

**History 569, Ancient Chinese Civilization**  
**T & Th 9:35-10:50, HSS 151**  
**Fall, 2006**

Instructor: Dr. Pi-ching Hsu, Associate Professor  
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China is the oldest continuous civilization on earth. The purpose of the course is to trace the evolution of Chinese civilization from the Neolithic through the medieval periods, up to the end of the Tang dynasty, around 900. We will study the lives and thoughts of ancient Chinese philosophers, the establishment of the early Chinese empires, the founding of the Chinese historiographical tradition, the flowering of Buddhism in China, the domestic and international politics at the formative stage of imperial China, and the daily life of ordinary people.

- *This course fulfills History Major and Minor requirement.*
- *This course is part of the GE Segment III cluster: Asian Society, Politics, and Culture, Category A.*
- \* *Segment III courses are required to include a minimum of 10 pages of writing corrected by the instructor. This course meets or exceeds this minimum requirement.*
- \* *To receive Segment III credit for this course, students must complete the cluster as described in the Class Schedule and Bulletin, including the requirement that they must have earned 60 units by the end of the semester in which they take the course.*

**Mode of Instruction:** lecture, films, classroom discussion of assigned readings, student-led activities, exams, and essay assignment

**Texts:**

Conrad Schirokauer & Miranda Brown, A Brief History of Chinese Civilization, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.  
 Frederick Mote, Intellectual Foundation of China, Second Edition  
 Stephen Durrant, The Cloudy Mirror: Tension and Conflict in the Writings of Sima Qian  
 Michael Loewe, Faith, Myth, and Reason in Han China  
 Susan Whitfield, Life Along the Silk Road

**Requirements:**

**Class Participation:** You are expected to do all required readings **before** class. Each student should serve as a **discussion leader** once: Find a couple of **quotations** from a primary or secondary source other than the textbook, and use them to facilitate class discussion of issues relevant to the reading of the day. Attendance will be taken throughout the semester, and performance will be noted.

**Term Papers:** There are **TWO** essay assignments. Each paper should be **5-7 pages, typed, double-spaced**, using **12-point** font, with appropriate **documentation** by using footnotes to indicate the author, title of book/article, and page number of your source

material every time you cite, paraphrase, or summarize a scholarly work in your paper. Put **page number** on the upper right-hand corner and **staple** on the upper left-hand corner. Late papers will be penalized, as will spelling and grammatical errors. Observe the school regulation concerning **plagiarism**. Grading is based on both form and content.

First Essay Assignment:

You should consult a primary source; for example, *Analects*, *Mencius*, *Hsün-tzu (Xunzi)*, *Chuang-tzu (Zhuangzi)*, *Tao-te ching*, *Han Fei-tzu (Han Feizi)*, *Historical Records (Shih-chi)*, etc. You should also consult at least one outside scholarly source in addition to the required readings. Your essay should address one of the following issues:

- 1) The Eastern Zhou was a period of political, economic, and social breakdown. Confucianism, Taoism, and Legalism all proposed measures to cope with the crisis either on a personal level or for the sake of state building. Analyze one school of thought in the historical context of Eastern Zhou. Or, if you prefer, analyze one school in comparison with another Axial Age philosophy.
- 2) Compare and contrast the Confucian and Taoist modes of life. Why are they considered to be compatible components of the Chinese civilization, despite the apparent differences?
- 3) Tensions can be found in many aspects of Sima Qian's life and writing, some moral, some political, some philosophical, some historiographical. Identify one kind of tension and analyze it, using specific chapters of *Shiji (Historical Records)* as your reference.
- 4) What, in your opinion, characterizes the Chinese historiographical tradition represented by *Shiji*? How did Sima Qian handle the issue of subjectivity versus objectivity as a historian? Was Sima Qian too much of a storyteller and too little of a historian? Or, was he brilliant as both? Cite evidence from *Shiji* to support your argument.

Second Essay Assignment:

Write a comparative essay on one aspect of Han and Tang history; for example, religion, philosophy, politics, foreign relations, gender, literary and artistic expressions, science and technology, social structure, land tenure, commerce, taxation, military, etc. Consult at least two outside sources as well as the required readings. You are encouraged to visit the Asian Art Museum and incorporate your observations of the exhibit in your essay.

FYI:

*Bibliography of Asian Studies* (published annually) is a great index to publications in the Asian field, and is available in the Reference Room in our Library as well as online.

The following scholarly journals are available in our library:

*Journal of the American Oriental Society*

*The China Quarterly*

*Chinese Culture*

*Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews*  
*Daedalus (occasional coverage of China)*  
*Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*  
*Journal of Asian History*  
*The Journal of Asian Studies*  
*Journal of Social Sciences (occasional coverage of China)*  
*Late Imperial China*  
*Modern China (occasional coverage of late imperial China)*  
*Philosophy East and West (occasional coverage of China)*  
*positions: east asia cultures critique*  
*Renditions: A Chinese-English Translation Magazine (primary sources)*  
*Signs (feminist journal, occasional coverage of China)*  
*Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies*

**Exams:** There are **TWO** in-class exams, including multiple choice, map, identification of terms, and/or essay questions. Study guides will be distributed prior to the exams. As the exams are designed around lecture/discussion and may cover substantial materials outside of the assigned readings, irregular attendance will significantly affect your performance. **No make-up exams** will be given without compelling reason.

Performance Characteristics to Guide Grading of Essays:

(Based on the criteria of CSET: Social Science Exam)

- \* **PURPOSE:** The extent to which the student responds to the questions/assignments charge in relation to relevant subject matter requirements.
- \* **SUBJECT MATTER KNOWLEDGE:** The application of accurate subject matter knowledge as described in the relevant subject matter requirements.
- \* **SUPPORT:** The appropriateness and quality of the supporting evidence in relation to the relevant subject matter requirements.
- \* **DEPTH AND BREADTH OF UNDERSTANDING:** The degree to which the essay demonstrates understanding of the relevant subject matter requirements.

**Grading:**

Term papers: 45%

Exams: 45%

Class participation: 10%

93 & up	A	90-92	A-	87-89	B+	83-86	B
80-82	B-	77-79	C+	73-76	C	70-72	C-
67-69	D+	63-66	D	60-62	D-	below 60	F

All requirements have to be fulfilled to get a passable grade. "Incomplete" will be granted only upon written request, with good reason, and when the student has completed and passed at least 75% of the course requirements. "WU" (Unauthorized Withdrawal) will be assigned if the student fails to fulfill all requirements by the final exam day without filling out a petition for Incomplete or Withdrawal.

**Schedule of Classes:**

8/29: Introduction to the Course

**China in Antiquity: Neolithic, Xia, Shang, and Zhou**

8/31: READ: Brief History, 1-16

9/5: READ: Brief History, 16-32

*Sign up to schedule class activities*

**The Age of Philosophers: Confucianism, Taoism, Legalism, and Other Schools**

9/7: READ: Intellectual Foundations, xi-25

9/12: DISCUSS: Brief History, 33-35, 38-42; Intellectual Foundations, 26-58

9/14: DISCUSS: Brief History, 42-45; Intellectual Foundations, 59-76

9/19: DISCUSS: Brief History, 35-37; Intellectual Foundations, 77-98

9/21: DISCUSS: Brief History, 46-47; Intellectual Foundations, 99-114

**The Founding of the Confucian-Legalist State: Qin and Han**

9/26: READ: Brief History, 51-55

9/28: READ: Brief History, 56-80

10/3: READ: Faith, Myth and Reason, 144-169

10/5: ***FIRST EXAM***

**The Chinese Historiographical Tradition: Sima Qian**

10/10: READ: Cloudy Mirror, ix-27, 149-151

10/12: READ: Cloudy Mirror, 29-69

10/17: DISCUSS: Cloudy Mirror, 71-122

10/19: DISCUSS: Cloudy Mirror, 123-147

**Belief System in Han China**

10/24: DISCUSS: Faith, Myth and Reason, 1-47

10/26: DISCUSS: Faith, Myth and Reason, 48-90

10/31: DISCUSS: Faith, Myth and Reason, 91-143

11/2: DISCUSS: Faith, Myth and Reason, 170-190

***FIRST ESSAY DUE***

**Decline of Confucianism and Period of Disunity: Six Dynasties**

11/7: READ: Brief History, 85-105

11/9: Film: *Buddhism in China* (# 84556) (30 min.)

**From Aristocracy to Bureaucracy: Sui and Tang**

11/14: READ: Brief History, 107-123

11/16: READ: Brief History, 123-133

11/20-25: Thanksgiving. No Classes.

11/28: Film: *Silk Road—The Glories of Ancient Ch'ang-an* (# 89839) (51 min.)

11/30: ***SECOND EXAM***

**Daily Life in Tang China**

12/5: DISCUSS: Life Along the Silk Road, 1-54

12/7: DISCUSS: Life Along the Silk Road, 55-112

12/12: DISCUSS: Life Along the Silk Road, 113-173

12/14: DISCUSS: Life Along the Silk Road, 174-231

**12/19: *SECOND ESSAY DUE IN MY OFFICE, SCI 265A, 10 am-12 noon*  
(ABSOLUTELY NO EXTENSION)**

1/3: Grades due.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year