

GE1501: CHINESE CIVILISATION - HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Chinese Civilisation - History and Philosophy

Subject Code

GE - Gateway Education

Course Number

1501

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

GE Area (Primary)

University GE Chinese

Medium of Instruction

Other Languages

Other Languages for Medium of Instruction

Chinese (Cantonese/Putonghua) for the Chinese session and English for the English session for the non-local and non-Chinese speaking students.

Medium of Assessment

Other Languages

Other Languages for Medium of Assessment

Chinese for the Chinese session and English for the English session

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details**Abstract**

This course will critically examine Chinese historical themes and philosophical concepts from various perspectives. All learning activities, including large-class lectures, discussions, and an online platform, will cover selected topics of Chinese history and philosophy. By learning selected topics, students will be able to appreciate individual-society-state relationships; and hence to develop a sense of civility. These central themes will run through the course as the main thread in order to foster a better understanding of Chinese nation and state building from antiquity to the present.

The discussions in all TLAs will touch on the real-life issues to connect the past with the present. In addition to reading texts, multimedia (such as film, music, visual arts, Websites etc.) is employed and fieldtrips are coordinated to keep afresh the experience of learning Chinese civilisation.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if DEC-A1 app.)		DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Illustrate key events and the three central themes in Chinese history and philosophy;			x	
2	Demonstrate fundamental knowledge of relevant Chinese historical and documentary sources;			x	
3	Apply historical and philosophical knowledge, wisdom and perspectives to reflect on current issues;		x	x	
4	Examine critically selected historical and contemporary issues concerning nation building and national security in a wider sense (not applicable to students admitted in 2025/26 and thereafter); Examine critically the overall historical themes and philosophical concepts and assess ancient source materials;			x	x
5	Develop a sense of civility by rethinking the impact of Chinese civilisations on modern world.		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	Large Class Learning Activities	Large class learning activities on facts, ideas, themes, theories and research findings are designed to (a). illustrate key events and the three central themes in Chinese history and philosophy; (b). discuss fundamental knowledge of relevant Chinese historical and documentary sources; (c).examine critically the overall historical themes and philosophical concepts. Interactive classroom activities and class works will be involved. Multimedia tools such as film, online video, TV show, music, Websites etc. will be used in teaching if necessary. This activity will develop a strong sense of curiosity.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2	Readings	Chapters, articles and supplementary materials on special topics of Chinese history and philosophy.	1, 2, 5

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?	
1	3 In-class quizzes (only the two quizzes with the highest marks will be counted; each carries 20%) Demonstrate an understanding of Chinese history and philosophy. Test comprehension and retention of lecture content. Marks will be evenly distributed among the quizzes.	1, 2	40	-	No
2	Discussion To cultivate active thinking among students, there will be guided discussion in class, through which students develop the ability to apply knowledge and perspectives to reflect on current issues, and develop a sense of civility.	3, 4, 5	15	-	No
3	Research project Written essay in 1500-2000 words for each student on a selected topic related to historical themes and philosophical concepts.	2, 4, 5	45	-	No
4	Compulsory Course Requirement Quiz on national security education (not applicable to students admitted in 2025/26 and thereafter)	4	0	Students must pass the quiz in order to complete this course.	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)

Assessment Task

3 In-class quizzes (40%)

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:

- 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:

- 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:

- 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 class discussion and comment on other points.

Failure (F)

Fail to meet minimum requirements of class discussion and comment on other points.

Assessment Task

Discussion (15%)

Criterion

- Ability to criticize different facts and statements, to provide practical and innovative comments with convincing demonstration;
- Ability to give feedback on fellow students' presentations.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Strong evidence of:

- Rich content, ability to integrate various resources 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;
- Ability to criticize different facts and statements, to provide practical and innovative comments with convincing demonstration.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Some evidence of:

- Rich content, ability to integrate various resources 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;
- Ability to criticize different facts and statements, to provide practical and innovative comments with convincing demonstration.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Limited evidence of:

- Rich content, ability to integrate various resources 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;
- Ability to criticize different facts and statements, to provide practical and innovative comments with convincing demonstration.

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;
- Ability to use references, provide some reasonable personal comments, but no clear demonstration;
- Ability to respond to other comments in simple terms.

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 comment, or providing unreasonable comment;
- Inability to respond to others, devoid of content and unclear comment.

Assessment Task

Research project (45%)

Criterion

This assessment will grade on content, organization and fluency. Students should demonstrate the ability to utilize primary and secondary sources, build up argument and analyse.

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;
- Although expression is not clear, part of the idea can be identified; over use of existing quotations and relevant research.

Additional Information for AR

Assessment Task

Quiz on national security education (not applicable to students admitted in 2025/26 and thereafter)

Criterion

Ability to demonstrate an understanding of the National Security Law, bioethics, and professional ethics.

Pass

60% or above of questions are correct

Failure

Below 60% of questions are correct

Remarks: If failed the quiz, students must retake the quiz until pass in order to complete the course.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Aesthetics, Agriculture, Arts, Asian countries, Bioethics, Buddhism, China, Chinese Civilisation, Civil Examination System, Clan, Commerce, Confucianism, Daoism, Dynastic Cycle, Ethnicity, Family, Gender, History, Intellectual Foundations, Intelligentsia, Language, Lineage, Literature, Local and Regional History, Medicine, Music, National Security Law, Operas, Philosophy, Political Institution, Power Structure, Professional Ethics, Science, Technology, World

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	蘇秉琦：《中國文明起源新探》，北京：三聯出版社，1999。
2	余英時：《中國文化史通釋》，香港：牛津大學出版社，2010。
3	Hsu Cho-yun. China: A New Cultural History, translated by Timothy D. Baker, Jr. and Michael S. Duke. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012.
4	* The Chinese publications are for Chinese sessions while the English publication is for English sessions.
5	Required Readings for the Quiz on National Security Education:
6	Bioethics: A comparative cultural study on Western individualism and Chinese familism - Fan, R. (2002). Reconsidering surrogate decision making: Aristotelianism and Confucianism on ideal human relations. <i>Philosophy East and West</i> , 52.3, 346-372
7	Types of security: national, economic, network, environmental/sustainable - Kirshner, J. (2013). <i>Globalization and National Security</i> . Routledge, 1-34.
8	Respect, responsibility, gratitude - Chan, S. Y. (2006). The Confucian notion of Jing (respect). <i>Philosophy East and West</i> , 229-252
9	Constitution of the People's Republic of China, at: https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/doc/hk/a406/eng_translation_(a406)_en.pdf (not applicable to students admitted in 2025/26 and thereafter);
10	The Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, at: https://www.basiclaw.gov.hk/en/basiclaw/index.html (not applicable to students admitted in 2025/26 and thereafter);
11	The Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, at: https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/doc/hk/a406/eng_translation_(a406)_en.pdf (not applicable to students admitted in 2025/26 and thereafter)

Additional Readings

Title	
1	孫康宜、宇文所安主編，劉倩等譯：《劍橋中國文學史》上下冊，北京：三聯，2013。
2	葛兆光：《何為中國？疆域、民族、文化與歷史》，香港：牛津大學，2014。
3	劉永華編：《中國社會文化史讀本》，北京：北京大學出版社，2011。
4	Endymion Wilkinson. <i>Chinese History: A New Manual</i> , Fifth edition. Cambridge, MA: Endymion Wilkinson, c/o Harvard University Asia Center, 2018.
5	Patricia Buckley Ebrey. <i>The Cambridge Illustrated History of China</i> , 2nd edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
6	Valerie Hansen. <i>The Open Empire: A History of China to 1800</i> . New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2015.
7	Xingpei Yuan 袁行霈 et al. (eds.). <i>The History of Chinese Civilisation</i> , 4 vols., translated by David R. Knechtges. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
8	* The Chinese publications are for Chinese sessions while the English publication is for English sessions.

Annex (for GE courses only)

A. Please specify the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) that the course is aligned to and relate them to the CILOs stated in Part II, Section 2 of this form:

Please indicate which CILO(s) is/are related to this PILO, if any (can be more than one CILOs in each PILO)

PILO 1: Demonstrate the capacity for self-directed learning

1, 2

PILO 2: Explain the basic methodologies and techniques of inquiry of the arts and humanities, social sciences, business, and science and technology

2

PILO 3: Demonstrate critical thinking skills

3

PILO 6: Demonstrate effective oral communication skills

3

PILO 7: Demonstrate an ability to work effectively in a team

4

PILO 8: Recognise important characteristics of their own culture(s) and at least one other culture, and their impact on global issues

1, 2, 3, 4, 5

PILO 9: Value ethical and socially responsible actions

1

PILO 10: Demonstrate the attitude and/or ability to accomplish discovery and/or innovation

3, 4

B. Please select an assessment task for collecting evidence of student achievement for quality assurance purposes. Please retain at least one sample of student achievement across a period of three years.

Selected Assessment Task

Research Project