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**LIT 3309.001**

**Classical Chinese Stories**

Tu/Th 5:30-6:45pm Room JO 4.502

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**Professor:**

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Office Hours: Tu/Th 11: 30-12: 30 or by appointment

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**Course Description**

Every American student has read a large number of Western stories. This course provides an opportunity to read masterpieces of classical Chinese stories, which are distinctly different from both Western stories and modern Chinese stories in subject matter, theme, style, and writing technique. We will read a whole collection of stories with themes ranging from war, martial art, heroism, love, friendship, and the supernatural to ghosts, demons, knight-errant, thieves, detectives, and judges. While reading these fantastic tales, we have multiple aims in mind: 1) to gain knowledge about the structure and operations of traditional Chinese society; 2) to understand how traditional ways of life are related to modern Chinese culture; and 3) to appreciate Chinese narrative art in relation to Western storytelling. Our principal objective, however, focuses on what makes a good story, how to read it critically and thoughtfully, and how to develop analytical, communicative, and writing skills. Since students have already read numerous Western stories, they are encouraged to adopt a comparative approach and bring their knowledge of Western culture and literature to bear on the course. All readings are in English. No prior knowledge of Chinese language and culture is required.

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**Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

Students will read a variety of works of classical Chinese fiction including stories, novellas, and a novel, as well as essays on the historical development of Chinese fiction and critical approaches to literary studies. In reading both fictional works and theoretical treatises, students are encouraged to see the inherent relationships among life, society, and fictional works, and to explore how Chinese fiction is similar to and different from Western fiction in its rise, origin, function, conception, creation, and relations to society and ways of life. Students are required not only to read chosen fictional works but also to develop skills to think critically, read thoughtfully, and write competently. At the end of the course, students are expected to have an overview of the historical development of Chinese fiction, acquire an in-depth insight into traditional Chinese society, and improve their basic skills to read, appreciate, and critically analyze fictional works.

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**Required Textbooks and Materials**

- 1) Y.W. Ma and Joseph S.M. Lau, eds., *Traditional Chinese Stories: Themes and Variations*.
- 2) Cao Xueqin, *The Story of the Stone*, vol 1, translated by David Hawkes (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books).

- 3) Some electronic handouts.

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### Course Activities and Grading

The course will be conducted through a mixture of lectures, instructor-led discussions, and student presentations. Regular attendance and participation in the classroom activities are required of all students. Each student is required to give two presentations with summaries, write one guided mid-term essay, and take a final examination. Specific requirements for presentations, summaries, and essays will be given. The grading is based on the following:

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### Grading

1) Two presentations with summaries	20%
2) 1 guided essay/midterm paper	25 %
3) 5 mini-quizzes (1 with lowest score can be dropped)	20%
4) 1 final exam	25%
5) Attendance and Participation in discussion	10%
Total: 100%	

**Note:** Three absences without documented reasons will lower the final grade.

### Assignments & Academic Calendar

#### Week 1 Preliminaries for the Course

8/28 Session 1: Getting Started: Course Preliminaries and Some Basics for Reading Stories

8/30 Session 2: Lu Hsun, "The Historical Development of Chinese Fiction," handout, Read "From Myth to Legends," pp. 393-400.

Ma and Lau, "Explanations to Traditional Chinese Stories," pp. xii-xxiv

**Pre-Tang Tales:** Ma and Lau, "The Biography of Yu Jiang," p. 41-42; "Scholar T'an," pp. 387; "Han P'ing and His Wife," p. 251; "Hsu Chu-po Visits His Friend," p. 3;

#### Week 2

9/4 Session 1: Lu Hsun, "The Historical Development of Chinese Fiction," handout, Read "Tales of Men and of the Supernatural During the Six Dynasties Period," pp. 400-406.

Ma and Lau, "Liu Ling," p. 557; "Prince Tan of Yen," p. 43; "Ho Po," p. 558

9/6 Session 2: Lu Hsun, "The Historical Development of Chinese Fiction," handout, Read "The Prose Romance of the Tang Dyansties," pp. 407-414.

**Tang Stories** - Read Ma and Lau: "Miss Jen," p. 339; "The World inside a Pillow," p. 435; "The Story of Ying Ying," p. 139; "The Courtesan Li Wa," p.163;

#### Week 3

9/11 Session 1: Ma and Lau, "Feng Yen," p. 50; "Scholar Ts'ui," p. 413; "Tu Tzu-ch'un," p. 416; "The Legendary Marriage at Tung-t'ing," p. 346;

9/13 Session 2: Lu Hsun, "The Historical Development of Chinese Fiction," handout, Read Sections 5-6, pp. 425-443.

Ma and Lau, "Scholar Chang," p. 439; "Wu-shuang the Peerless," p. 52; "In Search of a Heart," p.427;

#### Week 4

9/18 Session 1: Handout, Gu, "Chinese Notions of Fiction", pp. 17-31.

Ma and Lau: "The Tragedy of Pu Fei-yen," p. 172; "The Poetess Yu Hsuan-chi," p. 305; "The Great Maodgalyayana Rescues His Mother from Hell," p. 441;

9/20 Session 2: "The Fake Knight-Errant," p. 559; "Empress Chao Fei-yen," p. 307; "The Wit of the Master Thief," p. 553; "Yang Wen, the Road-Blocking Tiger," p. 85;

#### **Week 5:**

9/25 Session 1: Lu Hsun, "The Historical Development of Chinese Fiction," handout, Read "Sung Stories and Their Influence," pp. 414-424.

**Sung and Yuan Stories**- Ma and Lau: "Sung the Fourth Raises Hell with Tight-wad Chang," p. 535; "Artisan Ts'ui and his Ghost Wife," p. 252; "A Mangy Toaist Exorcises Ghosts," p. 388; "Nieh Yi-tao the Magistrate," p. 465

9/27 Session 2: Lu Hsun, "The Historical Development of Chinese Fiction," handout, Read "The Two Main Trends in Ming Novels," pp. 425-432.

**Ming Stories**: "Eternal Prisoner under the Thunder Peak Pagoda," p. 335; "The Boot That Reveals the Culpit," p. 598; "The Jest That Leads to Disaster," p. 467;

#### **Week 6**

10/2 Session 1: Read Gu, "The Nature of Chinese Fiction," pp. 43-61.

Ma and Lau, "The Golden Phoenix Hairpin," p. 400; "Han Wu-niang Sells Her Charms at the New Bridge Market," p. 312;

10/4 Session 2: Ma and Lau: "The Pearl Shirt Reencountered," p. 264; "Wu Pao-an Ransoms his Friend," p. 4; "Old Servant Hsu," p. 19;

**Guided Essay topic distributed**

#### **Week 7**

10/9 Session 1: Ma and Lau, "Magistrate T'eng and the Case of the Inheritance," p. 485; "The Sung Founder Escorts Ching-niang One Thousand Li," p. 58; "Tu Shi-niang Sinks the Jewel Box in Anger," p. 146;

10/11 Session 2: "The Jade-faced Cat," p. 456; "The Lion Cub Lane," p. 469; "The Case of the Dead Infant," p. 122;

**Guided Essay due**

#### **Week 8**

10/16 Session 1: Gu, "The Poetic Nature of Chinese Fiction," pp. 97-102.

Ma and Lau, "The Oil Peddler Courts the Courtesan," p. 177; "The Couple Bound in Life and Death," p. 209;

11/18 Session 2: : Ma and Lau, "A Taste of Immortality," p. 420; "The Sham Commander reclaims His Beauty," p. 97; "The Hen-pecked Judge Who Loses a Governorship," p. 325

#### **Week 9**

10/23 Session 1: Lu Hsun, "The Historical Development of Chinese Fiction," handout, Read "Four Schools of Fiction in the Ch'ing Dynasty and Their Later Development," pp. 432-443.

**Ch'ing Stories**: Ma and Lau, "The Strong Kid of the Ch'inhuai Region," p. 110; "The Taoist Priest of the Lao Mountains," p. 429; "The Chung-shan Wolf," p. 117;

10/25 Session 2: Ma and Lau, "Nieh Hsiao-ch'ien," p. 404; "The Lady Knight-errant," p. 77; "Red Jade," p. 379; "The Monk's Magic," p. 431;

#### **Week 10**

10/30 Session 1: Ma and Lau, "Yen-chih," p. 524; "The Shansi Mercant," p. 135;

“The Leper Girl,” p. 225; “The Broken Hairpin,” p. 234

11/1 Session 2: Ch’ing Novel: *The Story of the Stone*, “Introduction,” and chs. 1-3

**Week 11**

11/6 Session 1: *The Story of the Stone*, chs. 4-6; “Appendix, pp. 527-534

11/8 Session 2: *The Story of the Stone*, chs. 7-9

**Week 12**

11/13 Session 1: *The Story of the Stone*, chs. 10-12

11/15 Session 2: *The Story of the Stone*, chs. 13-15

**Week 13**

**11/19—11/23\_Fall Break and Thanksgiving Holiday**

**Week 14**

11/27 Session 1: *The Story of the Stone*, chs. 16-18

11/29 Session 2: *The Story of the Stone*, chs. 19-21

**Week 15**

12/4 Session 1: *The Story of the Stone*, chs. 22-24

12/6 Session 2: *The Story of the Stone*, chs. 25-26  
*The Story of the Stone*, chs.119-120 (handouts)

**Week 16**

12/11 Final Examination

**Course Policies**

A student cannot pass this class without attending each session and completing all of the required work. Absences are excused ONLY with appropriate documentation from a doctor or other health professional, by an authorized UTD official for school events, or by official policy as disclosed below.

This course will be conducted according to strict codes of academic honesty. All cases of plagiarism will be investigated and the deliberate instances reported to the Dean of Students. Penalties for deliberate cheating may include failing the assignment in question, failing the course, or suspension and expulsion from the University. Students are expected to know the University’s policies and procedures on such matters, as well as those governing student services, conduct, and obligations.

**All cell phones, game devices, and other electronic equipment should be turned off during class.**

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**Note: With regard to the university’s policies on Student Conduct & Discipline, Academic Integrity, Email Use, Withdrawal from Class, Student Grievance Procedure, Incomplete Grade Policy, Disability Services, Religious Holy Days, etc. please see the e-version of the syllabus on WebCT.**

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