

**UGEA 2100A**  
**Outline of Chinese Culture**

**Lecture: Thursday 14:30-16:15**

**Location: LDS 214**

**Tutorial: N/A**

**Course Overview**

This course is an introduction to the culture of China. Specifically, we will examine what is meant by the word culture and how such an understanding influenced the development of Chinese civilization from its beginning through the pre-modern period. In order to provide as comprehensive an overview as possible, each week's lecture will cover a different component of China's cultural heritage, examples of which include: philosophy and religion, literature and the arts, women and society, technology and science, food and theories of health, and warfare and statecraft. With this knowledge in hand, you will be well-prepared to undertake other, more specialized courses on China no matter the time period.

**Learning Outcomes**

1. Identify the main characteristics of Chinese culture, especially those elements in the fields of philosophy, religion, literature, society, and governance, and to explain the relations between them.
2. Assess Chinese culture by comparing and contrasting its various elements and their theoretical characteristics.
3. Reflect on the significance of Chinese culture in contemporary society and how it can be applied (or not) to improve our quality of life.

**Topics**

1. Philosophy and Religion
2. Literature and the Arts
3. Women
4. Death and Theories of Health
5. Technology
6. Education and Governance
7. Food and Festivals

**Learning Activities**

You are expected to carryout the following duties:

1. Read and give thought to the assigned readings.
2. Develop the skills mentioned above in the Learning Outcomes.
3. Attend class lectures and engage your fellow classmates in discussion on the material presented.

**Assessment Scheme**

<b>Task nature</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Weight</b>
Class Attendance	Attendance	10%
In-Class Test #1	50 minutes, Week 6 (Feb 12)	25%
In-Class Test #2	50 minutes, Week 13 (April 2)	25%
Examination	120 minutes, End of Semester	40%

## Notes:

1. In-class Tests: During the second hour of weeks 6 and 13 there will be a 50-minute long test. The format will be a mix of identification questions and a short essay of approximately 150 words (half a page).
2. Exam: The exam will be two hours and cover the entire course. It will take place during the official examination period (April 22 to May 9). I will say more about it in class at the end of the semester.

## Learning Resources

### Required Texts:

\*There is no textbook for this course, only individual texts that I will post on Blackboard. You are responsible for downloading and reading them before each lecture. The course schedule shows which texts will be covered for each lecture. The full list is as follows:

Benn, Charles. *Daily Life in Traditional China: The Tang Dynasty*. Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2002.

Bonds, Alexandra. *Beijing Opera Costumes: The Visual Communication of Character and Culture*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008.

Bushell, Stephen. *Chinese Art*. New York: Parkstone Press International, 2009.

Chen, Tingyou. *Chinese Calligraphy*. Ren Lingjuan, Trans. Beijing: China International Press, 2003.

Cook, Constance. *Death in Ancient China: The Tale of One Man's Journey*. Leiden: Brill, 2006.

Ebrey, Patricia. "Gender and Sinology: Shifting Western Interpretations of Footbinding, 1300-1890" *Late Imperial China*, 20.2 (Dec. 1999): 1-34.

Elman, Benjamin. "The Civil Examination System in Late Imperial China, 1400-1900" *Frontiers of History in China*, 8.1 (2013): 32-50.

Fenollosa, Ernest. *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Arts: An Outline History of East Asiatic Design*. 2 vols. Massachusetts: Stone Bridge Press, 2007.

Girardot, N.J. "The Problem of Creation Mythology in the Study of Chinese Religion" *History of Religions*, 15.4 (May 1976): 289-318.

Goldin, Paul. "The Myth that China has no Creation Myth" *Monumenta Serica*, 56 (2008): 1-22.

Hinsch, Bret. *Women in Early Imperial China*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2011.

Lai, Karyn. *An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Lovrick, Peter. *Chinese Opera: The Actor's Craft*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2014.

Luo, Yuming. *A Concise History of Chinese Literature*. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2011.

Olberding, Amy. "Sorrow and the Sage: Grief in the *Zhuangzi*" *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy*, 6.4 (Dec. 2007): 339-359.

Qing, Julia. *Mysticism and Kingship in China: The Heart of Chinese Wisdom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Sterckx, Roel. *Of Tripod and Palate: Food, Politics and Religion in Traditional China*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005.

Temple, Robert. *The Genius of China: 3,000 Years of Science, Discovery and Invention*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2007.

Zhang, Ellen. "The Neo-Confucian Concept of Body and its Ethical Sensibility" in Ruiping Fan, *Confucian Bioethics*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002: 45-63.

## Feedback for Evaluation

1. You are strongly encouraged to give feedback on the course via email or meeting with your professor.

2. Midway through the term, you will also be asked to provide feedback via a brief questionnaire.
3. As with all courses at CUHK, you will evaluate the course through a survey and written comments at the end of the semester and by regular feedback you give to your Professor. This information is highly valued and is used to revise teaching methods, tasks and content.

### Course Schedule

Week	Lecture Topic	Assigned Readings	Remarks
<b>1</b> (Jan 8)	Course Outline; Mythology	Girardot; Goldin	
<b>2</b> (Jan 15)	Language	Chen	
<b>3</b> (Jan 22)	Philosophy	Lai (Confucius and Laozi)	
<b>4</b> (Jan 29)	Religion	Lai (Buddhism)	
<b>5</b> (Feb 5)	Education & Statecraft	Elman; Qing	
<b>6</b> (Feb 12)	Food & Festivals	Sterckx; Benn	<b>In-Class Test #1</b>
<b>7</b> (Feb 18-24)	<b>Chinese New Year Holiday</b>		
<b>8</b> (Feb 26)	Women	Hinsch; Ebrey	
<b>9</b> (March 5)	Death & Mourning	Cook; Olberding	
<b>10</b> (March 12)	Health & Medicine	Benn; Zhang	
<b>11</b> (March 19)	Literature	Luo	
<b>12</b> (March 26)	Visual Arts	Fenollosa	
<b>13</b> (April 2)	Chinese Opera	Bonds	<b>In-Class Test #2</b>
<b>14</b> (April 9)	Technology	Temple	

\* This schedule is subject to change. The Easter Holiday is April 3-7; Exam Period is April 22 - May 9.

### Details of Course Website

Relevant announcements and course documents will be posted on Blackboard.

## Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at: <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>

### Contact Details

<b>Professor</b>	
Name:	CHAI, David
Office location:	Room 422, Fung King Hey Building
Email:	davidchai@cuhk.edu.hk