

CAH2612: INTRODUCTION TO SINOLOGY

Effective Term

Semester B 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Introduction to Sinology

Subject Code

CAH - Chinese and History

Course Number

2612

Academic Unit

Chinese and History (CAH)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

CAH4147 Readings in Sinology

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course examines the development of sinology—the study of China—from the 16th century to the present. It discusses how China has been depicted in Europe and the United States. It also compares the different mechanisms by which an

image of China is produced and circulated in foreign countries. Overall, the main objective of the course is to direct students' attention to the creativity and originality in imagining the foreign and the exotic, even though "the foreign and the exotic" here is China, something that students should know from their upbringing and their previous education. This reverse angle—or the re-learning of the familiar through a foreign lens—will train students to appreciate the value of having multiple angles and the importance of seeing historical knowledge as culturally and historically constituted.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs	Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1 Demonstrate an overview of the major historical trends and periods in Sinology and China-related research in Europe, America, and Japan, and an appreciation of the ways in which these have reflected or motivated broader cross-cultural contact between the societies in question.		x		
2 Analyse different themes of sinological works and engage these themes and issues critically with an innovative approach from a cross-cultural perspective.		x	x	
3 Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of certain key works and their contents in a comparative approach to foster students' self-discovery for their own cultural identity			x	x
4 Conducting research on particular issues in certain sinological texts and present research results in a coherent manner, particularly highlighting students' own findings in their research.			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	Historical background, concept, major scholars, works, and issues will be discussed.	1, 2, 3, 4	

2	Tutorial	Team work, group presentations, conducting research, leading class discussions, responding to classmates' questions	1, 2, 3, 4	
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Additional Information for LTAs

A few minor changes concerning readings and grading, after taking into consideration comments and suggestions from students.

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Class Participation and Performance Class attendance required. Students will be assessed based on their performance in class discussion and participation. Students are expected to actively participate in all class activities such as reading, discussion, and QA.	1, 2, 3	10	-	No

2	<p>Presentation and Written Report Students are required to give a small-group presentation (15%). This will involve conducting research on particular sinological texts, identifying themes and issues therein against their historical background and analysing and presenting them critically in a coherent manner. After the presentations, the students will submit a reflective report of 1,500 words (approximately 7 pages) (15%).</p>	1, 2, 3, 4	30	-	Yes
	<p>Group Presentation starts from Week 3 to Week 13. Each Groups would take charge of one class, analyze weekly readings, raise questions, lead discussions, and submit a report after the class. The report would critically summarize and review the assigned reading.</p>				
	<p>During the class presentation, please summarize main points, and assess its strength/ contribution as well as its weakness/ problems in the reading. And please pick up your favorite sentence,</p>				

3	One Written Assignment Students will be required to submit one written assignment to demonstrate their mastery of the course content (1,500 words).	1, 2, 3, 4	20	-	Yes
4	Individual Term Paper Students will be required to submit a term paper of 3,000 words (approximately 20 pages) to analyse one sinological work to understanding China. In the papers, students are required to demonstrate their understanding of the strength, weakness, and impact of the sinological work (please choose weekly readings).	1, 2, 3, 4	40	-	Yes

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Class Participation and Performance

Criterion

Ability to identify and analyze the topics critically with excellent grasp of the materials and in-depth knowledge of the subject matter;
 Ability to interpret independent opinions effectively and efficiently.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Strong evidence of:

- Active in-class participation, positive listening, ability to simulate 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.
- Sufficient pre-class preparation and familiarity with peer reports and other materials.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Limited evidence of:

- Active in-class participation, positive listening, ability to initiate 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

Presentation and Written Report

Criterion

Ability to explain with Rich content, excellent grasp of the materials with in-depth or extensive knowledge of the subject matter; rigorous organization, coherent structure, balanced composition; Ability to criticize and analysis with convincing statement and creative comment.

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 presentation skills: distinct pronunciation, fluent expression and appropriate diction, 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 presentation skills: distinct pronunciation, fluent expression and appropriate diction, 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 presentation skills: distinct pronunciation, fluent expression and appropriate diction, 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 pronunciation and expression; few of mistakes in diction, 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;
 - Softly voice, indistinct pronunciation and improper diction, seriously over time.
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Assessment Task

One Written Assignment

Criterion

This assessment will grade 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 based on demand;
- 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:

- Rich content, ability to integrate various resources into primary and secondary levels based on demand;
- 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 writing skills to make the paper convincing with proper diction.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Limited evidence of:

- Rich content, ability to integrate various resources into primary and secondary levels based on demand;
- 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 writing skills to make the paper convincing with proper diction.

Marginal (D)

- Adequate content, ability to integrate resources generally based on demand, 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.
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Assessment Task

Individual Term Paper

Criterion

Ability to integrate various resources into primary and secondary levels on demand.

Ability to integrated ideas and opinions which can keep to the point, clear-cut subject, and distinct themes.

Ability to criticize and analysis with convincing statement and creative comment.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Strong evidence of:

- Rich content, ability to integrate various resources into primary and secondary levels based on demand;
- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, systematic composition;
- Clear and integrated ideas which can keep to the point, clear-cut subject, distinct themes, ability to interpret the opinions effectively;
- 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 writing skills to make the paper convincing with proper diction.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Some evidence of:

- Rich content, ability to integrate various resources into primary and secondary levels based on demand;
- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, systematic composition;
- Clear and integrated ideas which can keep to the point, clear-cut subject, distinct themes, ability to interpret the opinions effectively;
- 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 writing skills to make the paper convincing with proper diction.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Limited evidence of:

- Rich content, ability to integrate various resources into primary and secondary levels based on demand;
- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, systematic composition;
- Clear and integrated ideas which can keep to the point, clear-cut subject, distinct themes, ability to interpret the opinions effectively;
- 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 writing skills to make the paper convincing with proper diction.

Marginal (D)

- Adequate content, ability to integrate resources generally based on demand, 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;
- Summary of references, no personal idea and/ or unreasonable comment;
- Seriously insufficient/ no reference;
- Over use of existing quotations and relevant research.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Sinological writings, Perceptions of China, Images and understandings of China and the Chinese, Cross-cultural relations between China and the West, Marco Polo and the Early Jesuits, Enlightenment and the Example of China, Progress and Its Other, Chinese National Character, Confucianism and Capitalism, European Modernity and Confucianism, Pearl S. Buck's Creation of China, Fairbank and Area Studies, The Modernity of Chinese Civilization, Taoism and Deep Ecology.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

	Title
1	Endymion Wilkinson, Chinese History: a New Manual (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Asia Center, 5th edition, 2018, 6th edition, 2022).
2	Cai, Z., & Confucius, The Analects (B. Bruya, Trans.). Princeton University Press, 2018.
3	Ropp, Paul S. (ed.), Heritage of China: Contemporary Perspectives on Chinese Civilization. Berkeley, Los Angeles & Oxford: University of California Press, 1990.
4	Michael Radich, A Student's Guide to Writing in East Asian Studies. Harvard University, 2007.

Additional Readings

	Title
1	Cohen, Paul A., Discovering History from China. New York: Columbia University Press, 2010.
2	Gernet, Jacques, China and the Christian Impact: A Conflict of Cultures. trans. Janet Lloyd. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
3	范家偉: 《中文學術寫作入門》。中華書局, 2023。
4	Schafer, E. H. Golden Peaches of Samarkand. Hauraki Publishing, 2016.
5	Zürcher, Erik, The Buddhist Conquest of China. Leiden: Brill, 1972.
6	Yang, Bin, Cowrie Shells and Cowrie Money: A Global History. Routledge, 2019.