

Course Syllabus

HIST 3312-001 EARLY CHINA • Fall 2011

TR 5:30–6:45 | ECSS 2.203

Prof. J. Michael Farmer

JO 5.612

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Office Hours: TR 1:00–2:00 PM or by appointment

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions:

There are no pre-requisites or other restrictions for this course.
Knowledge of Chinese language is not required.

Course Description:

Chinese civilization, like its Greek and Roman counterparts in the Mediterranean, is both ancient and far-reaching, influencing the political, economic, social, intellectual, religious, and cultural systems of a hemisphere for over five thousand years. Traditional Chinese civilization coalesced around the turn of the Common Era, reached its zenith during the mid-eighth century, and then began its descent into the early modern world. This course will examine the history of Chinese civilization from its neolithic beginnings to the end of the third century of the common era, focusing on political, social, economic, intellectual, and cultural developments of China's axial age (the late Zhou dynasty) and first great empire (the Han dynasty).

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes:

This course is designed around an extensive collection of primary documents, both written (in English translation) and visual, with the pedagogical objective of teaching students how to “do history” from primary sources. Significant amounts of class time will be devoted to discussions of these source materials. Your thoughtful comments, based on careful readings of the primary and secondary materials, will be the driving force of this class. Students will write and submit regular analyses of the primary documents, and these primary source analyses will serve as the foundation for a research paper. In summary, this course aims to present not only the “facts” of the history of early China, but to expose students to the methods of historical inquiry.

History, Writing, and this Class:

Most of you are enrolled in this class because at some level you have developed an interest in history. To this point your interests have likely been passive; that is to say, you have enjoyed reading books or watching documentaries about historical topics. In this course you will shift from being consumers of history to producers of history. You will learn how to “do history.”

“Doing history” might be summed up by three interrelated acts: reading, thinking, and articulating your ideas about the past. The written word lies at the heart of the historical enterprise. Many of the surviving artifacts from the past are written documents, and most of the scholarship that attempts to make sense of these artifacts is also in written form. As such, you will be regularly engaged with writing. You will read the documents from the past. You will read ancient and modern historians’ attempts to organize the artifacts into meaningful representations of different times and places. You will think about both the primary and secondary documents at your disposal and offer your own representation of the past. You will do this through a variety of written assignments; that is how the professional historian works.

Although the creation of original ideas (or critical examinations of old ones) is the most significant act that the historian performs, for ideas to be tested and accepted they must first be shared. These ideas are shared in the form of books, articles, and short essays presented orally at conferences. Audiences will vary. At times historians write for each other. Other times they write for non-specialist or lay readers. And at other times they write for students. Depending on the audience, historians adopt a variety of voices; some formal, others informal. It is important to know how to present your ideas to each specific audience.

The format of historical writing is not simply to satisfy the whims of senior historians (or history professors). Rather, proper presentation of your ideas in writing adds credibility to your argument. Correct style, tone, format, documentation of evidence, etc. tell the reader that you have “sweated the small stuff,” and therefore your big ideas can be taken seriously. Conversely, failure to follow the conventions of the discipline signals to your reader that you have not mastered the simple matters of style, causing them to possibly doubt your ability to handle the more complex issues of content. While the viewpoint expressed above (“bad writing = unintelligence”) is most likely unfair and untrue, the perception remains. Thus it is your responsibility to demonstrate a competency in the craft of historical writing if you want your ideas to be taken seriously.

In this course you will have ample opportunity to examine primary and secondary documents, formulate your own ideas about them, and express those ideas in clear and concise essays. You will not only learn the “facts” about the history of early China, you will “do history.”

Required Textbooks and Materials:

Ebrey, Patricia. *Cambridge Illustrated History of China*. 2nd ed, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. ISBN: 0521124336.

Chang, K.C. *Art, Myth, and Ritual: The Path to Political Authority in Ancient China*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983. ISBN: 067404083.

Ivanhoe, Philip J. and Bryan W. Van Norden. *Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy*. 2nd ed. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2006. ISBN: 0872207803.

Watson, Burton, trans. *The Tso Chuan: Selections from China's Oldest Narrative History*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989. ISBN: 0231067151.

Lewis, Mark Edward. *Writing and Authority in Early China*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999. ISBN: 0791441148.

Rand McNally Map of China [provided by instructor].

Additional materials available through eLearning.

Assignments & Academic Calendar:

Map assignment:

You will be asked to identify a set of locations on the Rand McNally outline map of China and Japan [available in class]. Grade will be based on completeness and accuracy. [5%]

Primary Source Analyses:

You will prepare a one page primary source analysis paper (PSA) on an assigned primary document each week. Most of these documents are located on eLearning. Weekly reading assignments may contain several documents; write a PSA on only one (your choice). A total of 14 PSAs will be submitted over the course of the semester. [30%]

Write to Learn:

Given the central role of writing in the discipline of history, you will not be asked to fill in bubbles on exams in this class. Rather, over the course of the semester you will be required to write several short essays, typically in class. These short essays may ask you to summarize or analyze a primary document, or write a micro-theme on an assigned topic related to course work. Most of these “crash essays” will be graded only for completion. You must save all of these assignments, since at the end of the semester a “portfolio” of these essays will be resubmitted as part of your “final exam.” Selected essays will be revised and graded for content. No make-up assignments will be given. [25%]

Book Captures:

You will write a 4–5 page “book capture” on each of the secondary monographs (by Chang and Lewis; listed above). [10%].

Position Paper:

As the capstone for this course, you are to conduct research and write a position paper of approximately ten (10) pages in length arguing a position from a specific perspective (to be assigned). [30%]

Guidelines for all assignments will be distributed in class and via eLearning.

Tentative Schedule:

I will make every reasonable effort to follow this reading and discussion schedule, but sometimes changes must be made. Modification to this outline will be announced in class. It is your responsibility to be aware of the schedule and prepare the assigned materials.

KEY:

CIHC = Ebrey, *Cambridge Illustrated History of China*

Readings = Ivanhoe and Van Norden, *Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy*

Items prefaced by an asterisk (*) are available via WebCT.

Items prefaced by a plus sign (+) indicate a due date.

WK	Date	Early China
1		X
	8/25	Welcome. Periodization. * Periodization of Chinese History
2	8/30	Land, Languages, & People + Map Assignment Due <i>CIHC</i> , Ch. 1
	9/1	Bronze Age Societies: Anyang * Shang Dynasty Oracle Bone Inscriptions
3	9/6	Bronze Age Societies: Sanxingdui +PSA 1 Due * <i>Basic Annals of the Kings of Shu</i>
	9/8	The Zhou Conquest * “The Metal-bound Coffin”
4	9/13	Western Zhou Polity +PSA 2 Due * “Shao Announcement”

	9/15	Western Zhou Thought * Milfoil Divination * Heaven's Mandate
5	9/20	Western Zhou Society +PSA 3 Due * Selections from <i>The Book of Songs</i>
	9/22	Shamanism and the Lyrics of Chu * Selections from <i>Chuci</i> Book Capture 1: <i>Chang: Art, Myth, & Ritual</i>
6	9/27	The Crisis of the Eastern Zhou <i>CIHC</i> , Ch. 2 +PSA 4 Due <i>Tso-chuan</i> (all)
	9/29	The Confucian Response <i>Readings</i> , Ch. 1
7	10/4	The Daoist Response <i>Readings</i> , Ch. 4–5 +PSA 5 Due
	10/6	Later Confucians <i>Readings</i> , Ch. 5, 7
8	10/11	The Legalist Response <i>Readings</i> , Ch. 7 +PSA 6 Due
	10/13	No Class

9	10/18	The Qin Conquest <i>CIHC</i> , Ch. 3 * Biography of Ching K'o * Legalist Theories in Action +PSA 7 Due
	10/20	Founding of the Han * “Faults of Ch'in” * “Reflections on the Rise of Emperor Kao-tsu”
10	10/25	Han Polity * Governing by Nonaction +PSA 8 Due
	10/27	Han Economy * Selections from <i>Han Social Structure</i> , pt. 1
11	11/1	The Silk Roads * “The Account of Ta-yuan” +PSA 9 Due
	11/3	Han Society * Selections from <i>Han Social Structure</i> , pt. 2
12	11/8	Han Cities * “Western Metropolis Rhapsody” +PSA 10 Due
	11/10	Women in the Han * “Lessons for Women” * Selections from <i>Position of Women in Ancient China</i>
13	11/15	Han Thought: Classical Learning * “Biographies of Wen Weng” * Codifying of the Confucian Canon +PSA 11 Due Book Capture 2: Lewis: <i>Writing & Authority in Early China</i>

	11/17	Han Thought: Life & Death * “Summons of the Soul”
14	11/22	Han Historiography * “Life of Sima Qian” (NOT PSA-eligible) * “Letter to Ren An” * <i>Shiji</i> 111-Wei Ch’ing + <i>PSA 12 Due</i> + Position Paper Due
	11/24	Thanksgiving
15	11/29	Han Literature & Art * Selections of Han Poetry + <i>PSA 13 Due</i>
	12/1	The Fall of the Han * Comments of a Recluse * Uprisings * Selections from <i>Han Social Structure</i> , pt. 3
16	12/6	Summary Period
	12/10 Sat	* WTL Portfolio Due 5:00 PM at Dr. Farmer’s Office (JO 5.612)

Legal & Administtrivia

Course & Instructor Policies:

Grading Policy:

Percentages for the course assignments have been noted above. The following gradescale will be used: 0–59 [F]; 60–62 [D-]; 63–66 [D]; 67–69 [D+]; 70–72 [C-]; 73–76 [C]; 77–79 [C+]; 80–82 [B-]; 83–86 [B]; 87–89 [B+]; 90–92 [A-]; 93–100 [A]. In narrative form, [F]=failing; [D]=below average; [C]=average; [B]=above average; [A]=exceptional.

The professor reserves the right to curve, round, or otherwise adjust grades at his sole discretion.

Attendance, Participation, and Discussion:

Attendance is mandatory! Please consult the university calendar before scheduling vacations, weddings, or other extra-curricular events that may keep you from your responsibilities in this class. You are responsible for the material and any assignments regardless of whether you were in a given class meeting or not. Any extended absence (two or more consecutive sessions) should be reported to me via email as soon as possible. Every student is expected to actively participate in the discussion of the assigned readings. While there may be no set percentage of the course grade dedicated to this requirement category, students who do not regularly attend and actively participate in class will not fare well in the course.

Late work:

Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the assigned date. Late work will not be accepted. For all work not completed by the due date, the student will receive a grade of 0 (zero) for the assignment. Exceptional circumstances may be taken into account. If you feel your circumstances merit special consideration, please notify me via email or in person as soon as possible.

Written Assignments:

All out-of-class written assignments must be typed, double-spaced, in a 10–12 point serif typeface (Times, Palatino, Garamond, Gentium, etc.). Pages must have one-inch margins and contain your name and page number in the upper right-hand corner of each page. Assignments must be printed on white paper in black ink. Multi-page documents must be stapled. Cover sheets are not necessary unless the specific assignment guidelines call for one. Do not submit work in a folder or other type of binder unless the specific assignment guidelines call for it.

Assignments not meeting these basic technical specifications will not be accepted.

Submissions via email or other electronic means will not be accepted.

Personal Electronics:

The use of laptop computers, tablet computers, mp3 players, cell phones, and all other personal electronics is prohibited in this course unless a student has documentation from The Office of Student AccessAbility. Students granted exemptions from the personal electronics policy will be seated in the front row of the classroom. Any non-class related use of personal electronics in the classroom will result in a revocation of exemption, and the immediate confiscation of the device. Confiscated devices will be

returned at the end of the class period. Repeat offenses will result in a failing grade in the course.

Audio and Video Recording/Intellectual Property:

Audio or video recording of class lectures and other activities without the express written permission of the professor is strictly prohibited. Students with documented accommodations from The Office of Student AccessAbility also require written permission from the professor. Additionally, while you are encouraged to take handwritten notes during class, these notes reflect the intellectual work and property of the professor and may only be used for the notetaker's personal academic use. Notes may be shared with enrolled members of the class, but may not be distributed outside of the classroom community without the professor's express written permission. Notes (and/or approved or illicit audio and/or video recordings) may not be posted online or distributed to free or for-profit entities outside of the classroom community. Violation of this policy may result in a failing grade in the class and expose the student to potential legal action.

University of Texas at Dallas Policies:

In an effort go green (by cutting back on photocopying) University Policies can now be viewed at the following URL:

<http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>

Course and Instructor Amendments to the University Policies:

Email Use:

Email is the preferred method of communication for this course. I generally reply to messages that require a response (and not all messages require or merit a response from the professor!) within two business days. Messages left on my office voicemail will be retrieved the next time I am on campus, which depending on when the message was left, could be several business days. For queries necessitating a response, email is the best and fastest method of communication.

Your Responsibility:

Students are responsible for all information contained in this syllabus and schedule, as well as any amendments or changes announced by the professor or Teaching Assistant(s) in class. Changes to the course schedule or syllabus will also be announced in class and/or by email. It is your responsibility to regularly check your UTD email account.

Failure to abide by the policies contained in the syllabus and any amendments or changes announced by the professor may result in a failing grade in the course.

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.