

Beginning Chinese

CHIN-1003-1503 (3 credits)

Vietnam: Traditional Medicine and Community Health

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 develop students' basic communicative skills in standard Chinese. Starting with pinyin, short sentence structures, and basic grammar points, this 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 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 Chinese as a foreign language using oral proficiency-based methods. Students are placed into language course levels based on in-country 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 45 hours of formal classes spread over a six-week period. Various teaching methods are employed, including in-class discussions on Chinese and American subjects, recitations for aural comprehension, and 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. TVM and TCM related vocabulary supplements daily lessons. Five additional hours of guided practice in Chinese are provided during the educational excursion period.

Language Levels and Placement

Students are placed into appropriate language course levels based on oral proficiency interviews conducted during orientation in Vietnam.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this 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.);
- 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;
- Shop for clothes, food, etc.;
- Ask and describe someone's favor and taste;
- Order food in restaurants;
- 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 one 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 assignments 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>

In Ho Chi Minh City, students are able to join the Chinese Club every weekend to improve their Chinese skills. Participants will get a chance to discuss various topics with the native teacher. SIT students who have an interest in Chinese are welcome to join in *You Can's Chinese Club* and no attendance fee is required.

Course Schedule

**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) 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

- 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 two contact hours M-F, except during excursions*):

- Classes are scheduled from 8:50 to 11:00
- 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 Vietnamese Martial Art Exercise
8:50 - 11:00 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.

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 oral proficiency 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:

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

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

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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