

[ANS 372.27 / HIS 364G / AHC 330](#)

## **History and Archaeology of Early China**

Spring 2014

### **Syllabus**

**Course unique numbers:** 32195 (ANS) & 40100 (HIS) & 33503 (AHC)

**Class meetings:** Tuesdays & Thursdays, 12:30-2:00 pm in [GAR 0.120](#)

Course website at <http://www.la.utexas.edu/dsena/courses/ans372-earlychina/>

**For the updated version of this syllabus, consult the course website.**

#### **Instructor**

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#### **Course description**

This course will examine the ancient roots of Chinese civilization, from the fluid mix of regional cultures in the Neolithic period (beginning ca. 8000 B.C.E.) through the establishment of the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.E.-220 C.E.). In addition to covering major political developments, we will pay close attention to religious, intellectual, and social trends, as well as to changes in the material culture of ancient China. Throughout the course we will focus particularly on recent archaeological discoveries. Nearly eighty years of scientific archaeology in China has produced a wide array of data that have revolutionized our understanding of ancient history. As new texts and artifacts continue to be unearthed, historians struggle to reconcile this new knowledge about the past with a received historical tradition that goes back 2000 years. This tension between received historical knowledge and modern archaeology puts archaeology at the heart of fierce historiographic debates. This course will explore these issues by examining early Chinese history in light of major archaeological discoveries of texts and materials, discussing both the content of the discoveries and their impact on the historiography of ancient China.

## Course goals

There are three learning goals for this course. The first is to acquire a broad understanding of the historical development of Chinese civilization from its origins in the Neolithic period through the second century C.E. This course adopts a "hands on" approach by asking students to consider primary historical evidence of both a textual and visual nature. Therefore, a second goal of this course is to develop one's ability to interpret texts and images as historical evidence by considering such material within its particular cultural context. The third goal of the course is to understand the impact of modern archaeology on the study of Chinese history and the historiographic issues involved in combining archaeological evidence with traditional sources of history. The ultimate goal of the course is to acquire a richer understanding of both Chinese culture and the practice of studying the history of ancient civilizations.

This course carries a [University Global Cultures Flag](#). The goal of this flag is to challenge students to explore the beliefs and practices of non-U.S. cultural communities in relation to their own cultural experiences so that they engage in an active process of self-reflection.

## Requirements

- **Reading assignments:** The [schedule of class meetings and reading assignments](#) is available online via the [course website](#). Required reading averages roughly 50 pages per week and is drawn from a range of primary and secondary sources, including material of both a textual and visual nature. Students will be expected to have completed the required reading assignment for each week before the first class meeting. Completion of the reading assignment involves not only reading the required pages but also thinking critically and creatively about how such material informs one's understanding of Chinese history, relating it to other readings and topics in the course, and formulating discussion questions.
- **Participation:** This course demands consistent, punctual, and active participation. All students are expected to contribute actively to class meetings by posing questions and by responding to the questions and comments of other students based on the material in lectures and readings. Students who attend class regularly but do not contribute actively can expect a grade of "C" for their class participation (15% of one's overall grade).

*Attendance:* Students are expected to attend all class meetings and are responsible for signing in on an attendance sheet to be distributed during each class. While regular attendance is a substantial factor in your grade for participation, you earn credit for participation by being actively engaged in the class.

- **Quiz:** One short quiz on geography and language will be administered in class on Thursday, January 23.
- **Tests:** Two midterm exams will be administered in class on Thursday, February 20 and Thursday, April 10. The exams cover all lectures, readings, and presentations.

*Make-ups:* Make-up tests, offered only in cases of illness or other extraordinary circumstances, must be arranged with the instructor BEFORE the regular exam is held. Requests for make-ups made after the fact will not be considered unless the student has made every reasonable effort to notify the instructor prior to the start of the exam.

- **Presentation:** Each student will produce a ten-minute digital presentation (podcast, video, multi-media, etc.) related to an early Chinese archaeological site. Presentations are due on March 27 and may be submitted in any file format that can be easily shared with the rest of the class.
- **Paper:** A paper of 5-7 pages is due on the last day of class, Thursday, May 1. Paper topics are open, but students are strongly encouraged to develop their paper topics in consultation with the instructor during office hours or via e-mail. Late papers will be penalized 1/3 of a full letter grade for each day beyond the scheduled due date.
- **Final examination:** The final exam will test material covered in class during the entirety of the semester. The exam is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, May 8, 2:00 –5:00 pm. The exam will be administered at the time and place officially scheduled by the Office of the [Registrar](#), typically finalized three weeks before the end of the semester.

*All students must take the final exam at the [officially scheduled time](#). No make-up final exams will be given to accommodate vacation schedules or other personal time conflicts. If you enroll in this class knowing that you will leave town before the end of the final examination period, or later commit to doing so, you run the risk of receiving a grade of zero for the final exam.*

## Grading

Final grades will be calculated according to the criteria below. Grades of plus/minus will be assigned as appropriate.

- Class participation: 15%
- Quiz: 5%
- 2 Tests 30% (15% each)
- Presentation: 15%
- Paper: 15%
- Final exam: 20%

## Course website

A website for this course has been established at <http://www.la.utexas.edu/dsena/courses/ans372-earlychina/>. It is essential that you establish some means of accessing the site because the updated syllabus, course schedule, assignments, handouts, readings, and important announcements will all be distributed through the website. Student grades will be posted on [Canvas](#). If you have any trouble accessing these tools, please consult the instructor.

## Textbook

The following textbook is required and available at the [University Co-op Bookstore](#):

- Li Feng, *Early China: A Social and Cultural History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

## Online Course Materials

Additional required readings for the class will be distributed electronically via [UT Box](#), UT's file sharing application. All students will receive an e-mailed invitation from the instructor to a [collaborative folder](#) in UT Box. After accepting the invitation, students may access course material via direct links embedded into the [course schedule](#), using your regular uteid and password to sign into UT Box when prompted. Contact the instructor immediately should you have any difficulty accessing this material.

## Instructor's Presentations

Throughout the course we will be studying a large number of maps, images, and other visual materials. To facilitate individual review, copies of the presentations used by the instructor in class are available via links on the [course schedule](#). These presentation files contain a minimal amount of text and are in no way intended to obviate the need for careful note-taking during class.

## Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty

Students who violate University rules on [academic integrity](#) are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information please visit the [Student Judicial Services](#) website: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs>.

## Students with Disabilities

Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact [Services for Students with Disabilities](#) (tel. 512-471-6259 [voice] or 1-866-329-3986 [Video Phone], e-mail [ssd@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:ssd@austin.utexas.edu)) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

## Schedule of Class Meetings

For reading assignments please consult the course website at <http://www.la.utexas.edu/dsena/courses/ans372-earlychina/>.

Week	Date	Week
1	1/14 1/16	Time, Space, and Language
2	1/21 1/23	The Neolithic Cultural Mix <b>Quiz on geography and pinyin on Thu 1/23</b>
3	1/28 1/30	Early States and the Question of Xia
4	2/4 2/6	Dynastic Power and the Late Shang State
5	2/11 2/13	Western Zhou and the Aristocratic Lineage System
6	2/18 2/20	<i>Review and exam</i> <b>Test 1 on Thu 2/20</b>
7	2/25 2/27	The Spring and Autumn Period and the Development of the Regional State System
8	3/4 3/6	Warring States and the Expansion of the Chinese Cultural Sphere
9	3/11 3/13	<b><i>Spring Break; no class meetings</i></b>
10	3/18 3/20	The Hundred Schools
11	3/25 3/27	Qin: State and Empire <b>Presentation assignment due on Thu 3/27</b>
12	4/1 4/3	Han Dynasty and the Foundations of the Imperial State
13	4/8 4/10	<i>Review and exam</i> <b>Test 2 on Thu 4/10</b>
14	4/15 4/17	Expansion of the Han Empire and Contact with the Steppe Cultures of the North
15	4/22 4/24	Social and Religious Developments in the Han
16	4/29 5/1	Conclusions: Archaeology and the Legacy of Early China <b>Paper assignment due Thu 5/1</b>
	5/8	<b>Final Exam, 2-5pm (date and time subject to change)</b>