This syllabus is representative of a typical semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Course Description
This beginning level language course is designed to prepare students for the daily social demands of living in China and to provide access into the host culture. Students are thus enabled to enrich all aspects of their experience abroad by functioning in the host language during field methods exercises, while conducting fieldwork for the Independent Study Project, and when interacting with homestay families and local contacts.

The goal of the course is to develop students’ basic Chinese communicative skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing, with more focus on speaking and listening. Starting with pinyin, students will gradually build up their communicative competency in Chinese. Moreover, the course will integrate Chinese culture to promote students’ cross-cultural awareness and understanding. Due to the great differences in Chinese and English, students will also be introduced to strategies and skills in learning Chinese as a foreign language.

Classes and field-based language activities are taught by experienced, professionally trained, native-speaking teachers of a foreign language using oral proficiency-based methods. Students are placed into this level of the language courses based on in-country estimated ACTFL oral proficiency interviews. These placements may not directly correspond to the student’s level at the home institution as SIT courses focus on communicative competence and linguistic functional ability.

Instruction consists of 90 class hours of formal classes spread over a 6-week period. Various teaching methods are employed, including in-class discussions on Chinese and American subjects, recitations for aural comprehension, and grammar exercises. The Chinese course emphasizes oral expression and listening comprehension, but also includes entry-level instruction in Chinese characters. Students are placed in groups of 2 to 4 students per teacher for language instruction and exercises. This language training is based at Yunnan Nationalities University. In addition, 20 - 40 additional hours of instruction and guided field practice in Chinese are provided through homestays and scheduled during educational excursions.

Course Objectives
Beginning Chinese has an interdisciplinary and experiential focus, encompassing 90 class hours (6 credits). Its main objectives are:
- To develop basic communication skills in Chinese language through formal instruction and cultural involvement;

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To provide a grammatical foundation and facilitate language use, with special emphasis on pronunciation, correct syntax, and verbal expression;
To develop a basic level of proficiency in reading and writing formal Chinese;
To examine extra-linguistic and paralinguistic features of language use;
To develop culturally appropriate language skills.

Learning Outcomes
Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Understand the pinyin system and basic syllabic structure of Chinese characters;
- Use pinyin as a tool to pronounce Chinese characters;
- Understand the basic Chinese radicals and follow rules of stroke orders for writing Chinese characters;
- Have a general idea of the uniqueness of Chinese grammar (word order, measure words and etc.);
- Exchange greetings with each other and make self-introduction;
- Discuss family members and describe others in more details ways (physical appearance, age, nationality hobbies and etc.);
- Describe their own rooms, classrooms and the neighborhood;
- Count in Chinese from 1-100 or more;
- Read a calendar and tell time and days of week;
- Talk about their school subject and school schedule;
- Describe hobbies, interests, and habits;
- Make an appointment by phone and ask friends to go out for activities (dinner, shopping and etc.);
- Shopping for clothes, food and etc.;
- Ask and describe someone’s favor and taste;
- Describe clothing and food;
- Order food in restaurant;
- Talk about money, price and simple bargaining;
- Ask for and give direction;
- Talk about different means of transportation;
- Simply plan a trip;
- Read about 300 and write about 100 simplified Chinese characters.

Course Requirements
Reinforcement exercises, both oral and written, are assigned. On average, students are required to complete homework nightly. Class attendance is also required; preparation and participation are highly emphasized. Active engagement and meaningful involvement in class activities are expected. Students should complete their assignments individually in time and with full efforts. A late assignment may result in a lower grade.

Required Texts
The textbook used for this course is New Practical Chinese Reader 1 and 2, a Project of NOCFL of the People’s Republic of China (Liu Xun, Beijing Language and Culture University, 2008). The textbook focuses on exclusive use of Chinese script, introduction of idioms and comprehensively teaches grammatical structures with commonly used vocabulary by means of structural drills. Liu Xun’s communicative and structurally based approach is well suited to the needs of foreign students living in a Chinese-speaking environment wishing to acquire a solid foundation of Chinese grammar.

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In addition, a computer software program for practicing Chinese characters will be provided to students.

**Recommended Materials:**
Chinese Situational Dialogues, By Chen Ru, Peking University, 2002

Oxford Beginner’s Chinese Dictionary (available on Amazon: $10.61)

*Other on-line dictionaries and resources provided below:*

**Pinyin Learning Tool**
http://www.chinese-tools.com/tools/pinyin.html (pinyin tying tool)

http://www.chineseliteracy.net/summer/cssystem_062908.swf (Chinese sound system)

**English-Chinese Dictionary**
http://www.nciku.com/

http://www.mdbg.net/


**Chinese Language Learning**

**PLEASE NOTE:** COURSE CONTENT, TOPICS, AND READINGS MAY BE MODIFIED AS NEEDED. SHOULD ANY CHANGE OF CLASS TOPICS OR ASSIGNMENTS BE NECESSARY, STUDENTS WILL BE PROMPTLY NOTIFIED.

**Overview of Course Content**

**Course Topics**
- Phonetics, Pronunciation and Intonation
- Basic sentence structure and word order
- Interrogative sentences
- 是 (shi) and 有 (you) sentences
- Introduction to basic Chinese character strokes
- Sentences with a verbal predicate, or an adjectival predicate
- Measure words, position words and optative words
- Prepositional construction
- The structural particle 的 (de)
- 了 (le) and 过 (guo) sentences
- 是…还是… (shi…haishi…) sentences
- Progressive aspect of an action
- An action that is going to take place
- Actions as past experiences
- Sentence with verbal constructions in series
- Sentences with a predicate verb taking two objects

**Model Conversational Targets**

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• Greetings and introductions
• Asking the way
• Describing family members
• Taking a taxi, bus, or buying a ticket
• Exchanging currency
• Ordering food at a restaurant
• Time, date and numbers
• Apologies and responding to apologies
• Making and responding to requests
• Counting and shopping
• Sending a letter
• Talking about weather and colors

**Daily Class Schedule** *(minimum of 4 contact hours M-F, except during excursions):*

- Classes are scheduled accordingly:
  - 8:00 - 9:40  Listening and Speaking
  - 9:50 - 10:20  Taiji exercise
  - 10:30 - 12:00  Grammar and comprehension
- There will be a short quiz every day.
- There will be one written and one oral mid-term exam. There will be one written and one oral final exam.

**Evaluation and Grading Criteria**

Instructors evaluate student performance based on observation, written exercises, and exams given throughout the course. Final grades are assigned by the Academic Director in consultation with the language instructors on the basis of the instructors’ evaluations, the students’ own self-evaluation, and the Academic Director’s observations of the students’ participation in classes and their efforts to use the language outside of the classroom.

Estimated ACTFL oral proficiency interviews are conducted toward the end of the semester to provide a measurement of students’ overall linguistic progress. Thus, course grades provide an assessment of students’ performance in meeting the requirements of the language class while estimated ACTFL scores provide an assessment of students’ linguistic competence in the host language. Both the course grade and the ACTFL score are reported on the transcript.

Grades are assigned by the language instructors based on the following evaluation criteria:

**Daily Quizzes/Written Homework/Oral Work**  50%
A brief quiz (approximately 10 minutes) will be held daily. The quiz will cover recent grammar, phrases and vocabulary terms. Daily written homework assignments reinforce the material taught through classroom drills.

**Mid-term Oral and Written Examinations**, averaged together  25%
The oral exam will be conducted one-on-one with a language instructor. The written exam will be a comprehensive test covering grammar, sentence structure and vocabulary.

**Final Oral and Written Examinations**, averaged together  25%
A group of language teachers will evaluate each student’s oral proficiency level. The written exam will be a comprehensive test covering grammar, sentence structure and vocabulary.

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**Grading Scale:** The grading scale for all classes is as follows:

- 94-100%     A
- 90-93%      A-
- 87-89%      B+
- 84-86%      B
- 80-83%      B-
- 77-79%      C+
- 74-76%      C
- 70-73%      C-
- 67-69%      D+
- 64-66%      D
- below 64     F

**Student Expectations**

**Class Participation**
Participation in class refers to attendance, punctuality, attentive listening and active engagement in all lectures, discussions, educational excursions, assignments and other activities. It also means polite and respectful behavior. An absent student is responsible for contacting the instructor, the tutor, and/or fellow students to be prepared for the assignments s/he missed and the ones scheduled for the next class.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and the academic appeals process.

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