

CET Syllabus of Record



Program: Intensive Chinese Language in Beijing

Course Title: (BJ/LANG 401) Advanced Chinese

Total Hours: 176

Recommended Credits: 9

Primary Discipline: Chinese Language

Language of Instruction: Chinese

Prerequisites/Requirements: 3 years of previous study

Description

This course is designed for non-native learners of Chinese who have taken approximately three years of regularly paced college-level Chinese, and have reached an oral proficiency level equivalent to an Intermediate High on the standard OPI, as well as a similar level of reading and writing proficiency.

Following the ACTFL guidelines, this course aims to use authentic materials as texts so as to help students raise their Chinese communication skills comprehensively to a true advanced level. This will help students get ready to pursue graduate studies at a Chinese university, conduct academic research in China, and/or work in a Chinese professional environment. Component classes include larger sessions, smaller sessions, and one-on-one conversation sessions. Some supplementary instruction, such as Chinese movies, participation in academic events, and language practicum, is also included.

Larger Sessions: This class meets for two hours per day. Since the majority of reading materials are authentic (typically masterpieces by famous Chinese authors), the language style may be very formal and different from what students have learned before. In addition to the normal question-answer format, the instructor also uses a style-conversion method, guiding students to convert formal expressions to neutral or colloquial expressions and vice versa. In so doing, students are expected to have a clear style consciousness and choose appropriate styles for different situations and different language tasks. As for grammatical structures, a great attention is given to the unique prosodic requirements of the Chinese language or the so-called prosodic grammar. For example, students learn the rules and apply them to making four character/syllable framed phrases. The goal is to speak more elegantly, and write more stylishly. Although formal written style comprises a critical part of this course, students are also guided to develop their informal or colloquial communication skills by watching video clips that use real-life colloquial Chinese and discussing their cultural implications.

Smaller Sessions: This class meets for two hours per day. Different from lower level courses, the first hour of smaller session is designed to consolidate the communication skills learned from the previous day. This is because it is difficult for even a well-educated native speaker to use sophisticated and stylish structures with appropriate vocabulary in prompt speech without preparation. Therefore, oral assignments are given on the previous day and students are required to make well-organized speeches with sophisticated structure and stylish vocabulary on given topics. Then the smaller session resumes to focus on the

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structures and vocabulary students have just learned. In addition to normal question-answer format, fast-paced sentence conversions are done both orally and in writing.

One-on-One: This class meets for at least 25 minutes each afternoon. Carefully-designed open-ended questions are used to help students further develop their range of language, spontaneity, and fluency in speech. The student is expected to decide a research topic of his/her interests in consultation with the instructors by the end of the second week of the program. Afterwards, students are required to talk to the instructor about the development of their research projects.

All classes are conducted in a Mandarin-only learning environment and place special emphasis on the functional nature of language. Full use is made of Beijing's positive cultural, linguistic, and geographical surroundings, allowing students to rapidly develop their language skills and accumulate a wide body of Chinese cultural knowledge.

Objectives

The goal of this course is to ensure that each and every student reaches an oral proficiency at the level equivalent to or higher than the Advanced Low of the standard OPI, and a similar level for communication skills in reading and writing. More specifically, students are able to do the following:

- Comprehend academic papers on various topics
- Read articles of common cultural and societal topics at a speed of 200 characters per minute
- Understand and appreciate the beauty and cultural implications of short stories and prose
- Write short academic papers that meet a publisher's standards
- Make an elegant speech at formal occasions such as seminars or symposiums
- Tell sophisticated and vivid stories both orally and in writing
- Increasing their vocabulary to a total of 4,500 terms or more and create their own four-character-frame phrases acceptable to native Chinese speakers

Course Requirements

This is a high-intensity course. Student requirements include:

- Knowing well new vocabulary for the next day's daily quiz
- Listening to the recording of the text that will be taught the next day
- Previewing the text of the new lesson
- Reviewing grammar notes to aid understanding of the text
- Working with Chinese roommates to complete speaking exercises
- Composing and completing written assignments
- Actively participating in all classroom activities
- Attending afternoon individual conversation sessions with a teacher
- Preparing for weekly written and oral quizzes
- Participating in language practicum

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Classroom participation and performance, weekly written and oral quizzes, daily dictations and comprehensive midterm and final exams are also used to evaluate student progress.

Methods of Evaluation

The final grade is determined as follows:

Participation 20%

Individual sessions 5%

Written homework 15%

Daily quizzes 10%

Weekly written tests 10%

Weekly oral tests 5%

Midterm written exam 10%

Midterm oral exam 5%

Final written exam 10%

Final oral proficiency interview 10%

Primary Texts

Feng, Shengli. *Comprehensive Chinese (Advanced Writing 1): On the Present and Past* [说古道今]. Beijing, China: Higher Education Publishing, 2007.

Additional Resources

Additional materials edited and prepared by CET faculty, including masterpieces of modern and contemporary Chinese literature, movies, lectures, and other internet resources.

Outline of Course Content

Every Friday, students take a written and oral examination on that week's course content.