appropriate diction, and exact 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, balanced composition;
- Critical analysis, convincing statement and creative comment;
- Superior writing skills: fluent expression, appropriate diction, and exact 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, balanced composition;
- Critical analysis, convincing statement and creative comment;
- Superior writing skills: fluent expression, appropriate diction, and exact time-management.

Marginal

(D)

- Loose organization, but acceptable identified content;
- Adequate understanding of the reading and indication of grasp of the general ideas, limited or irrelevant use of reading materials;
- Simple and unilateral comments, without clear explanation;
- Acceptable expression; a few mistakes in writing, but no influence to general delivery.

Failure

(F)

- Limited familiarity with the facts of the reading and its surface relations, unsystematic ideas which cannot express the subject matter or relevant themes;
- Loose organization, without distinct primary and secondary structure;
- Devoid of personal comment and/or unreasonable opinion
- Improper writing and seriously over time.

Assessment Task

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

Criterion

This assessment will be graded on content, organization and fluency. Students should demonstrate the ability to utilize primary and secondary sources properly, build up argument and analyse critically, apply research methods skilfully, and conclude in a convincing and creative manner.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

Strong evidence of:

- Rich content, ability to integrate various resources into primary and secondary levels as demanded;
- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, systematic composition;
- Creative, and insightful ideas;
- Ability to interpret the opinions originally;
- Sufficient and organized references which can be utilized in accordance with the topic;
- Exact and fluent expression, good sense of context, ability to use various research methods and writing skills to make the paper convincing with proper diction.

Good

(B+, B, B-)

Some evidence of:

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Marginal

(D)

- Adequate content, ability to integrate resources generally as demanded limited or irrelevant use of resources;
- Loose organization;
- Ability to express relevant points to the subject matter;
- References are insufficient, ability to provide some reasonable personal comments, but no clear demonstration;
- Sentence fluency and diction is acceptable.

Failure

(F)

- Vague and devoid of content, weak ability to integrate limited resources
 - Loose organization, without distinct primary and secondary levels;
 - Unsystematic ideas which cannot express the subject matter or relevant themes;
 - Overly simple summary of references, no personal idea and/ or unreasonable comment;
 - Seriously insufficient/ no reference;
 - Although expression is not clear, part of the idea can be identified; over use of existing quotations and relevant research.
-

Assessment Task

Research proposal and final paper (for students admitted in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

This assessment will be graded on content, organization and fluency. Students should demonstrate the ability to utilize primary and secondary sources properly, build up argument and analyse critically, apply research methods skilfully, and conclude in a convincing and creative manner.

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Assessment Task

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

Criterion

Students actively participate in discussions, debates and other class activities in tutorials and lectures. They have to show their ability to interpret and criticize both insightfully and innovatively.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

Strong evidence of:

- Active in-class participation, positive listening, ability to stimulate class discussion and comment on other points;
- Sufficient pre-class preparation and familiarity with peer reports and other materials.

Good

(B+, B, B-)

Some evidence of:

- Active in-class participation, positive listening, ability to initiate class discussion and comment on other points;
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Fair

(C+, C, C-)

Limited evidence of:

- Active in-class participation, listening comprehension, ability to participate in class discussion and comment on other points
- Sufficient pre-class preparation and familiarity with peer reports and other materials.

Marginal

(D)

Marginally satisfies the basic requirements of the participation.

Failure

(F)

Fail to meet minimum requirements of participation.

Assessment Task

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

Criterion

This assessment will be graded on content. Students must have thoroughly studied and researched the topics on the collection, reading, selection, integration, analysis of the resources. They should explain with rich content and excellent grasp of the materials with in-depth or extensive knowledge of the subject matter. They should demonstrate rigorous organization, coherent structure, balanced composition and an ability to criticize and analysis with cogent arguments and creative comments.

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(B+, B)

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Marginal

(B-, C+, C)

Marginally satisfies the basic requirements of the participation.

Failure

(F)

Fail to meet minimum requirements of participation.

Additional Information for AR

Not applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Chinese medicine, history, Warring States Period, Han dynasty, Mawangdui, Religions, Materia Medica, Confucianism, Surgery, Patient and Healer, Nurturing Life, Natural Environment, Southern Region, Ophthalmology, Smallpox, Bubonic Plague, abolishment movement of Chinese medicine, Public Health, Schistosomiasis

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	范行準，《中國醫學史略》，北京：中醫古籍出版社，1986。
2	馬伯英，《中國醫學文化史》，上海：上海人民出版社，1994。

Additional Readings

Title	
1	林富士，《中國中古時期的宗教與醫療》，臺北：聯經，2008。
2	范家偉，《大醫精誠——唐代國家、信仰與醫學》，臺北：東大，2007。
3	范家偉，《六朝隋唐醫學之傳承與整合》，香港：香港中文大學出版社，2004。
4	陳明，《殊方異藥——出土文書與西域醫學》，北京：北京大學出版社，2005。
5	馬伯英、高晞、洪中立，《中外醫學文化交流史——中外醫學跨文化傳通》，上海：文匯出版社，1993。