Course Syllabus

Chinese Culture

Course Instructor: Prof. Mao Zhongming
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Course Description
The course is an introduction to Chinese culture. It provides students with an understanding of the cultural, social, ideological, educational, economic, and political environments in China. The course is to be conducted in a research based approach, through lectures, readings, and particularly, presentations and discussions, students will learn the fundamental knowledge of the Chinese culture from a historical and global perspective, and achieve a better understanding of China.

Course Objectives
- Discuss and compare Chinese culture and society
- Discuss and evaluate Chinese political and religious concepts
- Discuss and evaluate Chinese ordinary life and custom

Course Books
No required course books available at moment, but students are recommended to find and read the relevant articles and books via E-Journals and websites, e.g. www.china.org, www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng, www.wikipedia.org, etc.

Course Requirements
This course requires students to complete the following:
Participation: 20%
Presentation: 40%
Exam: 40%

System of Grading
A – (100-90)
B – (89-75)
C – (74-60)
D – (59- )

About classroom participation: While it cannot be based on attendance per se, students should plan to be in class and ready to discuss the topics arranged on the course. Topics for presentation will be assigned to each student at the beginning of the term.

About in-class presentation: Each student will give a 30-minute PPT presentation and also the questions for a 15-minute discussion on the topic provided. The presentation should be informative about the topic in question, and creative in format. At least 3 academic sources should be mentioned for the presentation, students may use Wikipedia and other online sources as well, but they do not count toward the 3 academic
Exams: There will be an exam held at the end of class. The exam will be either an in-class written exam, or term paper writing.

Course Schedule

Week 1 (Sept. 18)
Lecture: Introduction to Chinese Culture

Week 2 (Sept. 25)
Lecture: Chinese History

Week 3 (Sept. 29)
Lecture: Chinese Thought
Students Presentation and Discussion:
1. “Four books and five classics”
2. Confucianism
3. Daoism
4. Legalism
5. The imperial examination system

Week 4 (Oct. 9)
Lecture: Virtues upholding by Chinese
Students Presentation and Discussion:
6. Buddhism
7. Filial virtue
8. “Three friends in cold weather”
9. Integrity and credit
10. The May 4th movement

Week 5 (Oct. 16)
Lecture: Chinese Arts and Literature
Students Presentation and Discussion:
11. Ancient mythology
12. The book of Songs
13. Tang poetry
14. Four great folklores
15. Fiction of the Ming and Qing Dynasties (2 students)

Week 6 (Oct. 23)
Lecture: Science and Technology
Students Presentation and Discussion:
16. Beijing opera
17. Chinese characters
18. Abacus and abacus calculation
19. Sundial and Copper Kettle Clepsydra
20. Zhang Heng and the seismograph

Week 7 (Oct. 30)
Lecture: Ordinary Life and Custom
Students Presentation and Discussion:
21. Terracotta warriors and horses
22. Jiaguwen
23. Dunhuang Mogao Grottoes
24. Jade Suit Sewn with Gold Thread
25. Tang Tricolor Pottery
26. Embroidery
27. Batik and Blue Calico

Week 8 (Nov. 6)
Lecture: The Concepts of Economy and Wealth
Students Presentation and Discussion:
28. One-Month-Old Feast and One-Year –Old Catch
29. Four deities-symbol of auspice in ancient times
30. The 24 seasonal division points
31. Zheng He’s voyage
32. Chinese Taboos
33. Traditional Chinese Medical Science and Medicine

Week 9 (Nov. 13)
Lecture: Political and Religious Concepts
Students Presentation and Discussion:
34. Golden years of Zheng Guan
35. Hanfei’s legalist thought
36. Policy of concession
37. Folk temple fair
38. Qigong
39. Acupuncture and Moxibustion Therapy and Narcotherapy
40. Classical Gardens

Week 10 (Nov. 20)
Exam
Course wrap-up

Class contact hours:
This class meets for 40 plus hours over the 11 week semester, with about 4 hours of class each week for ten weeks and one exam week. This course is equivalent to a 3 credit course at the College of Staten Island.