

## Beginning Chinese

CHIN 1002-1502 (2 credits/ 30 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:  
China: Community Health and Traditional Chinese Medicine

**PLEASE NOTE:** This syllabus represents a recent term. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from term to term.

### Course Description

This beginning level language course is designed to develop students' basic communicative skills in standard Chinese. Starting with pinyin, short sentence structures and basic grammar points, this intensive Chinese course emphasizes oral expression and listening comprehension, but also includes entry-level instruction in Chinese characters. 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 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 Chinese as a foreign language using oral proficiency-based methods. Students are placed into this level of the language courses based on in-country 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 30 hours of formal classes spread over a 3-week period. Various teaching methods are employed, including in-class discussions on Chinese and American subjects, recitations for aural comprehension, and intensive grammar exercises. This Chinese course emphasizes oral expression and listening comprehension, but also includes beginning-level instruction in Chinese characters. Students are placed in small groups for language instruction and exercises. TCM related vocabulary supplements daily lessons. Five (5) additional hours of guided practice in Chinese are provided during the educational excursion period.

### Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will be expected 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;

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- 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.);
- 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;
- Shopping for clothes, food and etc.;
- Ask and describe someone's favor and taste;
- Order food in restaurant;
- Talk about money, price and simple bargaining;
- Ask for and give direction;
- Talk about different means of transportation;
- Read about 100-130 and write about 30-50 simplified Chinese characters.

### **Course Requirements**

Reinforcement exercises, both oral and written, are assigned. On average, students are required to complete at least 1 hour of homework daily. Class attendance is also required; preparedness 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. Late assignment will 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. In addition, computer software for practicing Chinese characters will be provided to students.

### **Recommended Materials**

The Way We Communicate, Volume I & II

Concise English-Chinese/Chinese-English Dictionary, Oxford University Press

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

*Chinese Language Learning*

<http://chineselanguagelearning.com/>

*English-Chinese Dictionary*

<http://www.nciku.com/>

<http://www.chinese-tools.com/tools/dictionary.html>

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## [CCTVLearnChinese](#)

This site is the English language version of the Chinese CCTV channel. The website contains a wide range of multimedia materials for Chinese learners from beginner to advanced levels. Incorporating a number of Mandarin learning programs such as 'Easy Chinese', 'Survival Chinese', 'Growing up with Chinese', 'Happy Chinese' etc. it also includes a section where learners can learn Chinese through news.

### **Course Content**

**\*Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.**

### **Course Topics**

- Phonetics, Pronunciation and Intonation
- Basic sentence structure and word order
- Interrogative sentences; questions include reference, Yes /No and alternative
- “Shi”是 and “you” 有 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 “de” 的
- 了 (le) 和 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**

- Greetings and introductions
- Asking directions
- Describing family members
- Taking a taxi, bus, or buying a ticket
- Exchanging currencies
- Ordering food at a restaurant
- Expressing time, date and numbers
- Making an apology and responding to an apology
- Making and responding to requests
- Counting and shopping
- Sending a letter
- Discussing weather and colors

### **Daily Language Class Schedule** (*minimum of 2 contact hours M-F, except during excursions*):

- Classes are scheduled from 8:50 to 10:20.

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- There will be a short quiz every day.
- There will be one written and one oral final exam.

**Classes start at 8:00 AM**

8:00 - 8:30 Taiji exercise  
 8:50 - 10:20 Chinese language study

**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 and the Academic Director’s observations of the students’ participation in classes and their efforts to use the language outside of the classroom.

The program’s Academic Director and language faculty have obtained ACTFL OPI Tester Certification. ACTFL oral proficiency interviews will be conducted at the beginning and end of the program to provide a measurement of students’ overall linguistic progress. Course grades provide an assessment of students’ performance in meeting the requirements of the language class while ACTFL scores provide an assessment of students’ linguistic competence in the host language.

Description of Assignments

**Daily Quizzes/Written Homework/Oral Work**

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.

**Final Oral and Written Examinations, averaged together**

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.

Assessment:

<b>Daily Quizzes/Written Homework/Oral Work</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Final Oral and Written Examinations, averaged together</b>	<b>50%</b>

**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

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## **Expectations and Policies**

Show up prepared. Be on time and have your homework completed as instructed. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.

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.

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