

ANS 361/LIN 350 Spring 2012
Why Chinese Has No Alphabet
MWF 1-2 pm.
Benedict 1.126

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[All lectures, discussion and readings in English.]

Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 2-3:30 p.m.

Required Texts:*

**selected chapters are on Blackboard/Course Documents*

William G. Boltz, *The Origin and Early Development of the Chinese Writing System*
(New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1994)

Jerry Norman, *Chinese* (Cambridge, 1988)

Tsuen-hsui Tsien, *Written on Bamboo and Silk – The Beginnings of Chinese Books and Inscriptions, Second Edition* (Chicago, 2004)

Further Reading:*

**selected chapters are available on Blackboard/Course Documents*

John DeFrancis, *The Chinese Language: Fact and Fantasy* (Hawaii, 1984)

Michael Loewe, *Everyday Life in Early Imperial China* (Hackett, 2005)

S. Robert Ramsey, *The Languages of China* (Princeton, 1987)

Michael Sullivan, *The Three Perfections: Chinese Painting, Poetry and Calligraphy*

(Revised edition: George Braziller, 1999) [Out of print – Paradigm Books custom printing]

Statement on Global Cultures Flag:

This course carries the Global Cultures flag. Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. cultural group, past or present.

Course Description

This course will provide an introduction to the history of the evolution of the Chinese writing system and language. This course is open to all students and while recommended, no background in Chinese language, culture or linguistics is required. Course emphasis will be given to the study of the writing system and the cultural contexts that have preserved such a unique orthography from ancient to modern times. In this context, the course will include some discussion of the history of the Chinese language, including Chinese dialects. Lectures and discussions will focus on the cultural, historical, social, and political background against which Chinese writing and language have evolved.

Introduction – Chinese Language and Writing; What is writing? What is an alphabet?

I. The Beginnings – Ancient Writing Systems, Proto-Writing, the Shang Bronze Age

II. The Han Dynasty Milestone – Invention of Paper, “classifiers” (“radicals”) and the influential role of the *Shuowen jiezi*

III. The Song Dynasty Milestone – Calligraphy, Painting, Invention of Printing, and “handwriting”

IV. The Modern Milestone – Language Reform, Script transformation, Japanese/Western influence

V. Contemporary Times – Chinese writing in the cyber age, influence of the English language/alphabet

*****Applies to Graduate Students Only*****

For Graduate-Level Credit:

- **Complete a Conference Course Form and turn in by the add/drop date.**
- **See me to discuss details on additional reading and assignments.**

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

- **This course will be graded on the Plus/Minus system.**
- There is no written final exam for this course.
- *Late assignments will not be accepted for credit.*
- **Laptop and Electronic Device Use Policy** – Classroom Laptop and other electronic device use for taking notes and reading of downloaded files related to this course only. **Periodic submission of class notes may be required.** Please download the Laptop/Electronic Use Form (See Blackboard/Syllabus) if you are planning on using a laptop or other electronic devices (iPad, Kindle) in class for reading and “notetaking.” Laptop and other electronic device activities unrelated to this course will lead to dismissal from class (and marked as an absence for that day). **Repeat offenders will result in a filing of a report of academic problems.**
- **Other Electronic Devices (Cell phone, Blackberry, iPhone, etc.) Use Policy** – **All devices must be turned off during class.** Any use of these devices, including texting, websurfing, etc. will lead to dismissal from class (and marked as an absence for that day). **Repeat offenders will result in a filing of a report of academic problems.**
- **There is a class attendance policy for this course.**

Attendance is vital for success in this course and I value your contribution to class discussion.

As well, lectures will be vital for background on historical context and schools of thought, and flesh out ideas and concepts for discussion, all of which cannot be replaced by reading lecture outlines online.

ATTENDANCE POLICY – After 2 absences (excused or unexcused), the final class discussion/participation grade will be deducted a full grade; and a half grade for each additional absence. More than 10 absences will result in a failing grade for the course. (Extenuating circumstances will be taken into consideration in consultation with the Office of the Dean of Students.)

Religious Holidays – Religious holy days sometimes conflict with class and examination schedules. If you miss an examination, work assignment, or other project due to the observance of a religious holy day you will be given an opportunity to complete the work missed within a reasonable time **after** the absence. It is the policy of The University of Texas at Austin that **you must notify each of your instructors at least fourteen days prior to the classes scheduled on dates you will be absent** to observe a religious holy day.

Your grade for this course will be based on the following (see below for details):

- I. 10% *Class and online discussion, participation and “preparedness” (informal writing)*
- II. 50% *Reading and Discussion Questions*
- III. 10% *One Oral Panel Presentation*
- IV. 20% *One “Written Report” (based on Panel Presentation Topics)*
- V. 10% *Oral Comprehensive “Defense” Interview*

- *Writing*

Writing is one of the most effective ways to brainstorm about ideas and to communicate our ideas in an in-depth manner. In addition to informal writing in class and online, there will be a formal writing assignment.

On matters of writing at any stage, I encourage you to consult with me and/or make liberal use of the University's Writing Center.

<http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/uwc>

I. 10 % *Class and online discussion, participation and "preparedness" (informal writing)*

Discussion is essential for an understanding of the materials. Both verbal and written forms of expression in-class (informal writing) and online on Blackboard are emphasized in this course. Be prepared to respond to reading assignments, lecture points, expand on questions and/or observations posed for class discussion days, including discussion following panel presentations. In-class informal writing will usually take place at the start of class and will be assigned points. There is no make-up of informal writing. Expansion and extension of class discussion can continue online on Blackboard/Discussion Board. Credit will be given for quality discussion entries posted by the end of each week's forum. See Online Discussion guidelines on BB/Syllabus.

II. 50% *Reading and Discussion Questions*

There is NO make-up of Discussion Questions. If you do miss one, you will have an opportunity to do a second oral comprehensive "defense" during finals week. You can apply the grade of this extra comprehensive to only one missed DQ score.

See Schedule Outline for DQ dates (at the conclusion of each Section)

Each Reading/Discussion Question is worth 10 points. Formulated "Discussions Questions" are based on the material covered in lectures, class discussion, and required reading for each Section. (Review questions will be handed out for each Section.) Each DQ is in class and varies between open-book/open notes, and closed book/open notes. You will be expected to develop these discussion questions into concise but thoughtful responses. You are not expected to be exhaustive or comprehensive in scope. Some questions will be factually based, some will be geared toward your analytical response to the lecture and readings. These discussion questions are exercises in developing your ideas and observations in the process of understanding the course content. I would like you to regard all informal writing as ongoing drafts, therefore you are NOT expected to focus on written presentation (organization, clarity, usage of English) nor to have formal introductions or conclusions. Rather, the focus is on comprehension, thinking, analysis, and brainstorming in written form, and evaluation will be based on CONTENT.

III.10% *Oral Panel Presentation*

Oral Powerpoint Presentation on Panel Forum Topic. No make-up of missed presentation. Powerpoint files must be posted on BB/Groups/File Exchange.

One Oral Powerpoint Presentation on a selected Panel Forum topic (5-10 minutes presentations, depending on class size). You are required to present in only one panel forum but will be responsible for material covered in all panel forums. The process of preparing an oral presentation of one's ideas is an integral part of developing ideas and refining observations. A prepared oral presentation is an excellent exercise in abstracting the essence of one's ideas, basically "getting to the point," and supporting one's point with meaningful examples. The panel presentations will allow us to share ideas and research findings with one another in a formalized forum. The oral presentation is also designed to assist you in the process of researching and compiling your Written Report.

A well-spoken and well-timed talk will greatly contribute to a communication of your ideas. As well, oral presentations are always good practice for something you will be called upon to do at some point in your life and career, long after you leave the classroom. Your presentation will be equally evaluated on **Content and Oral Presentation.**

Content Selection and discussion of chosen topic, expression of ideas and opinions, observations

Oral Presentation Organization, clarity of expression of ideas and opinions, "mechanics" of presentation (within time limit, articulate delivery of presentation), effective use of Powerpoint

- **Panel Forum Topics**

Writing Mediums, Early Debates on the Chinese Writing System, Calligraphic Scripts, Modern Chinese Orthography, Modern Debates on the Chinese Writing System

IV. 20% *Written Report*

One Written Report (4-5 pages, double-space, .doc or .docx format) due Friday 4/27. Hard copies are due by class time of 1:00 p.m., electronic copies are due on Blackboard/Assignments by 11:59 p.m. No late submissions accepted for credit.

The written report is a research-based paper on a chosen topic that should be related to the topic covered in your oral panel presentation. I look to your papers to reflect responsible research, thoughtful observations and clear analysis regarding your chosen topic. Where relevant, you should incorporate relevant ideas and works from the lectures, required reading, in-class and online discussion; and last but not least, to reflect something of your own inspired interest in the topic. **Bibliography and Citation are required.** (Citation guidelines on Blackboard.) Plagiarism will not be tolerated and consequences will include failure of assignment and may lead to failure of the course.

I expect you to proof your work carefully and to hand in final drafts with minimal errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Your paper will be assessed two grades, equally evaluated on the following:

Content Discussion of topic (including assimilation of research, lectures, required reading, discussion), expression of ideas and opinions, observations, etc.

Written Presentation Organization, clarity of expression of ideas and opinions, proper usage of citation and English (mechanics of spelling, punctuation, and grammar)

V. 10% *Oral Comprehensive "Defense" Interview (Closed Book/Notes)*

5-minute Individual Oral Interviews in groups of 3-5 students during Week 16. (No class sessions during this week.) There is no make-up of missed appointments.

The oral interview is designed to demonstrate your comprehensive understanding of the materials covered in the course. Your interview will include a concise fact-based discussion and, to a small extent, a defense of a topic selected randomly at the time of your interview. Each student in the interview group will discuss a different topic. There

will be opportunity to engage in friendly debate with fellow interviewees, and to defend and support a point raised in your discussion. Guidelines and Review questions will be handed out prior to Week 16.

You will be equally evaluated on the following:

Content Quality discussion of topic (including assimilation of lectures, required reading, discussion), judicious reference to additional reading, expression of ideas and opinions, observations, etc.

Oral Presentation Clarity of expression of ideas and opinions, effective use of allotted interview time

SCHEDULE OUTLINE

- Weeks 1-2** **Introduction – Overview of Chinese writing and language**
1/18 -1/27 What is writing? Writing systems and development of an alphabet or syllabary
- Weeks 3-5** **I. The Beginnings – Ancient Writing Systems**
1/30-2/17 Ancient systems – Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Chinese
The Shang Dynasty – oracle bones, bronzes
Proto-writing
○ 2/17 Reading and Discussion Questions 1
- Weeks 6-8** **II. The Han Dynasty Milestone**
2/20-3/9 Old Text and New Text Debates
Invention of paper
“Classifiers” and the role of the *Shuowen jiezi*
○ Panel Presentations
○ 3/7 Reading and Discussion Questions 2
- Week 9** **SPRING BREAK**
- Weeks 10-11** **III. The Song Dynasty Milestone**
3/19-3/30 Calligraphy, Painting
Invention of Printing
“Handwriting”
○ Panel Presentations
○ 3/30 Reading and Discussion Questions 3
- Weeks 12-14** **IV. The Modern Milestone**
4/2-4/20 19th-20th century language reform
Romanization / Phonetic Symbols
Japanese/Western influence
Pinyin, Script transformation, Modification of “Radicals”
“Traditional” and “Simplified” Debates
○ Panel Presentations
○ 4/20 Reading and Discussion Questions 4
- Week 15** **Contemporary Times – Chinese Writing in the Cyber Age**
4/23-4/27 Influence of English language/alphabet
○ 4/27 Written Reports Due (Hard copy due by classtime 1:00 p.m.; Electronic copy due on BB by 11:59 p.m. No late submissions accepted for credit.)
- Week 16** **Oral comprehensive “defenses”**
4/30-5/4 Oral interviews in groups of 3-5 students. No class sessions.
No make-up of missed appointments.

Use of Blackboard

This course uses Blackboard, a Web-based course management system in which a password-protected site is created for each course. Blackboard can be used to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments, and to take online quizzes and surveys.

You will be responsible for checking the Blackboard course site regularly for class work and announcements. As with all computer systems, there are occasional scheduled downtimes as well as unanticipated disruptions. Notifications of these disruptions will be posted on the Blackboard login page. Scheduled downtimes are **not** an excuse for late work. However, if there is an unscheduled downtime for a significant period of time, I will make an adjustment if it occurs close to the due date.

Blackboard is available at <http://courses.utexas.edu>. Support is provided by the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., so plan accordingly.

The Undergraduate Writing Center

The Undergraduate Writing Center provides individual, professional advice on all aspects of writing to UT undergraduates on a drop-in basis or by appointment. Location: Flawn Academic Center 211, 471-6222.

Fall 2006 hours: Monday-Thursday 9 a.m.-8 p.m. (last appointments at 4 p.m.)

Fridays 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (last appointments at 2 p.m.)

*Last consultations begin 1 hour before closing. If your paper is due in two hours or less, you cannot meet with a consultant. You will not have enough time to revise after your consultation.

Writer's Advice Line: free and open to everyone.

Email your brief query or call at 475-VERB.

Website: <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/uwc>

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The University of Texas Honor Code

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

University Electronic Mail Notification Policy

(Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students)

All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html>.

In this course e-mail will be used as a means of communication with students. You will be responsible for checking your e-mail regularly for class work and announcements. Note: if you are an employee of the University, your e-mail address in Blackboard is your employee address.

Documented Disability Statement

Students who require special accommodations need to get a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students (471-6259 – voice or 471-4641 – TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). This letter should be presented to the instructor in each course at the beginning of the semester and accommodations needed should be discussed at that time. Five business days before an exam the student should remind the instructor of any testing accommodations that will be needed.

See Website below for more information: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssd/providing.php>