Chinese

Professors: Chamness, Weng

The Chinese program provides students with exposure to the language, literature, and culture of China. The multiple levels of Chinese language courses offer a balanced emphasis on listening, reading, writing, and speaking, establishing a good foundation for ongoing language study. Students may study abroad in China or take part in other forms of advanced study to continue developing their language skills. Chinese Studies courses (in English) acquaint students with Chinese literary works and their social, political, and cultural contexts.

Due to the overlap in requirements, it is not possible for students to major in East Asian Studies and minor in Chinese or Japanese unless they are pursuing coursework in both languages.

Requirements for the Minor in Chinese

Number of Units

6 total units are required; not including CHIN 101-102

Required Courses: (5 units)

1. Language courses (at least 4 units)

CHIN 103, 201, 202, 203 (or approved equivalent courses for a total of four units)

All students wishing to count equivalent language courses taken off campus must demonstrate the appropriate aptitude with a placement exam. Please note that placement exams are only offered at the beginnings of each quarter.

It is also important to note that Chinese language courses are offered in the Fall-Winter-Spring sequence for both CHIN-101-102-103 and CHIN-201-202-203. CHIN-101 and CHIN-201 are only offered in the Fall quarter.

1. One Chinese Studies course taken on campus (1 unit)

From among CHIN 222, CHIN 225, CHIN 235, CHIN 245, CHIN 250, CHIN 260

Elective Course: (1 Unit)

Minors must complete one additional elective course. This course can be a second Chinese Studies course taken on campus, an advanced Chinese language course above CHIN 203 taken on campus, or an approved non-language course taken on study abroad. With approval, additional special topics one-time course offerings with Chinese Studies content many count as an elective.

Related Programs

The Chinese program is also an essential part of the East Asian Studies program, and contributes to the International and Area Studies program as well. Students may major in East Asian Studies or in International and Area Studies with a focus on East Asia. Interested students should consult with the director of East Asian Studies. See catalog listings for East Asian Studies or International and Area Studies for requirements for these majors.

Study Abroad Opportunities

The College has established several programs in the People's Republic of China. Please consult with the Center for
International Programs on the different options available. To maximize the benefits of studying abroad, students are strongly encouraged to complete CHIN-203 before leaving for China. For more details about language preparation for study abroad, consult early with professors and the Center for International Programs.

Chinese courses

CHIN 101 Beginning Chinese I
This course is an introduction to the Chinese language. Pronunciation system, basic vocabulary, written script, fundamental grammatical structures, as well as some cultural background of the language will be studied. The goal of this course is to set a good foundation for making Chinese a functional language for the students. Students are asked to follow three principles: (1) make Chinese a part of daily life, (2) use Chinese actively in class and outside of class, and (3) be creative in finding ideas for using the Chinese language.

CHIN 102 Beginning Chinese II
This course follows Beginning Chinese I. All four skills -- listening, speaking, reading, and writing -- are equally emphasized. By the end of this course, students are expected to understand simple questions and answers, to be able to ask and respond to simple questions, to understand simple statements, and to be able to participate in simple conversations on a few familiar topics. Students will also be expected to read and write simple notes, meaningful sentences, and short passages constructed with basic grammatical patterns.

Prerequisite: CHIN-101. CHIN-102L must be taken concurrently.

CHIN 103 Beginning Chinese III
A continuation of Beginning Chinese II, this course further consolidates the essential skills in reading, writing, listening to, and speaking Chinese. The goals are to increase vocabulary, to form a clear understanding of the language through knowledge of the meaning of words and structures, and to advance the ability of students to express themselves in the language accurately and properly on some selected topics.

Prerequisite: CHIN-102; CHIN-103L must be taken concurrently

CHIN 201 Intermediate Chinese I
This course follows CHIN 103 and starts the Intermediate Chinese language sequence. It will create an authentic language environment for the students and help make learning Chinese an interesting experience. The students will develop their fundamental language skills with a balanced emphasis on listening, speaking, reading, and writing. A communicative approach will be adopted, and accuracy will be emphasized at the same time. Culture will be brought into the classroom through songs, poems, and so on. Short cultural talks related to course material will be given.

Prerequisite: CHIN-103; CHIN-201L must be taken concurrently

CHIN 202 Intermediate Chinese II
This course follows CHIN 201, Intermediate Chinese I, and emphasizes interactive skills. More authentic materials will be used, and more topics and situations concerning contemporary Chinese society will be introduced. Class activities include visiting local Chinese communities and interviewing native speakers of Chinese language.

Prerequisite: CHIN-201; CHIN-202L must be taken concurrently

CHIN 203 Intermediate Chinese III
The course concludes the Intermediate Chinese sequence. Students should be prepared for exposure to various spoken and written styles of Chinese and for a steady expansion of their vocabulary. After completing three quarters of Intermediate Chinese, students will have gained a solid foundation in Chinese grammar and vocabulary and have developed good strategies for effective reading and listening comprehension. In addition, students will have acquired further confidence in their ability to speak Chinese.

Prerequisite: CHIN-202; CHIN-203L must be taken concurrently

CHIN 222 20th-Century Urban China
This course interrogates literary and cinematic representations of Chinese cities in the twentieth century. By examining urban narrative in Chinese fiction, drama, poetry and film from the Republican and People's Republic periods, this class offers a new understanding of Chinese modernity as marked by its unique urban sensibilities and configurations.

CHIN 224 Chinese Sci-Fi
This course uses Chinese Sci-fi fictions and films to explore how an understanding of the tumultuous past and a perception of the rapidly shifting present in the Chinese cultural context are rendered in an imagination of alternative contemporary realities and of the future of China and of this interconnected planet. This course starts with the beginning of the genre in Chinese language in late 19th century and then focuses on contemporary Sci-fi fictions and films. Sci-fi in China since the 19th century has been addressing some of the current themes in Chinese literature and cinema that include issues and aspects of modernity, the building of a nation-state, capitalism and alienation, social justice and utopia, spatiotemporal and
technology, human society and eco-environments, etc. In recent years there has been a globe-wide increasing interest in Chinese Sci-fi. This course starts with the beginning of the genre in Chinese language in late 19th century and then focuses on contemporary Sci-fi fictions and films. All the course materials will be in English translation. No knowledge of Chinese language or culture is required.

CHIN 225 Traditional Chinese Literature in Translation
This course examines the relationship between the individual and society in traditional Chinese literature. We will read a wide selection of important texts from China's long history, including the Classic of Poetry, early assassin narratives, medieval nature poetry and romantic tales, vernacular stories, urban drama, and novels from the late imperial period. Among the more important questions that we will investigate is the complex role that Chinese literature played in articulating the place of the individual vis-à-vis the community and state.

CHIN 235 Modern Chinese Literature in Translation
This course will examine the literary world of modern China by closely analyzing representative stories and novels written during the 20th century. As will quickly become clear in the course, literature in modern China has had and continues to have a close relationship with politics as well as with a wide variety of discussions on cultural identity in post-traditional China. Among the main goals of the course will be to explore how literature comes to grips with a thoroughgoing crisis of an established culture that results in a series of consequences unprecedented in Chinese history. Above all, the course will seek to understand how and why literature has played the role that it has, and what implications for the meaning of literature can be determined from examining the relationship between writing and society in modern China.

CHIN 245 Chinese Film
This course examines the cinematic traditions of China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong in light of such topics as: the foundational legends of Chinese cinema, the relationship between film and politics, representations of historical crisis (e.g., the February 28 Incident (1947), the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-76), and the British handover of Hong Kong (1997)), revolutionary aesthetics, and 'spectacular' violence. The overarching question we will explore is: How do Chinese films create the spectacle of "China," narrate its history, and represent its diverse cultural landscapes both at home and abroad?

CHIN 250 China From the Borders
This course helps students approach China, one of the world's most vibrant multiethnic societies, and encourages students to investigate questions of race and ethnicity in the context of intercultural exchange in China and Asia. Despite China's historical legacy as the "Middle Kingdom" that imagined itself as the center of world civilizations, Chinese culture is far from a homogenous and self-contained entity. Chinese culture has always been in active conversation with other cultures. In this course, students will probe the historically evolving relationships between the so-called Chinese political and culture "center" and its non-Han peripheries. Students will investigate the multilingual, multiethnic traditions of Chinese literature and delve into many previously marginalized literary voices and creative expressions generated by China's diverse non-Han groups. The course will expand students' understanding of the ethnic diversity of China in the global context by introducing them to a variety of Chinese national narratives and minority-produced literary, cinematic, and artistic creations. We will particularly probe how minority intellectuals endeavor to salvage fast-disappearing minority linguistic and cultural traditions against state-led modernization in China, as well as how ethnic minority poets make transnational tribal connections with Native American communities. We will further place Chinese ethnic cultures in a global context by analyzing transnationally produced cinematic sensations to form sophisticated understandings of how Chinese minority cultural symbols enter into global cultural and capital circulations. Students have an opportunity to conduct research with Chinese-language and minority-language literary, cinematic, and artistic materials (mostly produced by the formerly overlooked minority intellectuals of China) to develop their skills to engage with multicultural sources in globalizing China. (All course materials are accompanied by English translations.)

CHIN 260 Women in China
As in many countries subject to imperialism, women's movements in China were an important part of China's modernization project. How, then, have Chinese feminism theories and women's movements been different from those in the West? What is it like to live as a woman in a rapidly changing China through the 20th and 21st centuries? This course takes three approaches to explore these questions. To examine the characteristics and changes of gender roles we look at the representations of women in literature and film. To understand women's experiences we read women writers' essays, memoirs and fictions. To think about how women work as historical agents who make historical changes, we look at women activists, feminist thinkers and women's movements.

CHIN 295 Reading of Chinese Poetry
This course provides students with an opportunity to read, discuss, and enjoy Chinese poetry. All readings are in English translation. While the primary focus is on close reading of poetic texts, students will be analyzing poetry from scholarly perspectives, writing research papers of poetic studies, and composing their own poems. Students will also acquire knowledge on the history of Chinese poetry and poetics from the beginnings to the eighteenth century. This course may be of the interest of East Asian Studies majors, students who want to learn about Chinese culture, and those who are interested in poetry in general.
CHIN 295/SEMN 293 Memory in Chinese Lit, Art, & Beyond
This course surveys the theme of memory in Chinese culture. By surveying pre-modern and modern Chinese literature, art, and beyond, students will observe how remembrance of the past has played significant roles in Chinese cultural history. While showing that the past has always played powerful roles in Chinese civilization, the seminar will also urge students to reflect on their own cultures by understanding that both private memories and cultural artifacts have been an inescapable part of the present: they offer models for present behaviors, and at the same time also recall what has been lost.

CHIN 295 The Past in Contemporary China
This course investigates the dynamic role that China's contested cultural past plays in reshaping Chinese views of the contemporary world. Modern China's "more than five-thousand-year history"-a phrase thrown around unreflectively in China today-belies the diversity of people, customs, group identities, and cultural values that has contributed to the foundation on which the modern Chinese nation-state was built. Yet that complex past is often used to negotiate ideas of what constitutes Chinese cultural identity today. By exploring modern and contemporary essays, prose fiction, poetry, film, and television dramas that directly engage questions of how China's past is relevant to the present, together we will examine various ways in which ethnic, cultural, religious, and gender identities are reconfigured through claims about Chinese cultural heritage. Course is taught in English - no knowledge of Chinese language necessary.

CHIN 295 The Fantastic Chinese Lit
Why do people value stories they know to be untrue? What role does the extraordinary play in human society? How should we (or should we?) make sense of stories about ghosts, mythical beasts, divine heroines, dream travel, and vengeful rocks?
In this course we will investigate the fascinating world of stories about "strange things" in Chinese literature (in English translation). Classical Chinese literature, as is often noted, lacks a category that perfectly matches our modern category of "fiction." Premodern Chinese authors instead were fascinated with the categories of the "strange," "extraordinary," and "fantastic," which gave rise to a complex range of literary genres and styles. Together we will explore several examples of the Chinese fascination with "strange things"-including mythological accounts, song lyrics, records of anomalies, tales of fox spirits, dream novels, modern Chinese science fiction, and more. Please note that this course is taught entirely in English, and all readings will be in English. This is not a Chinese language course.

CHIN 295 Power, Propaganda, & Poetry in Chin Emp
This course explores the dynamic role that poetry has played in negotiating systems of power in imperial China as both a form of political propaganda and a popular mode of subversion. We will reflect on the enormous impact that Chinese poetry has had on key social issues relating to sexuality and gender, race and ethnic identity, political geography, colonialism, the environment, global epidemics, revolution, and more. *All reading in English; no knowledge of Chinese required*

CHIN 300 Advanced Chinese
This course is a continuation of the Intermediate Chinese language sequence. The objective is to make a transition from textbook Chinese to real-life communication situations. For this purpose, the course surveys materials including texts from literature, the social sciences and cultural history, and students will be exposed to a wide variety of written and spoken styles of Chinese. Some of the materials selected are original publications drawn from books, magazines and newspapers. The opportunity to work directly with lively, authentic materials will be valuable for studying Chinese language, literature, society and culture. This course focuses on content and style with extensive discussion and frequent written assignments in Chinese. It will consolidate what the students have learned in the past and help them develop better reading and writing skills. In addition, the improvement of speaking and listening abilities will also be emphasized. This course may be tailored to the needs of the participants and may be taken for credit up to three times.
Prerequisite: CHIN-203

CHIN 301 Advanced Chinese: Short Fiction
This course is an advanced-level language course in standard Mandarin Chinese, focused on readings and discussions of original works of modern Chinese-language short fiction. We will learn to read, discuss, and engage these works in the target language, as we explore themes of social inequality, love, violence, and untranslatability across various media, including films and cartoons, chosen to reflect an immense linguistic and cultural diversity. Completion of Intermediate Chinese III or demonstration of the equivalent language ability is required.
Prerequisite: CHIN-203 or CHIN-300 or instructor permission

CHIN 593 Senior Integrated Project
Each program or department sets its own requirements for Senior Integrated Projects done in that department, including the range of acceptable projects, the required background of students doing projects, the format of the SIP, and the expected scope and depth of projects. See the Kalamazoo Curriculum -&gt; Senior Integrated Project section of the Academic Catalog for more details.
Prerequisite: Permission of department and SIP supervisor required.
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