

CAH4802: CHINESE HISTORICAL METHODS

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Chinese Historical Methods

Subject Code

CAH - Chinese and History

Course Number

4802

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

Chinese

Medium of Assessment

Chinese

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

The course provides good training in the skills required to pursue research in the field of Chinese history. Introducing students to a range of methodologies including research designs, data collection and mining, textual analyses and

criticisms, argument formation and literature reviews, this course is designed to acquaint students with a variety of approaches taken by historians to perceive the past and enhance their abilities in investigating Chinese history. It primarily focuses on the following sections: 1) Learning how to skillfully use research tools with regard to historical characters, eras, geography, systems and ancient records to examine Chinese history. 2) Studying the important theories and concepts put forth by historians in recent years. Teachers will analyze the construction and deconstruction of historical thinking in China. 3) Referring to distinguished ancient and contemporary historians and precisely illustrating the principles and techniques of differentiating, utilizing, examining and analyzing historical materials. Students will be asked to read a number of books and articles written by leading historians, which demonstrate excellent application of historical methods to their research.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if DEC-A1 app.)		DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Identify the main issues, theories, methods, trends, and the leading scholars' works in the field of Chinese history	20	x		
2	Demonstrate a good understanding of various research methods including the collection and use of research materials, analyses and critiques of written texts, and the suitable strategies for information management and scholarly presentation	20	x		
3	Examine how historians conceive their objects of study and how they use primary sources as a basis for their accounts	20		x	
4	Analyse how historians structure the narrative and analytic discussions of their topics, as well as the advantages and drawbacks of their various approaches	20		x	
5	Apply historical theories and research methods to their research on chosen topics.	20			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 academic discovery, besides normal lectures, students will engage in in-class group activities, e.g. group discussions, simple quizzes and debates.	1, 2, 3, 4	
2	Reading	Students will engage with books and articles related to the topic.	2, 3, 4	
3	Tutorial Presentation and Discussion	All tutorials are topic-oriented. Students are expected to study the assigned readings in advance, and all of them will take turns to present and lead discussions throughout the course. Teachers will assess students' analytical skills and their understanding of assigned readings. Tutorials ensure that there is sufficient teacher-learner interaction and peer discussion. Group presentations and discussions will be conducted during tutorials. Both oral and written presentations will be assessed. Students assigned as discussants should actively take part in discussions right after the presentation.	2, 3, 4, 5	
4	Exercises	Student will complete two exercises related to historical methods during the semester.	1, 2, 3, 4	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Presentation: Ideas are clearly organized, developed, and supported. Students will demonstrate full knowledge by answering all class questions with explanations and elaboration. Ideally, the presenter is able to effectively keep the audience engaged.	2, 3, 4, 5	10	-	No
2	Final Paper (around 4000 words): students will submit a final paper on a selected topic at the end of the semester. The paper must be original, insightful and well-written in academic form. The emphasis is on innovation and being critical to advance proper methods for the study of Chinese history.	3, 4, 5	40	-	No

3	Participation and discussion in class: Student will proactively contribute to class activities by offering ideas and/or asking questions consistently both in lectures and tutorials. Student should listen when others talk, both in groups and in class. They should always be well-prepared for class with required class readings. They have to make comments on other students' works in class. At the end of the lesson, students need to summarise the main points of the lecture.	1, 2	10	-	No
4	Two Exercises (20% each): Students will review and perform the methods which they have learned.	1, 2	40	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Presentation

Criterion

This assessment will grade on content and fluency of presentation as well as the organisation and coherence of the assignment. The group delivering presentation must have thoroughly studied and researched their topic and worked as a team on the collection, reading, selection, integration, analysis of the resources. They should lead classmates into the discussion, to 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 analyse 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 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;
- a few 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;
- Overly soft voice, indistinct pronunciation and improper diction, seriously over time.

Assessment Task

Final Paper

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.

Assessment Task

Participation and discussion in class

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 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, listening comprehension, ability to participate 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

Exercise

Criterion

Two exercises will be given to assess students' knowledge and ability in describing, analysing and reflecting on the subject.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- Excellent command of knowledge, skills and understanding in lectures of Chinese historical methods.
- Deep understanding of concepts and key ideas and connections between them
- Innovative ideas with convincing demonstration · Good and organized expression

Good (B+, B, B-)

- Good command of knowledge, skills and understanding in lectures of Chinese historical methods.
- Deep understanding of concepts and key ideas and connections between them
- Innovative ideas with convincing demonstration · Good and organized expression

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- Adequate command of knowledge, skills and understanding in lectures of Chinese historical methods.
- Understanding of concepts and key ideas and connections between them
- Innovative ideas with less convincing demonstration

Marginal (D)

- Marginal command of knowledge, skills and understanding in lectures of Chinese historical methods.
- Fair understanding of concepts and key ideas and connections between them
- Ideas without convincing demonstration

Failure (F)

- Failure to show knowledge, skills and understanding in lectures of Chinese historical methods.
 - Poor understanding of concepts and key ideas and connections between them
 - Ideas without convincing demonstration
-

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Historical methods, Philology, Qualitative Methods, Memory, Oral History, Archival, GIS, Argument, Evidence, Historiography, Historical thinking, Source criticism, Historical Interpretation, Philosophy of History, Social Science, Social Theory, Postmodernism, Orientalism, World System, Annales School.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	王爾敏，《史學方法》（台北：東華書局，1988年）(部分章節)
2	杜維運，《史學方法論》（台北：三民書局，1991年）(部分章節)
3	梁啟超，《中國歷史研究法》（台北：里仁書局，1984年）(部分章節)
4	Shafer, Robert Jones著，趙干城、鮑世奮譯，《史學方法論》（台北：五南圖書出版公司，1990年）(部分章節)
5	許冠三，《史學與史學方法》（香港：龍門書店，1975年）(部分章節)

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Bloch, Marc著，周婉窈譯，《史家的技藝》（台北：遠流出版事業，1989年）
2	Braudel, Fernand著，劉北城譯，《論歷史》（台北：五南圖書出版公司，1991年）
3	Stanford, Michael著，劉世安譯，《歷史研究導論》（台北：麥田出版社，2001）
4	汪榮祖，《史學九章》（台北：麥田出版社，2002年）
5	思與言雜誌社編，《史學與社會科學論集》（台北：明文書局，1983年）
6	康樂、彭明輝主編，《史學方法與歷史解釋》（北京：中國大百科全書出版社，2005年）
7	康樂、黃進興主編，《歷史學與社會科學》（台北：華世出版社，1981年）
8	許冠三，《新史學九十年》（香港：中文大學出版社，1986年）
9	麥勁生，《近代史學與史學方法》（台北：五南圖書出版社，2000年）
10	鄭天挺、周谷城等，《學史入門》（台北：國文天地雜誌社，1989年）
11	賴建誠，《年鑑學派管窺》（台北：作者自刊發行，1996年）
12	錢穆，《中國歷史研究法》（台北：東大圖書公司，1991年）