

## SYLLABUS

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**HUMA1301.008**

**Chinese Culture: A Survey**

Tu and Thur 11:30-12:45pm      Room MC 2.410

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**Professor:**

**Dr. Ming Dong Gu**

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Office Hours:

Tu/Th 2: 00 - 3: 00 or by appointment

**Teaching Assistant:**

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Office Hour: Tuesday 2:30-3:30 pm at JO 5.410C, or by appointment

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### Course Description

This course introduces fundamental aspects of Chinese culture. "Culture" is one of the few most complicated words in English. This course adopts its two basic meanings: Matthew Arnold's notion of "the best that has been thought and said" and Raymond Williams's conception of "a whole way of life." Since Chinese culture is too enormous a subject to be adequately covered in a single semester course, the two meanings of culture will serve as the guiding principle for selecting course materials and structuring the course organization. The main aim of the course is to acquire a basic knowledge of Chinese history, thought, religions, politics, economics, language, literature, arts, people, society, and general ways of life. In addition to a widely used textbook and selected readings, students are required to view in class a sizable number of videos on aspects of high culture pertaining to literature, philosophy and fine arts, and aspects of popular culture covering daily life, religious activities, festivals, customs, costumes, cuisines, historical sites, traditional medicine, martial arts, and folk art. Characterized by an ample use of power-point presentations and audio-visual materials, the course has no prerequisites.

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### Required Reading and Viewing Materials

1. Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *Cambridge Illustrated History of China*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
  2. A score of videos on aspects of Chinese culture to be viewed in class.
  3. A Course Pack containing electronic handouts of short literary works and excerpts of Chinese thought and religion to be distributed by the instructor.
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### Course Activities and Grading

The course will be conducted through a mixture of lectures, instructor-led discussions, and film/video viewing. Regular attendance and participation in the classroom activities are required of all students. Students are expected to read the assigned materials before coming to class, take a series of brief in-class quizzes, which cover the course content, and have one mid-term exam and a final exam. The grading is based on the following:

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| 1. 4 in-class quizzes                                       | 40% |
| 2. One mid-term exam:                                       | 20% |
| 3. One final exam:  | 25% |
| 4. Two reports on Chinese cultural events (one designated): | 5%  |
| 5. Attendance and Participation:                            | 10% |

Total: 100%

## Assignments & Academic Calendar

- Week 1** 8/27 Introduction: "Chinese History, Culture and Society"  
Video Viewing: "A Glimpse of Chinese Culture-Historical Chronology"  
8/29 **Cambridge China 1:** "Forward and Preface"; "The Origin of Chinese Civilization," "Animal and Human Imagery in Bronze Vessels" pp.10-37  
Video Viewing: "Wisdom of Chinese Characters"-1/2
- Week 2** 9/3 **Cambridge China 2:** "Philosophical Foundations"  
Video Viewing: "Xia, Shang, Zhou: the Birth of States"  
9/5 **Handouts:** Excerpts from Confucius; Laozi; and Chuang Tzu  
Video Viewing: "Spring Autumn Periods: Philosophical Schools"
- Week 3** 9/10 Continue with Excerpts from Confucius, Laozi; and Chuang Tzu  
**Quiz 1**  
9/12 **Cambridge China 3:** "The Creation of the Bureaucratic Empire: The Qin and Han Dynasties"  
Video Viewing: "The Qin and Han: Great Unification"
- Week 4** 9/17 **Handouts:** "Biography of Jing Ke"; "The Prince Tan of Yen"  
Video Viewing: "Wisdom of Chinese Characters"-3/4  
9/19 **Cambridge China 4:** "Buddhism, Aristocracy, and Alien Rulers: The Age of Division"; "Early Buddhist Art"  
Video Viewing: "The Wei and Jin: Flourishing Chinese Art"
- Week 5** 9/24 **Cambridge China 5:** "A Cosmopolitan Empire: The Tang Dynasty"  
Video Viewing: "Northern and Southern Dynasties: Buddhism"  
9/26 **Quiz 2**  
Video Viewing: "The Sui and Tang Dynasties: Peak of Chinese Civilization"
- Week 6** 10/1 **Handouts:** "The Story of Ying Ying" and "A Dream in a Pillow"  
10/3 **Cambridge China 6:** "Shifting South: The Song Dynasty"; "Landscape Painting"  
Video Viewing: "Northern Song Dynasty: A Dreamy Prosperity"
- Week 7** 10/8 **Cambridge China 7:** "Alien Rule: The Liao, Jin, and Yuan Dynasties"; "Drama and the Performing Arts"  
Video Viewing: "The Southern Song Dynasty: Uneasy Peace and Prosperity"  
10/10 **Handout:** A Yuan play: "The Orphan of Chao"  
Video Viewing: "The Yuan Dynasty: Literati Painting"
- Week 8** 10/15 Film Viewing: The Emperor and the Assassin (1)  
10/17 Film Viewing: The Emperor and the Assassin (2)
- Week 9** 10/22 **Mid-Term Examination**  
Video Viewing: "Exploring Chinese Culture-Traditional Customs"  
10/24 **Cambridge China 8:** "The Limits of Autocracy: The Ming Dynasty"; "The Kilns at Jingdezhen"  
Video Viewing: "The Ming Dynasty: Storms in Imperial Palace"
- Week 10** 10/29 **Cambridge China 9:** "Manchus and Imperialism: The Qing Dynasty"; "Working for a Living"

Video Viewing: "Chenghe Sailed to the Atlantic"  
10/31 **Cambridge China 10:** "Taking Action: The Early Twentieth Century"; "Modern Chinese Painting"  
Video Viewing: "The Qing: The Last Imperial Dynasty"

**Week 11** 11/5 **Handouts:** Two Stories by Lu Xun: "A Madman's Diary"; "Medicine"  
**Quiz 3**

11/7 **Handout:** "Why Modern Science Failed to Appear in China?"  
Video Viewing: "Traditional Chinese Medicine and Chinese Wushu"  
Video Viewing: "Wisdom of Chinese Characters"-5/6

**Week 12** 11/12 **Cambridge China 11:** "Radical Reunification: The People's Republic"  
Video Viewing: "Exploring Chinese Culture"-Traditional Festivals"  
11/14 **Cambridge China:** "The Cult of Mao"  
Video Viewing: "Exploring Chinese Culture - Chinese Arts"

**Week 13** 11/19 **Quiz 4**  
Video Viewing: "Wisdom of Chinese Characters"-7/8  
11/21 **Cambridge China 12:** "Opening to the World: China since 1976"; "Tibet"  
Video Viewing: "Exploring Chinese Culture –Tourist Highlights"

**Week 14** 11/25—30 **Fall Break and Thanksgiving Holiday**

**Week 15** 12/3 **Cambridge China:** "Epilogue"; "Chronology and Further Reading"  
Video Viewing: "Exploring Chinese Culture –Folk Arts"  
12/5 **Review for Final Exam**  
Video Viewing: "Wisdom of Chinese Characters" - 9/10  
Video Viewing: "Exploring Chinese Culture –Living in China"

**Week 16** 12/10 **Final Examination**

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### 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 and game devices MUST be turned off during class.**

**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.*