

CHINESE LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE GUIDELINES FOR HONORS STUDENTS

The Chinese language and literature program at ASU, now to be offered in the School of International Letters and Cultures (SILC), was set up in the late 1960s for students who wish to take up the challenge of learning a language and a culture that is vastly different from the languages and cultures of Europe and America. While encountering anything foreign to one's upbringing is enriching, the study of Chinese—an uninflected modern language, without conjugations, declensions, or tenses, but with tonal distinctions for lexical meanings, and with a writing system that utilizes imagistic graphs rather than an alphabet or a syllabary—has proven to be especially so. In the past four decades of its existence, the program has produced a good number of alumni who have repeatedly testified to the different ways the study of Chinese language and literature have made whatever they eventually do professionally so much more meaningful and rewarding.

The Chinese curriculum emphasizes proficiency in reading, writing and speaking Mandarin and in reading classical Chinese. It provides an in-depth understanding of the fundamentals of the rich Chinese cultural tradition, centered on primary Chinese texts (in Chinese and in English translation) from the literary, intellectual and religious cultures of Chinese-speaking societies. These texts include visual and written materials on, among other things:

- linguistics
- literary theory and history
- film and media
- religions and thought
- urban culture

Students in the program have a number of options available to enhance their education through study abroad: <https://international.clas.asu.edu/studyabroad>. Highly-motivated students interested in learning Chinese to professional-level proficiency are encouraged to inquire about the Chinese Language Flagship Program. Students with higher levels of linguistic competency may enroll in targeted courses (conducted in Chinese) offered as part of the Chinese Flagship track: <https://international.clas.asu.edu/chineseflagship>.

For those of you from Barrett Honors College who are considering participating in the Chinese language and literature program, the following three points should be helpful.

(1) Learning a language in an academic environment is not the same as learning from, say, Berlitz. Our language program seeks to provide you with an infrastructure of the Chinese language that will help you make sense of the repetitive oral drills, and will help you take off in your fluency once you get into a Chinese speaking environment. We would like all our serious students to go to China for a period of time, and we have over the years set up a number of ways for you to do so during your time here. Your advisor has up-to-date information on the many opportunities.

(2) As is proper at a university, our program also stresses reading and writing, what language pedagogues call “the latter two skills.” Experience has also shown that learning to read and write

modern Chinese well will greatly help your listening and speaking (the first two skills). Our language majors are required also to learn classical Chinese, so that they will begin to access China's past for themselves.

(3) The program in Chinese is rather unique in that it encourages majors to look into studying another East Asian language or culture (i.e., Japanese or Korean). Again, long experience has shown that this allows the student to develop a broader concept of China's part of the world, and to come to a deeper understanding China's language and culture through comparison and contrast.

Our program has always prided itself on the personal contact with its students. You are very much encouraged to make an appointment with the advisor (see below) or anyone teaching about China in SILC for that matter, to get personally acquainted.

HONORS ENRICHMENT CONTRACTS

There are a number of courses in the Chinese program you can enroll with Honors Enrichment Contract. All upper-level courses, depending on the semester they are offered, can be considered, including, 300 and 400, some 400 (sometimes combined with 500), CHI/SLC 120, and some 200- and 300-level language courses upon the approval of the instructor.

Examples:

CHI 120 Introduction to Chinese Culture
CHI 307-308 Introduction to Literary Chinese I and II
CHI 321-322 Chinese Literature I and II
CHI 333 China
CHI 336 Interpreting China's Classics
CHI 338 The Daoist Bible: Daode jing
CHI 345 Chinese Film and Civilization
CHI 380 The Chinese Language
CHI 450 Classical Prose
CHI 451-452 Chinese Cultural History I and II
CHI 461 Classical Vernacular Performance Literature
CHI 470 Modern Chinese Literature and Culture
CHI 482 History of Chinese Language

Upper-level (especially 400 or above) courses may require advanced reading knowledge of Chinese. Students are advised to contact instructors before making decisions.

HONORS THESIS

For those who want to complete an honors thesis, the faculty in Chinese language and literature is qualified to direct you in a wide variety of potential topics. Current courses offered in the undergraduate level include traditional literature (both poetry and fiction), modern literature

(specializing in film studies), religion and thoughts, and linguistics. Students from Barrett Honors College are encouraged to take these courses to discover for themselves the specific topics they would consider researching for their honors thesis, along with the instructor with whom they would like to do their work. Again, students are more than welcome to meet with anyone on our faculty.

Guidelines for Honors Theses

To successfully complete the thesis as Barrett Honors major in Chinese, a student must meet both Chinese and Barrett Honors requirements. An honors thesis can be done either in a traditional written thesis or in a creative project, depending on the consent of the student's thesis committee.

1. Students wishing to write an Honors Thesis in the Chinese Program must be Chinese Majors or Minors. For details of major/minor requirements and a major map for Chinese BA, visit: <https://silc.asu.edu/degrees/undergrad>
2. All Barrett students must complete a thesis/creative project information session prior to enrolling in thesis credit (492 or 493). This may be a workshop/session offered by Barrett or an on-line workshop offered via ASU Blackboard through Barrett. For further instructions, go to: <http://barretthonors.asu.edu/academics/thesis-and-creative-project/>
3. The Thesis Committee should be made up of the thesis director (an ASU faculty-line member) from the Chinese Program in the School of International Letters and Cultures and at least one other committee member who does not have to be an ASU lecturer or faculty-line member. TAs and graduate students may not serve on committees.
4. It is the student's responsibility to formulate the topic which will result in a thesis or a project of original scholarship akin to but shorter and lighter than that of an M.A., to select a Chair in consultation with the Chinese Honors Advisor, to request another member to serve on her or his committee, to submit the necessary forms and to ascertain and inform the chair of the committee of all Honors College requirements and deadlines.
5. The topic can be chosen from any aspects of Chinese culture and society in which our Chinese faculty members have their expertise. For information about the faculty areas of research, visit: <https://silc.asu.edu/about/people>.
6. An Honors Thesis/Project Prospectus is to be submitted to the Chinese Honors Advisor, Young Kyun Oh, by October 1 for a defense in the following spring semester, or by March 1 for a defense the following fall. The prospectus should contain the student's contact information, the topic as well as a working title for the thesis; a list of Committee Chair and Second Reader, and a tentative timeline (first draft, second draft, defense). This may be the same as the prospectus which the student submits to the Honors College, as long as it conveys the information described above.

THE ADVISOR

For the 2016-17 academic year, anyone from Barrett Honors College interested in studying Chinese language and literature is encouraged to set up an appointment with the honors advisor for Chinese, Young Kyun Oh (youngoh@asu.edu, LL449B, 480-440-0779).