Introduction to Chinese Civilization

Spring 2020

Introduction to Chinese Civilization (01: 165: 215)

Monday 2:50–4:10 pm, SC-207
Wednesday 2:50–4:10 pm, SC-205
Instructor: Peng Liu 刘鹏
Office hours: Monday/Wednesday 1:45– 2:45 pm, by appointment
Scott Hall 337

Course Description and Goal:
This course surveys the history of China from ancient times to the beginning of the twentieth century. During the semester, we will discuss individuals, institutions, events, and ideas that shaped Chinese history. We will also learn how to analyze historical records, fictional works, and documentary films. Through the lenses of these miscellaneous sources, we seek to understand how Chinese people from all walks of life experienced the world around them and created a unique culture. Readings are all in English. No knowledge of East Asian languages and cultures is required. This course is certified for AHp (Arts and Literatures) and HST (Historical Analysis). It aims to train students how to analyze texts and visual sources.

Requirements and Grades:
1. Attendance and class participation – 20%
2. Project and presentation – 25%
3. Midterm exam – 25%
4. Final paper (6 pages) – 30%

Class participation: In every class meeting, all students are expected to participate actively in discussion.

Project and presentation: During the semester, students have to complete a project entitled “Illustrated History of China.” This project aims to help students learn how to utilize visual and textual sources to interpret Chinese history. It also teaches students how to conduct research and present their ideas in public. The details are as follows:

1) Two students form a group.
2) Each student has 30 minutes.
3) Each student should find a topic that interests you most. For example: “The Influence of Buddhism on Chinese Painting.” The topic should be related to the topic of the current week or the previous week. For example, if we are discussing the Tang dynasty, you should focus on artworks of that period.

Midterm exam: The exam will be based on the lecture and the reading materials. It will include single choice questions and essay questions.
Final paper: Students should write a term paper with a clear argument. Please combine primary and secondary sources and dissect texts thoroughly. You should include footnotes and a bibliography according to the *MLA Style Manual* or *Chicago Manual of Style*. Please submit an electronic copy via e-mail.

**Statement on Academic Integrity**

As a member of Rutgers community, you are expected to demonstrate integrity in your academic endeavors. Your paper should be your own original work. If you want to use words or ideas from other sources, make sure you identified the original sources and provide footnotes or parentheses. If you cite from a published source or from a web site and the quotation is short, please place it in quotation marks; if you quote a longer passage from a publication or web site, please indent it and use single spacing. Any work that has been submitted for credit in another course is generally not allowed to be submitted in this course unless you have the permission from your instructor.

**Students with Disabilities**

Students with any physical, psychological, or learning disability are encouraged to talk to your instructor after class or during office hours.

**Required Texts:**


**Schedule**

**Week 1**

1/22 **Introduction**

**Week 2**

1/27 **Early Chinese Philosophy**


[Confucianism] excerpts from *Analects, Mengzi, and Xunzi*

[Daoism] excerpts from *Laozi & Zhuangzi*

[Legalism] excerpts from *The Book of Lord Shang*

[Mohism] excerpts from *Mozi* (all on Canvas)

1/29 **Qin and Han Dynasties**

Tanner, vol. 1, 83–130.

[In-class screening] The Creation of the Chinese Empire Documentary

**Week 3**

2/3 **Group Presentation 1**
2/5 Buddhism and Medieval China  
Tanner, vol. 1, 135–164.  
*The Lotus Sutra*, Chapters 12, 25 (on Canvas)  

**Week 4**  
2/10 Group Presentation 2

2/12 China in the Sui and Tang Dynasties  
John Jorgensen, “The Figure of Huineng,” in *Readings of the Platform Sutra*, 25–52. (on Canvas)

**Week 5**  
2/17 Group Presentation 3

2/19 Chinese Song Dynasty and Neo-Confucianism  
Tanner, vol. 1, 201–238.

**Week 6**  
2/24 Group Presentation 4

2/26 China under the Mongols  

**Week 7**  
3/2 Group Presentation 5

3/4 The Ming Dynasty  

**Week 8**  
3/9 Group Presentation 6

3/11 Ming Drama  

**Week 9**  
Spring break

**Week 10**  
3/23 Midterm Exam
3/25 Group Presentation 7

Week 11
3/30 No Class

4/1 Ming Novels
Quelling the Demons Revolt
Selections from Water Margin (on canvas)

Week 12
4/6 Group Presentation 8

4/8 The Beginning of the Qing Dynasty
Tanner, vol 1, 340–381

Week 13
4/13 Group Presentation 9

4/15 War and Rebellion in the Qing

Week 14
4/20 [In-class screening] The Last Emperor (Part I)

4/22 [In-class screening] The Last Emperor (Part II)

Week 15
4/27 The Search for Modern China
Tanner, vol. 2, 111–144. (on Canvas)

4/29 Group Presentation 10

Week 16
5/4 Review

Final paper due May 10