

CAH4842: HISTORY OF THE MODERN WORLD

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

History of the Modern World

Subject Code

CAH - Chinese and History

Course Number

4842

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

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course introduces the major historical events that shaped and formed the modern world from the French Revolution to the post-Cold War period. It focuses on the intellectual, social, economic, cultural, and political development of the modern

world and explores the rise of the West after 1750. In order to make sense of present realities, it also assesses the origins and outcomes of world wars and revolutions in the period mentioned, as well as the global challenges of the post-Cold War era.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Demonstrate and analyse fundamental knowledge of relevant historical and documentary sources related to modern world history	30	x		
2	Examine the overall historical development in modern world from the French Revolution to WWII	40	x		
3	Apply historical theories and research methods in historical study	15		x	
4	Develop college-level reading skills, oral presentation skills and writing skills	15		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-class learning activities on facts, ideas, themes, theories and research findings are designed to illustrate the key events and themes in history of modern world, discuss advanced knowledge of relevant world historical and documentary sources, and examine the overall historical themes. Interactive in-class activities are included, e.g. five-minute comment and summary.	1, 2	
2	Reading	Book chapters and articles related to the topics.	1, 2	

3	Tutorial and Presentation	Group discussions and presentations are required. In tutorials, teachers will assess students' analytical skills and their understanding of assigned readings. Students will be divided into small groups to present an assigned topic. Students and teachers will assess and grade the presentation groups according to their performance. Through presentations and peer assessments, students' analytical skills will be enhanced.	3, 4	
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Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Class participation and performance: Students should ask key questions, bring in relevant academic knowledge, move the discussion along, and identify issues or take the discussion. Students should use appropriate terminology and be able to synthesize or indicate gaps or extensions to topic. Students need to be ready to answer questions from the teachers and other students. They should also make comments and give their own viewpoints about the lecture content and about the readings.	1, 2	10	-	No

2	Final Paper (around 3000 words): students are required to write a final paper on a selected topic in academic form. Students are required to generate their own arguments originally, use historical sources properly and apply methods skilfully.	3, 4	40	-	Yes
3	Mid-Term Exam: An open book mid-term would be given to assess students' knowledge and ability in describing, analysing and reflecting on the subject. It also provides an opportunity for the lecturer as well as students to reflect on the teaching and learning.	1, 2, 3, 4	30	-	No
4	Presentation: Students should integrate research findings with a broader context, understand implications of data and methods, support arguments with references, and answer questions based on academic knowledge.	1, 3, 4	20	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)

Assessment Task

Class participation and performance

Criterion

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

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Strong evidence of:

- Active in-class participation, positive listening, able 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, able 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, able 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

Final Paper

Criterion

This assessment will grade on content, organization and fluency. Students should demonstrate the ability to utilize primary and secondary sources properly, deliver argument and analyse critically, apply research methods skilfully, as well as 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
- Able 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, able 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
- Able 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, able 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
- Able 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, able 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;
- Able 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;
- Although expression is not clear, part of the idea can be identified; over- use of existing quotations and relevant research.

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 the 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;
- 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;
- Overly soft voice, indistinct pronunciation and improper diction, seriously over time.

Assessment Task

Mid-Term Examination

Criterion

An examination 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 ancient Chinese history.
- 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 ancient Chinese history.
- 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 ancient Chinese history.
- 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 ancient Chinese history.
- 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 ancient Chinese history.
- Poor understanding of concepts and key ideas and connections between them
- Ideas without convincing demonstration

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Europe, Russia, Germany, France, Britain, Italy, the USA, capitalism, communism, democracy, ideology, imperialism, liberalism, Marxism, modernisation, racism, Stalinism, socialism, totalitarianism, World War I, World War II

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Bentley Jerry H. & Herbert F. Ziegler, Traditions & Encounters : a Global Perspective on the Past (Boston: McGraw Hill, 2000), Chapters 29-39.
2	Bayly, C. A., The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914: Global Connections and Comparisons (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2004).

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Kurlansky, Mark, Cod: a Biography of the Fish that Changed the World (New York: Walker and Co., 1997).
2	Curtin, Philip D., Death by Migration: Europe's Encounter with the Tropical World in the Nineteenth Century (Cambridge [England]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).