Course Description: This course introduces traditional Chinese literature from its beginnings through the Song dynasty (960-1279). Readings consist of both primary texts in English translation and secondary critical works. This course surveys major narrative and poetic genres, forms and works. Particular attention will be paid to developments of important literary themes, practices and conventions. Relevant cultural and historical contexts will be provided in class. Students are expected to participate actively in class discussions, during which the texts will be read closely. In addition to class discussion, students are required to do at least one in-class presentation on the assigned readings. At the end of each class, the professor will briefly introduce the coming week’s readings and provide questions and issues for thinking about the texts. No background in Chinese language or literature is required. Students with reading ability in Classical Chinese are encouraged to read the texts in the original, though class discussions will be based on the English translations.

Requirements and Grading

Undergraduate students:

Attendance and Participation (10%): Students are required to attend all classes. Should your absence be unavoidable, please use the Absence Self-Reporting system (https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/) to indicate the date and reason for your absence. Students will need to come to class having read and pondered all of the assigned texts (both primary and secondary). Students must bring a copy of the reading assignment to class. Participation does not mean just attendance; rather it means active engagement in group discussion.

Class Presentations (20%): Students are to lead the seminar discussion in turn and present on the assigned texts over the course of the semester. Class presentations may be based on the provided discussions questions and/or the students’ own interpretation of the interest and/or import of the texts. They may also address larger issues or make comparisons with other course readings. Each student is expected to make several presentations throughout the semester. Everyone is required to come prepared for discussion whether or not s/he is presenting that week. The presentation should be between 5-10 minutes.

Note on civility in the classroom: students are expected to uphold basic standards of classroom decorum, which means arriving to class on time, no texting or surfing the internet, no chatting with your neighbors, and no eating during class.

Weekly Reflections (40%): The weekly analytical reflection will consist of close reading of the assigned primary texts. Questions will be provided in advance for these weekly reflections, though these reflections may include also your own ideas and questions that arise during your reading of the texts. Students must demonstrate that they have read the texts carefully and thoughtfully, that they are able to connect it with other assigned readings, and that they can
articulate intelligently what they understand to be the themes and issues raised by the texts. Each reflection must be approximately 250 words, typed, single-spaced, and include a title and word count (not to exceed 300 words). Each student must submit one analytical reflection per week, except for the student(s) leading the discussion that week. The ten highest grades will be used when calculating this component of the course grade.

Term Paper (30%): 5-7 pages in length. Choose a theme, issue or author and construct an argument based on close reading of two or more texts. Try to be original and careful in your analysis. Students must retain a copy of each paper. Written work for this course must be entirely your own and careful citation of credible sources should conform with The Chicago Manual of Style. For guidelines, see: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html.

Violations of academic integrity, such as cheating, plagiarism, helping others to violate academic integrity, or submitting another’s work as your own, will not be tolerated. Any violation will result in zero credit for that assignment and will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the rules and conventions of attribution and citation is not considered a mitigating factor. See Rutgers University guidelines on academic integrity at: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml

Graduate students:

1. Attendance and Participation (10%): See above.
2. Class Presentations (20%): See above.
3. Weekly Reflections (40%): See above.
4. Term Paper (30%): 10-15 pages. Please see me to discuss your topic.

Course Materials:

I. There are two types of required reading materials, of which students will need a hard copy:

A) A course reader in a PDF file, which will be made available to students enrolled in the course
B) The following textbook may be purchased at Barnes and Noble and NJ Books. It is also on reserve at the Alexander Library.


II. You may wish to consult secondary literature on Chinese poetry for additional background on individual poets, periods and styles. The following books, on reserve at the Alexander Library, will be useful research sources for papers:


III. The following history books provide useful background and context.

*The Cambridge History of Ancient China: From the Origins of Civilization to 221 B.C.*


**Syllabus:**

**Week 1 (September 3): Introduction**

“The Great Preface” to the *Classic of Poetry*; Ode #1 “The Ospreys Cry”

**Week 2 (September 10): Selections from the Classic of Poetry, or the Book of Songs**


#205 “Northern Hills” (Reader)


**Week 3 (September 17): Early folk poetry and literati poetry**


**Secondary readings:** Hans Frankel, “Yüeh-fu Poetry,” 69-94.
Week 4 (September 24): Early Narrative

Selections from the *Zuo Commentary*, or *Zuozhuan*: “Two Brothers of Cheng and the Mother Who Doted on the Younger,” “Duke Hsien of Chin and Lady Li,” “Ch’ung-erh: The Years of Wandering,” “Ch’ung-erh: The Return to Chin,” “The Battle of Ch’eng-p’u” (Reader)

More selections from the *Zuo Commentary* and other early narrative: (A, 77-99)

**Secondary readings**: Burton Watson, introduction to the *Tso Chuan*, xi-xxxviii.

Week 5 (October 1): No class

Week 6 (October 8): Selections from *Zhuangzi*

“Free and Easy Wandering,” “Discussion on Making All Things Equal,” “In the World of Men,” “Robber Chih,” “Discoursing on Swords” (Reader)


Week 7 (October 15): Selections from the *Records of the Grand Historian*, or *Shiji*

“The Biography of Bo Yi and Shu Qi” (A, 142-45), from the “Biographies of the Assassins”: Nie Zheng (A, 152-54); from the “Biographies of the Assassins”: Jing Ke, “Basic Annals of Xiang Yu,” “The Biography of Sima Xiangru” (Reader)


Week 8 (October 22): Strange Writings


From Tsu Ch’ung-chih’s *Accounts of Strange Things*: “Ou Ching-chih and the Corpse Eater”; *Guideways Through Mountains and Seas* (also known as the *Mountains and Seas Classic*), Nos. 1-100 (Reader)


Week 9 (October 29): Selections from the Recluse Poet Tao Yuanming

Tao Yuanming: “Returning to Farm to Dwell” Nos. 1 and 2, “A Lament in the Ch’u Mode,” “On Moving House” Nos. 1 and 2, “A Reply to Secretary Kuo” No. 1, “Peach Blossom Spring,” “Twenty Poems After Drinking Wine,” Preface, Nos. 5, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14, “Biography of the Gentleman of the Five Willows” (Reader)


Week 10 (November 5): Selections from Southern Dynasties palace poetry

He Xun, “Performers on the Terrace of the Bronze Sparrow” (A, 326)

Xie Tiao, “A Companion Piece for Xie Jing’s ‘Terrace of the Bronze Sparrow’” (A, 326)

Xiao Yan, “Zi-ye Song” (A, 328); Shen Yue, “Going Out Early and Meeting an Old Love, I Give This to Her in Her Carriage” (A, 328); Wu Jun, “Quatrains on Various Topics” No. 1 (A, 328); Wang Seng-ru, “Spring Longings” (A, 329); Liu Xiaochuo, “On a Woman Unwilling to Come Forth” (A, 329)


Week 11 (November 12): High Tang poets: Wang Wei, Meng Haoran, Li Bo, and Du Fu

Wang Wei: “The Wang River Collection” (with Pauline Yu’s commentary in Reader); “When Living Quietly at Wang-chuan I Gave This to Pei Di”; “Villa on Zhongnan Mountain”; “Answering Magistrate Zhang” (A, 390-91)


Week 12 (November 19): Mid-Tang poets: Bo Juyi, Han Yu, and Meng Jiao


Chen Hong, “An Account to Go with the ‘Song of Lasting Pain’” (A, 448-452)

Han Yu: “Autumn Meditations” Nos. 1 and 8 (with Stephen Owen’s commentary in Reader)

Meng Jiao: “Autumn Meditations” No. 2 (with Stephen Owen’s commentary in Reader); “Cold Creek” No. 3 (with Stephen Owen’s commentary in Reader); “Tormented” (A, 479)


Week 13 (November 26): Thursday classes

Week 14 (December 3): Song shi-poetry: Mei Yaochen, Su Shi, Huang Tingjian

At a Party Given by Fan Zhongyan the Guests Spoke of Eating ‘River-Hog,’ or the Blowfish” (A, 650-51)

Huang Tingjian: “Following the Rhymes of Huang Dalin’s ‘Sent to Su Che’,” “To Huang Jifu,” “Asking for a Cat” (A, 694-95)


Week 15 (December 10): Song ci-poetry

Yan Jidao: to “Butterflies Love Flowers” (Die lian hua), to “Partridge Weather” (Zhe gu tian) (“With such feeling...”) (A, 572)

Liu Yong: to “Joy at Midnight” (Ye ban le) (A, 575)

Zhou Bangyan: to “Gallant” (Fengliu zi), to “Spring in the Mansion of Jade” (Yulou chun) (A, 576-77)

Su Shi: to “Song for the River Tune” (Shui diao ge tou), to “Immortal by the River” (Lin jiang xian), to “Settling Wind and Leaves” (Ding feng bo) (A, 577-78), “To the tune, ‘River Town’” (Jiang cheng zi) (Recording a Dream on the Night of the 20th Day of the 1st Month of Yimao [1075]) (with Egan’s commentary in Reader)

Li Qingzhao: “Like a Dream” (Ru meng ling), to “Note After Note” (Sheng sheng man); to “Southern Song” (Nan ge zi) (A, 580-82)

Lu You: “To ‘Partridge Weather’” (Zhe gu tian) (A, 583)

Xin Qiji: to “Clear and Even Music” (Qing ping yue) (An Account on the Censer Mountain Road), to “West River Moon” (Xi jiang yue) (Expressing What was on My Mind) (A, 584)


Final paper due Friday, December 13, 12 noon. Email an electronic copy to Professor Swartz. You must retain a copy of your paper.