

**COURSE SYLLABUS**  
**CHN441: Fourth Year Reading and Writing: Advanced Topics I**  
***Web-based advanced Chinese course***  
**PURPOSE / OBJECTIVES OF COURSE**

This course is designed to strengthen student skills in reading and writing at the Advanced level of the ACTFL language proficiency descriptions, and to push students toward the Advanced High (emerging Superior) level. Students will gain reading and writing skills in standard (Mandarin) Chinese through work with advanced authentic texts with carefully designed exercises designed to guide comprehension and to strengthen reading strategies. Specifically, students will, as a result of this course:

1. Become aware of the skills and strategies available for improving reading ability in Chinese.
2. Be able to understand main ideas, most supporting details, and argumentative structure in expository and lightly analytical Chinese newspaper and magazine reports, opinion pieces, and other texts on advanced topics directed at an educated general readership.
3. Be familiarized with Chinese computer technology and the World Wide Web.
4. Become acquainted with aspects of Chinese culture and social behavior that relate to the texts.
5. Develop the ability to engage in analysis and argumentation in Chinese by making substantive contributions to asynchronous text-based discussions with peers and instructor in Web-based forums.
6. Develop the ability to compose grammatical and organized essays in Chinese related to the above topics through a process of peer publication and editing.
7. Develop the ability to assess the level of a selected article in Chinese, and analyze the argumentation and other features of the article using techniques that one has learned in this course.
8. Contribute original written posts and essays of quantity and quality sufficient to meet Writing Intensive (WI) course standards, the equivalent of 24 total pages or approximately 7200 characters.

**TEXTS & MATERIALS**

**Part 1: Moodle materials**

A series of specially authored reading lessons based on authentic materials, developed under the sponsorship and guidance of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), comprise the text of the course. These lessons and all required materials are integrated into the course Web site.

## TOPICS (Course Content)

1. Introduction and Orientation
2. Space Technology
3. A Nostalgic Look Back at Spring Festival
4. China's "Fierce Dragon" Jet Fighter
5. The Adultification of Children
6. The Emergence of the Middle Class
7. Class Project

The articles to be covered in the course are characterized by a mix of linguistic functions at the upper end of the Advanced proficiency level. In these materials, Advanced language functions such as narration, description, and comparison feature relatively technical, low-frequency vocabulary and complex syntax featuring a distinctly written (书面语 *shūmiànyǔ*) style; students will learn strategies to approach the language of this type. Some of the texts make forays into linguistic functions at the Superior level including exposition of abstract/hypothetical argument.

### **Part 2:** One-on-one tutoring materials (access via Laulima)

The weekly one-on-one tutoring sessions are an internal part of this course. It is **MANDATORY** and counts towards **15%** of the final grade. By integrating the two 30-minute sessions into the curriculum, the students will have abundant exposure to both reading and writing instructions in addition to the existing online resources on Moodle. The one-on-one tutoring sessions for CHN 441 will be conducted in the following format:

Time: 30 minutes per student

Date: Every Thursday and Friday

Content: Reading for Thursday; Writing instruction on Friday

The reading materials for reading sessions will be uploaded to Lauiliam Resources Folder. The writing sessions will be dedicated to revising your unit essays.

## **COURSE WRITING REQUIREMENTS**

This course requires a significant amount of written production. Text is the only means of communication in the course; students use Web-based forums to discuss course texts and the associated online exercises they have completed. Many of these exercises focus on the usage, language patterns, and argumentative structure of the source texts, bringing those features to students' attention as potential expressive tools to use in their own writing. The instructor participates fully in the online discussions, offering answers to student questions, and challenging students to support their positions. In order to receive full marks, students must make substantive contributions to the discussion in each unit.

One of the chief learning outcomes of the course targets the development of the

ability to write native-like argumentative essays approximately three pages in length. Students compose essays using the Draft Book function in Moodle, which allows them to work on the essay over time. Each essay requires the submission of at least two drafts. When the first draft is handed in using the Draft Book, it is automatically published as a thread in the Essay Discussion Forum in the current unit. Students are required to read and respond to the first drafts of at least two of their peers, offering comments and questions. In addition, the instructor offers each student individual feedback on the draft, giving suggestions on usage, argumentation, and grammar, and publishing the feedback in the same thread. The student author returns to the Draft Book to perform revisions, and when s/he hands in the second draft, it is published inline in the original thread. A second round of commenting follows. Following this iterative process through five units, students are able significantly to improve their written expression in Chinese at the Advanced level.

## **WEB/COMPUTER LITERACY**

Based on our experience, we feel it is necessary at the outset, during the Welcome and Orientation unit, to review and/or familiarize the students with computer literacy involving Chinese. We also encourage students to use the Web as a resource for research, e.g. for finding cultural resources.

## **GRADING & STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

<b>Class project-midterm</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Class project-final</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Essay (5 units)</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Moodle exercise (5 units)</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>One-on-one tutoring</b>	<b>15%</b>

**Moodle exercise & one-on-one tutoring:** The course is designed to take place mainly on the Web with additional tutoring sessions with a teacher from an affiliated institute in China. Students can visit the class Web site from any computer of their choice, with the important qualification that they use computers properly equipped with Chinese language software (see below). Students must log in at least 5 times a week, ready to read and write in Chinese. Students must read the instructions in the Class Schedule for each unit thoroughly and be prepared to interact with classmates. The class will progress through a series of task-based activities. Punctuality in submitting assignments is of vital importance. Points will be deducted from late assignments. The Moodle exercise in each unit counts towards 8% of the final grade and makes up a total of 40%. The one-on-one tutoring sessions are mandatory. Thus, the attendance will be closely recorded and count towards 15% of the final grade. If you can not go to one of the sessions, please email Jen Laoshi in

advance at [hjen@hawaii.edu](mailto:hjen@hawaii.edu) with a reason. Failure to do so will result in an absence and have a negative impact on your grade.

**Essays:** The Essay is the culminating assignment in each unit, which counts towards 6% of the final grade and makes up a total of 30%. It represents a carefully considered reaction to the lesson text, published on the course Web site for the benefit of the whole class. Response to at least **two** classmates' essays in each unit is an essential element of the course. Each essay should be at least **800** characters in length. The specific schedule varies from unit to unit. But basically, students will have at least one chance to revise the essays with feedback provided by their one-on-one teachers. Only the revised version will be graded. Thus, it is important for the students to discuss the revision with their one-on-one teachers.

**Class Project (Midterm & final):** Students search the internet and select one article in Chinese. Students need (1) to assess the text level and provide a simple analysis of the elements that determine its level; (2) describe the processes and strategies that one has applied while reading the article; (3) Outline the main idea, structure and/or organization, and summarize the main idea for each section/paragraph; (4) In Chinese, write a 读后感 *duhougan* (reaction to/reflection on the selected article). Students should start work on their final projects by the beginning of the prior instructional unit (by the latest). The last week of the semester is set aside for students to finish this project.

**Grades:** 100-97%=A+,      96-93%=A,      92-90%=A-;  
89-87%=B+,      86-83%=B,      82-80%=B-;  
79-77%=C+,      76-73%=C,      72-70%=C-;  
60-69%=D;  
0-59% = F.

For those students who have chosen the CR/NC grading option, work that would receive a grade of "C" or better is needed to receive credit.

## TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Students should have basic knowledge of how to use a computer with Chinese language applications, including how to surf the Web and how to input Chinese text.

## PREREQUISITES

Students must have earned credits in CHN401 or 402 (or equivalent). Please contact the instructor if you have any questions.