



CET Syllabus of Record

Program: January Term Intensive Chinese Language in Beijing

Course Code / Title: (BJ/LANG 302) Advanced Low Chinese

Total Hours: 92

Recommended Credits: 5

Primary Discipline: Chinese Language

Language of Instruction: Chinese

Pre-requisites / Requirements: 2 years of previous university-level Chinese language study.

Final placement is at the discretion of the Academic Director.

Description

This course is designed for non-native learners of Chinese who have completed approximately two years of regularly paced college-level Chinese instruction and whose Chinese proficiency has reached an Intermediate level both orally and in writing. Students should be ready to break through to an Advanced level, one in which they can independently and successfully fulfill complicated and culturally intensive communication tasks with confidence. Following ACTFL guidelines, this proficiency-oriented course comprises a variety of integrated classes. Components include a group class, drills and discussion, 1:1s and 1:2s, a Language Practicum and Chinese skits.

Advanced grammatical knowledge, structural refinement, and vocabulary development are integrated with and contextualized in cultural and societal content. While much of the reading materials are authentic and in the format of formal written language, the necessity of oral proficiency improvement is also emphasized. In other words, this is not a reading class, but a class to boost students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in a comprehensive and balanced way. Communicative and interactive methods are used, and students learn cultural knowledge and come to understand grammatical structures with intensive and challenging questions and answers.

This class also focuses on the integration of appropriate grammatical structures, advanced-level vocabulary, and cultural awareness in a fast-paced question-answer format. When answering most of the questions, students are required to express their ideas in short paragraphs, namely, three or four well-connected sentences. Fluency and accuracy are also emphasized. In-depth discussions are also used as an enhancement to the group class. During class discussions, students are expected to participate creatively and discuss or debate cultural topics intensively with fellow students or invited guests who are native Chinese speakers. By so doing, students comprehensively develop their interpretational, interpersonal, and presentational skills and enhance their understanding of culture, comparison, and community. When discussions are academic, students are expected to speak in a more formal way by using formal structures, "upper-level" words, and idioms suitable to the topic.

All classes are conducted in a Mandarin-only learning environment and place special emphasis on the functional nature of language, allowing students to rapidly develop their language skills and accumulate a wide body of Chinese cultural knowledge.

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Objectives

By completing this course, students are expected to reach an oral proficiency that is equivalent to or higher than Advanced Low of the standard OPI, to have a good command of the Chinese language in reading and writing, and to be able to fulfill communication tasks independently. More specifically, through their participation in this course, students are able to:

- Significantly elevate their working vocabulary, increasing it to an estimated 2,400 words and phrases, and understand associated synonyms, near-synonyms and antonyms.
- Comprehend short authentic Chinese materials of common topics in different styles, both orally and in writing.
- Be ready for independent study in Chinese society and culture.
- Make oral or written presentations in a formal or semi-formal style that are well-organized, culturally appropriate, with rich and appropriate vocabulary.
- Communicate with native Mandarin speakers orally at natural speeds and with accurate understanding of common idioms.
- Know enough cultural and societal information about China to ensure smooth communication and comparison.
- Know the characteristics of the Chinese internet language, including the jargon and abbreviations that allow them to participate in cyber media discussions.
- Establish strong strategies for future study.

Course Requirements

This is a high-intensity course. Requirements include:

- Participation & Preparation. As outlined in the CET Attendance Policy, students must attend and actively engage in group class, one-on-one sessions, one-on-two sessions, the language practicum, and skits. Students are expected to thoroughly prepare for each day's lessons and for written and oral tests. This includes but is not limited to learning new vocabulary, listening to assigned recordings, previewing texts, reviewing grammar notes, and completing all written assignments.
- One-on-One: One-on-one sessions take place daily five times a week. Carefully-designed open-ended questions are used during the session to help students further develop their vocabulary range, linguistic spontaneity, and fluency in speech. Students are required to express their ideas in well-connected long paragraphs. During these sessions students and the instructor use in-depth discussion of course content to increase student ability to create and express ideas in Chinese and practice their pronunciation.
- One-on-Two: One-on-two sessions take place daily five times a week. Two students work with one instructor to fine-tune pronunciation and increase fluency. The one-on-two class uses materials developed by CET instructors that incorporate common phrases from student life so that participants may be able to apply them in context directly after practice. Students discuss and debate a topic under the guidance of the teacher to deepen their understanding of the content of the text.
- Practicum and Report: The Language Practicum combines the vocabulary and grammar learned through texts with out-of-classroom practice. Teachers take students to locations such as the college

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campus, the mall, historic hutong, and museums to explore Chinese society, economy, politics, culture, daily life, and other areas of interest. Students are then connected with local Chinese people to discuss their findings, thoughts, and China-based perspectives. Students share the results of their practicum with classmates upon return in formal reports that make use of new vocabulary and grammar structures.

- Chinese Skits: Each class performs a skit about topics related to their whole semester's theme. Students are encouraged to use new grammar and vocabulary, and present their performance to classmates, roommates, and instructors. Skits encourage exchange and increase student's knowledge about Chinese culture. Through these skits, students hear the language used in natural yet advanced, formal yet accessible ways.
- Listening Intensive: Biweekly sessions, arranged by level. Students watch videos or movie clips, then discuss. May include idiom (*chengyu*) stories.
- Practice with Chinese roommate. Students are expected to work with their Chinese roommate to complete speaking exercises.

All of the above, with the exception of practice with Chinese roommates, constitute graded components of the course.

Grading

The final grade is determined as follows:

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| • Class participation | 25% |
| • One-on-one and one-on-two | 10% |
| • Written homework | 10% |
| • Daily quiz | 10% |
| • Weekly oral tests and skits | 10% |
| • Listening intensive and language practicum | 5% |
| • Final exam | 30% |

Textbook

Zhou, Zhiping, Xin Zou, and Jincheng Liu. *Eyes on China: An Intermediate-Advanced Reader of Modern Chinese*. 《我看中国》 Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019. (8-10 units)

Additional Resources

Supplementary materials prepared by CET instructors, including but not limited to articles about Chinese holidays, Chinese songs, and *chengyu* stories, and other articles and short videos related to class content.

Overview of Course Content

Conversational topics

- Dragon and Panda
- Soft power

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- Copycat products
- Flies and tigers
- Relationships, human relations, and rule of law
- Fellow-villager
- Thinking behind the "study abroad craze"
- Is the moon round in a foreign country?
- Chinese festivals
- Significance of traditional festivals becoming legal festivals
- It is better choose a small bed in a big city than a large bed in a small city
- Shenzhen, urbanization, and China's maritime development

Cultural, economic, and political topics

- The symbolic significance of dragons and pandas in Chinese culture
- The influence of US soft power on China and China's countermeasures
- The relationship between the concept of "intellectual property" and the proliferation of *shanzhai* products
- The impact of media freedom on corruption in China
- "Circle culture" brought by hometown concept
- China's tendency to study abroad at a younger age
- The relationship between festivals and religion in China and the United States and their impact
- Can making traditional festivals official holidays boost domestic demand and achieve cultural revival?
- Choose to stay in a big city or a small city? What are the pros and cons of each?
- The impact of urbanization represented by Shenzhen
- Problems caused by the urban-rural divide in China
- The impact of Shenzhen's development on the revival of the Maritime Silk Road.