



Bachelor of Arts in Chinese Course Handbook

Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies

Academic Year 2025-26

Course Co-ordinator – Professor Tian Yuan Tan

This handbook applies to students who, in Michaelmas 2025, are starting their course (for information relating to the FPE), or are entering the Final Honour School (for information relating to the FHS). The information in this handbook may be different for students starting in other years.

The Examination Regulations relating to this course are available here ([Exam Regulations](#)).

If there is a conflict between information in this handbook and the Examination Regulations then you should follow the Examination Regulations. If you have any concerns please contact the Senior Academic Administrator, [Edmund Howard](#).

The information in this handbook is accurate as at Michaelmas Term 2025; however, it may be necessary for changes to be made in certain circumstances, as explained at www.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges. If such changes are made the faculty will publish a new version of this handbook together with a list of the changes and students will be informed.

General faculty-wide information can be found in the [General Undergraduate Handbook](#).

This Handbook

The handbook sets out the basic framework for the BA in Chinese. You should consult the current edition of the Examination Regulations for information regarding your course. The information in this handbook should be read in conjunction with:

- the Faculty’s general Undergraduate handbook;
- the Examination Conventions and Rubrics;
- the Examination Regulations;
- the [University Student Handbook](#);
- your college handbook.

If there is a conflict between information in this handbook and the Examination regulations, then you should follow the Examination regulations.

Information relating to Chinese as a subsidiary language can be found in the AMES UG Subsidiary Languages Handbook for this year.

Comments and criticism of the handbook are always welcome; they should be sent to the Director of Undergraduate Studies or the Senior Academic Administrator, [Edmund Howard](#).

Version history

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Introduction

The BA in Chinese is a four-year course designed to give students an understanding of both traditional and modern China, based on a knowledge of the classical and the modern Chinese languages.

Programme Aims

The aims of the BA Chinese are:

- To give students a good knowledge of the modern Chinese language both written and spoken.
- To train students to read Classical Chinese, and understand it in its historical and cultural context.
- To provide a strong foundation in the interdisciplinary study of China's history, society and cultures.
- To train students to think critically, write effectively and undertake independent research.

Learning Outcomes

On completing the course students should be able to:

- Read, write and speak modern Chinese in a range of registers.
- Read and understand classical Chinese texts.
- Engage with scholarship on China and interpret issues in Chinese studies to a broader audience.
- Approach the study of China and other topics with an independent, critical mindset and write effectively about them.

Course Outline

Year 1 (First Preliminary Examination)

Students will study modern standard Chinese, classical Chinese and Chinese history and culture.

Examination

You sit the First Preliminary Examination (FPE; a.k.a. Prelims), at the end of your first year. You will take three examination papers:

- Chinese: Modern (including an oral component)
- Chinese: Classical
- East Asia Survey: China

Overview of teaching and learning

For **modern Chinese**, the textbook we use to introduce our students to all aspects of basic grammar is *Practical Chinese Reader*, Books I-II, Beijing, 1981. Although more than 40 years old, this textbook still offers one of the most thorough introductions to Chinese grammar. In

addition to grammar classes and language tutorials that focus on writing and reading skills, in the first year you will also have oral classes in small groups, plus 3 hours a week working in the classroom on pronunciation, intonation, fluency, listening and interpreting skills. The goal here is to enable you to communicate effectively in given situations and to familiarise you with a Chinese language environment. The spoken, written, and writing elements all reinforce one another and are examined at Prelims in a written and an oral paper.

By the end of the first year, you will have covered the full range of basic grammar and begun your experience of reading original material in modern Chinese. You will have made a start in formulating what you need to say in spoken Chinese. By this point, you will have an active vocabulary of 900 characters and approximately 1,500 lexical items; your passive vocabulary will be larger than this.

You are expected to learn to write the Chinese characters by hand. A solid foundation in writing characters helps with many other aspects of Chinese language learning, such as vocabulary expansion, grammar intake, reading comprehension, and even in listening and speaking. Learning to write characters using the correct stroke order and direction of the strokes in your own time is a part of the course. You will need to practise this skill regularly, and we expect students to be able to write in Chinese by hand throughout the whole undergraduate course, including in the FPE and final examinations.

For **Classical Chinese**, students will master the basic grammar and vocabulary for reading proficiency. You will learn the fundamental structures and features of the language and read classical Chinese texts. Throughout the academic year, students are expected to acquire a vocabulary of approximately 500 lexical items. Regular quizzes will be administered to monitor your progress and ensure adherence to the rigorous pace of the curriculum. Students will be required to devote considerable time to the constant practice of familiarizing themselves with the usage of individual characters in classical Chinese, and comparing such usage to their application in modern Chinese. By the end of the year, you will be able to read original texts written in simple Classical Chinese.

Students will be expected to develop the skills required to analyse the syntactical structures of classical Chinese sentences and provide accurate translations of these sentences. Building on this foundation, what you will need to move forward in Classical Chinese to prepare for your third and fourth years is further exposure to texts, the continued expansion of your vocabulary, and consolidation of the skills developed in the first year.

For **East Asia Survey: China**, students will attend the East Asian Survey lecture series, and complete four tutorials per term. The tutorials are designed to resonate with the content of the lecture series. This course takes students from prehistory to the present day and includes a wide range of topics in philosophy, history, literature, art, political science, etc. This exposure will give you a background knowledge of China and East Asia that will optimise your engagement in all parts of the course to come (*including* the language components and especially the third-year Classical Chinese course), as well as equipping you for more serious work such as the final-year dissertation. Good attendance and active engagement is therefore key to success on the course overall.

Year 2 (Year Abroad)

You will spend the second year of your course studying at Peking University in the PRC. This will give you contact with Chinese life and Chinese people at a point when you are just about ready to encounter them in their own language. You will continue to study modern Chinese, classical Chinese and Chinese culture and society. You will return to Oxford with greater confidence, some real fluency in speaking the language, and a much clearer sense of what you want to do in the second part of the course.

Before your departure, you will be given two briefing sessions and detailed guidance on matters of official paperwork, costs, and general preparation for this period of overseas study in your first year. For anyone without sufficient resources to cope with the costs whilst abroad, some colleges will help with travel grants, and the Faculty has a small number of hardship travel scholarships, derived from trust funds run by the University.

While on your Year Abroad, you are still Oxford students and as such will be expected to attend classes, consolidate what you have learned, and sit collections as you would at Oxford. You will also write four Year Abroad projects, as detailed below.

Overview of teaching and learning

Your **modern Chinese** classes will be organised by the Year Abroad institution and details of those will be provided to you upon arrival.

Classical Chinese will involve working on a variety of set texts. Students will continue to practice what they learned in their first year, but vocabulary lists will no longer be provided. They will need to be equipped to check dictionaries and prepare their own translations. The passages studied have been carefully selected to illustrate the changes in Classical Chinese over time and to provide students with well-known texts that they can tackle at their level. In addition to Classical instruction, students will be expected to engage in independent work and will need to work on the assigned set texts in their own time.

Year Abroad Projects

In preparation for the third year Modern China course, students will undertake four projects during their time in China or Taiwan. The first two essays will be about visiting a museum and thinking about popular culture. In the second term there is a choice between a piece of historical creative writing and conducting an interview with an older person about their life. The final, capstone essay, is an ethnographic project on a subject of your choice.

While abroad, you will have access to the university library which houses a large collection of secondary material in many languages. Through your Oxford Single Sign-On, you will also have access to all the electronic databases and journals (e.g. SOLO, JSTOR) to which Oxford subscribes.

All of these essays are obligatory and you are expected to keep to the deadlines set.

Years 3 and 4 (Final Honour School)

In your third and fourth years you continue studying Modern and Classical Chinese, and take the core Modern China course. You will also choose between taking two options within

Chinese Studies or taking a subsidiary language. Finally, you will also write a dissertation of no more than 15,000 words.

Examination

You will sit your Final Honour School (FHS) examinations in the final term of your fourth year. All students take a **core** of compulsory papers in Modern Chinese (including oral), Classical Chinese, and the study of Modern China.

You will take ten papers, as follows:

Chinese	Chinese with a subsidiary language
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Modern Chinese I 2. Modern Chinese II 3. Chinese: Oral 4. Classical Chinese I 5. Classical Chinese II 6. Modern China 7. Dissertation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Modern Chinese I 2. Modern Chinese II 3. Chinese: Oral 4. Classical Chinese I 5. Classical Chinese II 6. Modern China 7. Dissertation
Options within Chinese Studies:	Subsidiary Language:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Special Option I: Texts and Essays 9. Special Option II: Texts and Essays 10. Special Option III: Extended Essay 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Subsidiary Language I 9. Subsidiary Language II 10. Subsidiary Language III

More detail on these papers is provided in the descriptions below.

All students complete a **dissertation**, where the choice of topic lies entirely with the student. Past choices have varied from a linguistic analysis of internet language, to a close study of newly discovered ancient texts, to the contemporary art market to the democracy movements in Hong Kong. Students begin investigating the choice of topic in the third year and many will undertake reading and research over the summer, but the bulk of the dissertation writing is done in the final year.

Those taking further options within Chinese Studies will select two **options**. These options involve reading Chinese texts, discussing them, and participating in tutorials. Each option is examined through a single paper that typically involves elements of translation, commentary and essay writing. Students take one option in the 3rd year and one in the 4th year. In the Trinity Term of the 3rd year they write an extended essay in the area of their 3rd-year option. This is a separate exam paper and provides training for the dissertation.

Alternatively, students may choose to take an approved **subsidiary language**: Korean, Japanese, or Tibetan. The option consists of language study, with a focus on reading ability, and tutorials on history and culture. The subsidiary language is assessed through two language papers and one essay paper.

Students should note that not all subsidiary languages and Special Options may be available in a given year.

Special Options to be taught 2025 to 2026:

- China and the World (Prof. Henrietta Harrison)
- Confucius Superstar (Prof. Dirk Meyer)
- Text and Performance in Late Imperial China (Prof. Tian Yuan Tan)
- Life in China under Mao (Dr Mark Czeller)
- Chinese Law and Society (Ms Loveday Liu)

Representing War in Modern China: Media, Memory, and Gender (Dr Bingbing Shi)

Further details of these options are available below

The options which will be available in 2026-2027 will be confirmed in the summer of 2026, but the following are likely to be offered.

- Love and Emotions in Premodern Chinese Literature (Prof. Ted Hui)
- Confucius Superstar (Prof Dirk Meyer)
- Contemporary Cities (Prof. Margaret Hillenbrand)
- China and the World (Dr Mark Czeller)
- Painters on Painting (Prof. Shelagh Vainker)
- Modern Chinese Studies option (TBC)

Subsidiary languages:

For BA Chinese students, the following languages are permitted as subsidiaries.

- Japanese
- Korean
- Sanskrit
- Tibetan

Papers for FPE (Prelims)

All three papers are compulsory. The exam regulations for Prelims can be found [here](#).

Modern Chinese

Terms taught: Michaelmas, Hilary, and Trinity

Taught by: Various tutors, for queries contact Mr. Shio-yun Kan.

Modern Chinese will be examined through a 2.5-hour written exam plus an Oral component.

The written exam will require you to translate English sentences into modern Chinese, with systematic use of both abbreviated (simplified) and unabbreviated (unsimplified or traditional) script. There will also be a passage in Chinese to test your comprehension and a grammar question which will ask you to explain the characteristics of given sentences.

The oral examination is conducted in two parts: a comprehension test conducted in groups (approx. 25 minutes), and an individual test (approx. 25 minutes).

In the comprehension test, you will hear a passage or passages lasting up to five minutes and read twice by a native speaker or speakers. You will be allowed 10 minutes to give written evidence in English that you have understood the material.

In the individual test, you will be required to read aloud a short passage in Chinese selected from texts that you have prepared during your course of study. You will then be asked to answer a few questions based on the text. After this, you will be required to conduct a short conversation in Chinese with the Moderators in a fictional scenario.

Classical Chinese

Terms taught: Michaelmas, Hilary, and Trinity

Taught by: Prof. Ted Hui

Classical Chinese will be examined through one three-hour handwritten paper in Trinity of the first year. The exam will cover a range of texts written in classical Chinese. Students will be expected to produce translations from the prescribed passages and translate short pieces of unseen text.

East Asia Survey: China

Terms taught: Michaelmas, Hilary, and Trinity

Taught by: Various tutors, for queries contact Prof. Ted Hui.

The exam consists of three essays chosen from a total of eight to ten questions, which cover aspects of Chinese society past and present, including religious practices, political culture, social and economic history, literature, and philosophy.

Papers for FHS

The exam regulations for FHS can be found [here](#).

Modern Chinese

Type of Paper	Compulsory Papers
Year of Study	Years 3 and 4
Term Taught	MT, HT, TT
Taught by	Language Lecturers*

*For further information, please contact Mr. Shio-yun Kan.

Modern Chinese language teaching primarily supports the Prose Composition (Modern Chinese I), Unprepared Translation from Modern Chinese (Modern Chinese II) and Spoken Chinese (Oral) papers. The latter is weighted at half a paper. These three papers are based on a functional, rather than literary, approach to the language and will be taught throughout the third and fourth years. The prose composition paper, which must be written by hand in Chinese, is intended to help you develop your active vocabulary and ability to express yourself in written Chinese.

The translation paper is designed to reflect training in reading expository and discursive writing, including newspaper styles. In the final examination your skill in translating the Chinese language as it appears in contemporary publications in China and Taiwan and/or Hong Kong will be examined.

Spoken Chinese is an oral test that exercises three distinct and important skills: understanding sustained passages of spoken Chinese; formulating your own thoughts in the language at length; and negotiating two-way communication on behalf of other people. The language teaching offered through the third and fourth years will prepare you specifically in each of those skills.

Classical Chinese I

Type of Paper	Compulsory Paper
Year of Study	Years 3 and 4
Term Taught	MT, HT, TT
Taught by	Prof. Dirk Meyer

This is a comment and essay question paper. It is devoted to texts that would have formed part of the cultural capital of literate persons in pre-modern China. Reading these texts will thus familiarise the student with many of the concepts, conventions, and ideas common to Chinese culture, while also improving their ability to read and work with Classical Chinese.

Preparation for this paper will begin in the third year with the reading of select passages of the *Zhuangzi*. The imagery and ideas presented in this text are so well known to later

generations that this text is central to the Chinese experience as well as inherently worth reading for its own sake.

In the fourth year, students will continue their preparation for this paper by selecting from one of two options as listed below. These options are subject to the availability of specialists and thus will not all be offered every year. Students will be expected to be responsible for the material covered in only the option they select.

1. Classical Chinese: Early Philosophy:

You will look at passages from texts from the formative period of the Chinese intellectual tradition. The arguments and ideas in the set texts have long provoked debate and discussion in the intellectual and political world of China.

2. Classical Chinese: Early Historiography:

You will look at passages selected from the Western Han Dynasty text the *Shiji*. One of the first histories of China, this text not only sets the pattern for all subsequent histories and marks the beginning of the historiographic tradition of China, but the episodes and stories it contains have also been enjoyed as literary writings in their own right, being well recounted and discussed even today.

Examination

One 3-hour typed paper in Trinity Term of the final year.

Classical Chinese II

Type of Paper	Compulsory Paper
Year of Study	Years 3 and 4
Term Taught	MT, HT, TT
Taught by	Prof Tian Yuan Tan

This paper focuses on reading comprehension. Certain texts will be prescribed per term and taught through the third year. These will appear as seen texts in the first section of the paper. The second section of the paper tests unprepared translation from similar texts. Preparation for these unseen texts is the focus of teaching in the fourth year.

Examination

One 3-hour typed paper in Trinity Term of the final year.

Modern China

Type of Paper	Compulsory Paper
Year of Study	Years 3 and 4
Term Taught	MT, HT, TT
Taught by	Various tutors, for queries Dr Bingbing Shi

This is an interdisciplinary course which builds on the first-year East Asia Survey as well as your first-hand experience of China during the second year abroad. Extending from the

late imperial era to the present, its aim is to look beneath the surface of contemporary China and to examine the events, influences, debates and ideas that have made China what it is today. The topics covered range from the construction of ethnicity, through political participation and dissent, to the contemporary cultural scene and human rights. The course is taught in a series of lectures and tutorials spread over the third year and part of the fourth year. It is expected that you will begin reading for this course soon after Prelims and continue into the fourth year.

Examination

One 3-hour typed paper in Trinity Term of the final year.

Dissertation

Please also see the [Chinese Dissertation Handbook](#) for complete advice on all aspects of the dissertation.

Your dissertation topic is yours to choose freely, subject only to approval by the Faculty Board, and you can also choose the style of work you wish to pursue. The regulations dictate a *maximum* length of 15,000 words; in practice, most students write around 10,000 words. It is stipulated in the exam regulations that your work will be at least partly based on material in the Chinese language, whether written sources, interviews, or other fieldwork.

Your dissertation will be the most tangible thing you take away with you at the end of your course in Oxford. It will also probably be the first sustained piece of analysis and writing at this level that you have achieved. Naturally, it will take up time and energy, and for this reason the process needs to be planned carefully. Remember that it counts as only one paper among ten in your final exams: do not let it crowd out your efforts on all the rest.

The dissertation topics will normally be chosen during Hilary Term of the third year when you will be issued with a Dissertation Handbook. You will be contacted to submit a dissertation title for approval by the Faculty board. The title for approval must be submitted by 12 noon, Monday 0th Week Hilary Term (see 'Deadlines' at the end of this course handbook).

Work should begin in the Trinity Term, giving time for preparatory reading and, if necessary, the planning of field visits in the Long Vacation. Your dissertation must be submitted on Inspira not later than noon on Friday of 10th week of Hilary Term in the fourth year.

The choice of topics can be prepared for during Michaelmas Term of the third year. An open meeting will be held in which a group of potential tutors outline the possibilities in their fields (modern writers, social institutions, etc.), after which the students put questions. You may also be directed to tutors not present at the meeting. You should do some preliminary reading under the guidance of a tutor as soon as possible. Following this, in Hilary Term, you

can expect one tutorial in the field of your tentative choice, to gain guidance on fixing your topic.

It is our policy to give guidance but not direction to undergraduates writing a dissertation. And since this is equivalent to one paper in the Final Honour School we expect to make an appropriate amount of tutorial time available for dissertation guidance – say, 8 hours of individual tutorials. It is your responsibility to keep your tutors informed of your progress, and to seek meetings with them when help is needed.

Needs will vary from case to case, but in general you should be prepared for a pattern in which you get most attention in the early stages (when you are feeling your way with the subject and need reading lists, etc.) and the late stages (when you are grappling with the task of writing up). The middle period should normally be one of quiet, steady progress.

Part of the guidance given in tutorials will concern matters of presentation, including footnoting (social science style/sinological style), bibliography, etc.

A suggested pattern of tutorials would be: 1 in HT of 3rd year, 1 in TT of 3rd year, 3 in MT of 4th year, 3 in HT of 4th year.

The Christmas vacation of your final year is your best chance to produce as full a draft as possible of the whole dissertation. This ensures that you do not neglect other work during the Hilary term by being forced to spend too much time writing your dissertation. Tutorials in Hilary Term of the fourth year are an opportunity to discuss your drafts. Tutors will not accept drafts for reading after Week 7 of Hilary Term.

As the dissertation has to be submitted by noon on Friday of 10th week, Hilary term, the subsequent two weeks are best used to finalise and print out your dissertation, which must be submitted online on Inspira. Remember to write your candidate number and not your name on the dissertation.

Special Option I & Special Option II

For Special Option I and Special Option II students will select two options, one taken in the third year and one taken in the fourth year. Students taking these papers will also take the Extended Essay Paper (see below).

Each option consists of weekly 2-hour classes in the Michaelmas and Hilary terms, in which you will read original Chinese documents about your subject and discuss the topics, plus 4 tutorials for which you will write essays. **In the Trinity Term of your third year you will write an Extended Essay on the subject of your third-year option (details below).**

The option courses available in 2025-2026 will be:

Confucius Superstar

Professor Dirk Meyer

This option will examine the phenomenon of Confucius in early China. Only 150 years after his death Confucius had risen to such prominence that his influence was evident across all subsequent traditions of meaning construction and argumentation, with philosophical texts consistently bearing the hallmark of his thought. No other philosophical or religious figures, including Socrates, Jesus, and Siddhartha, rose to such prominence so quickly over such a vast geographical area. The project will investigate how this was possible in an early manuscript culture of low information flows. To do so we shall read a range of texts from the period. This will include manuscript texts and transmitted texts of different genres, including the Analects tradition, the Songs tradition, but also other philosophical texts such as the Zhuāngzǐ. In the tutorials, we shall investigate the more theoretical aspects pertinent to the question of information flows and meaning.

Text and Performance in Late Imperial China

Professor Tian Yuan Tan

This is an option on pre-modern Chinese literature. Focusing on issues related to text and performance, the option comprises of two main aspects:

1. How can we read Chinese “performances”, including popular songs, storytelling, and drama, in textual forms? We will explore how various kinds of performances are captured in written texts and ask what are transmitted, lost, or gained in the process;
2. To what extent may a broader range of Chinese literary texts and genres, including poetry and prose, be considered “performative”? We will discuss the dynamics and interactions between verbal and visual, classical and colloquial, written and performance cultures in pre-modern Chinese literatures.

In tutorials, we will examine key terms and concepts that will help us analyse and understand critically the rise of popular literatures and performance cultures in late imperial China, with emphasis on engaging with secondary scholarship on relevant topics and themes.

Life in China under Mao

Dr Mark Czeller

Between the communist revolution in 1949 and the death of Mao in 1976 Chinese people lived through a dramatic and often traumatic period, but they also shared many experiences and interests with other people at this time. This option will focus on the everyday life of ordinary people during the period. Chinese texts will all be people writing about themselves

and their own lives: diaries, confessions, memoirs and other personal accounts. Students will also be encouraged to read some of the many memoirs, and other documents of the period that are available in English.

Michaelmas Term

1. Transforming lives: Living through the 1949 Revolution (weeks 1-4) workplace, children and old people
2. Material culture: food, houses, clothes, consumer goods (weeks 5-8)

Hilary Term

1. Engaging in politics: living with a class label, compulsory politics, becoming an activist and joining the party (weeks 1-4)
2. Relationships: parents and children, dating and sexual exploitation, friendships (weeks 5-8)

Chinese Law and Society

Ms Loveday Liu

The People's Republic of China (PRC) has undertaken a historic endeavour to establish a modern legal system since its inception. Within decades, the PRC has built formal legal institutions (e.g., judiciary and legislatures), professionalised lawyers through legal education and training, and begun a process of "legal popularisation" to teach citizens their rights. Legal modernisation has touched all areas of law, including criminal law, civil law, administrative law, and the PRC's approach to international law (e.g., the WTO, international arbitration). These are no easy achievements given China's significant ethnic and regional disparities, entrenching traditional legal norms and customs, and the overriding political influence of the Chinese Communist Party on all aspects of social life. Such disparities, entrenching norms, etc., also characterise the operation of institutions and the implementation of formal laws, creating a gap between law in books and law in action. This course will introduce students to China's legal modernisation program by placing it in China's historical, political, and cultural context. We will examine socio-legal changes and points of tension arising in the PRC's construction of a "rule of law", and assess the role of non-state actors in shaping the future of law in China.

Representing War in Modern China: Media, Memory, and Gender

Dr Bingbing Shi

Twentieth-century China experienced several turbulent wars, including the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) and the Chinese Civil War (1945-1949), which caused national traumas that affected the entire country. This option examines how war traumas have been represented in literature and digital media, including poetry, short stories, spoken dramas, graphic novels (*lianhuanhua*), films, TV series, and video games, and discusses how war

memory has been constructed in modern China. By delving into war memory, we will gain a deeper understanding of one of the most important ideologies in China today, as reflected in cultural productions, policy-making, and international relationships: nationalism. We will discuss how cultural production both reinforces nationalism and is shaped by it. We will explore gendered dimensions of war memory through portrayals of female spies, wartime romances, sexual violence and works by male and female authors who have written about war. The texts we will study are all related to intermediality—for example, novels made into graphic novels, stories adapted into films, or television dramas turned into video games. This option will therefore explore new contemporary forms of representing war in the digital era, focusing on how different media are used to make war narratives resonate with a broad range of readers and audiences.

Michaelmas Term

Poetry: Mu Dan, “Fang kong dong li de shuqing shi” (Lyrics from Shelters, 1939)

Spoken drama: Chen Quan, “Ye meigui” (Wild Rose, 1941)

Novella: Zhang Ailing, “Qingcheng zhi lian” (Love in a Fallen City, 1943)

Graphic novel: Liu Zhixia: *Tiedao youjidui* (Railway Guerrillas, 1954)

Film: *Spy Number One* (dir Zhang Ying, 1964)

Film: *Railway Guerrillas* (dir Zhao Ming, 1956)

Film: *Love in a Fallen City* (dir Ann Hui, 1984)

Hilary Term

Novella: Mo Yan, *Hong gao liang* (Red Sorghum, 1985)

Novel: Yan Geling, *Jinling shisan chai* (The Flowers of War, 2007)

Novel: Mai Jia, *Feng sheng* (The Message, 2007)

Video game: *Chitu zhi qian fu* (Lurking on the Red Path, 2012)

Film: *Red Sorghum* (dir Zhang Yimou, 1988)

TV series: *Red Sorghum* (dir Zheng Xiaolong, 2014)

Film: *The Flowers of War* (dir. Zhang Yimou, 2011)

Film: *The Message* (dir. Chen Guofu & Gao Qunshu, 2009)

Special Option III: Extended Essay

Students taking the special options will also write a 5,000-word essay on a subject related to their 3rd year option. The Extended Essay is taught in the Trinity Term of the 3rd year through weekly 2-hour classes and two tutorials all focussed on acquiring research skills and learning to write a research paper and providing training for the dissertation.

Students are guided in how to identify an interesting and practical question related to the subject. They will then produce a series of smaller pieces of academic writing building towards the extended essay, and practising different skills ranging from how to discuss the relevant secondary literature in a research paper, to translating and discussing quotations from the primary sources.

The extended essay is formally submitted electronically no later than 12 noon on Wednesday 9th Week of Trinity Term in the 3rd year.

Chinese with a Subsidiary Language

Japanese, Korean, Sanskrit, and Tibetan are offered as subsidiary languages with BA Chinese. The courses spread across the third and fourth year and consist of language teaching with a focus on the acquisition of a strong foundation in the language plus the study of history and culture. In each case the examinations consist of three papers.

Notes:

1. Studying for the subsidiary languages requires initiative from the students as the pattern of work is different from that of the majority of your year group. It is important that you keep track of which classes and tutorials you should be doing and reach out to the relevant teachers where necessary.
2. If you are thinking of doing a subsidiary language it is really important that you feel confident in your Chinese language as you will have less opportunity to read Chinese before finals. The Undergraduate Studies Committee has suggested that subsidiary languages should only be taken by students with an average mark of 67 in their first language papers. Of course, your studies during the year abroad are not marked on that scale, so there can't be a strict rule about this, but it is a good idea for you to think seriously before taking a subsidiary language and if you are not sure you might want to discuss your choice with your college tutor.
3. Since students taking subsidiary languages do not take the Extended Essay paper which provides training for the BA Chinese dissertation, they are encouraged to attend the initial classes for the extended essay. They should contact the teacher of whichever option is closest to their planned dissertation topic at the start of Trinity Term of the 3rd year to arrange this.

For comprehensive information on papers and teaching for the subsidiary language options, please refer to the [AMES UG Subsidiary Languages Handbook](#).

Recommended Patterns of Teaching (RPT)

Below is an indication of the type and number of teaching hours on this course.

FPE Chinese (Year 1)

Paper	Term	Faculty		College		Comments
		Lectures	Classes	Tutorials	Classes	
						<i>Figures in this table are in hours unless otherwise stated.</i>
[1.] Modern Chinese	MT		56	8		2 hours grammar (MT&HT); 1 hour TT per student per week. 3 hours lab; 1 hour text reading and interpreting; 1 hour oral practice; 1 hour tutorial per student per week.
	HT		56	8		
	TT		48	8		
[2.] Classical	MT		24			
	HT		24			
	TT		24			
[3.] East Asia Survey: China	MT	24		4		
	HT	16		4		
	TT	8		3		

Year Abroad (Year 2)

The figures given for this year aim merely to provide a rough idea, corresponding to teaching in past years and are subject to change.

Paper	Term	Comments			
		Lectures	Classes	Tutorials	<i>Figures in this table are in hours unless otherwise stated.</i>
1. Modern	Semester 1 (Sept-Dec)	2	10		First semester: Sept – Dec Second semester: Feb – June Modern language 10 hours of classes a week
	Semester 2 (Feb-June)	2	10		Modern literature 2 hours of classes a week
2. Classical	Semester 1 (Sept-Dec)		12		Second semester: Feb – June Modern language 10 hours of classes a week
	Semester 2 (Feb-June)		12		Classical Chinese 2 hours of classes a week
3. Various papers	Students write four essays, based on actively interacting with local people and local culture through their increasingly strong linguistic capabilities.				

FHS Chinese (Years 3 and 4)

Paper	Term	Year 3				Year 4				Comments
		Faculty		College		Faculty		College		
		Lectures	Classes	Tutorials	Classes	Lectures	Classes	Tutorials	Classes	
[1.] Modern Chinese I	MT			8			12			Year 3: 1 hour tutorial per week per student (prose translation and composition; oral presentation) Year 4: 1 hour prose translation; 0.5 prose composition
	HT			8			12			
	TT			8			8			
[2.] Modern Chinese II	MT		8				8			Year 3: 1 hour per student per week: reading comprehension and translation from Chinese to English. Year 4: 1 hour newspaper reading.
	HT		8				8			
	TT		8				6			
[3.] Chinese: Oral	MT		12				16			Year 3: 1 hour listening comprehension; 0.5. hours interpreting classes per student per week. Year 4: As for Year 3, plus an addition 0.5 hours per week oral presentation.
	HT		12				16			
	TT		12							
[4.a] Classical I: Zhuangzi	MT									
	HT		16							
	TT			3-4						
[4.b1] Classical I: Philosophy	MT						16			
	HT									
	TT									
[4.b2] Classical I: Historiography	MT						16			
	HT									
	TT									

Paper	Term	Year 3				Year 4				Comments
		Faculty		College		Faculty		College		
		Lectures	Classes	Tutorials	Classes	Lectures	Classes	Tutorials	Classes	
[5.] Classical II	MT		8				8			Year 3: Seen texts Year 4: Unseen texts
	HT		8				8			
	TT		8				6			
[6.] Modern China	MT	8		2				1		
	HT	8		3				1		
	TT	8		2						
[7.] Dissertation	MT									In TT of the 3rd year, there will be a workshop on the process of writing the dissertation.
	HT	1						3		
	TT	1						3		
[8.] Special Option I: Text and Essay	MT		16	2						
	HT		16	2						
	TT									
[9.] Special Option III: Extended Essay	MT									The topic for this option corresponds to the Year 3 Special Option I.
	HT									
	TT			8						
[10.] Special Option II: Text and Essay	MT						16	2		
	HT						16	2		
	TT									

Note: Tutorials are organised by the Faculty.

Students who choose to take a **subsidiary language** will substitute papers 8, 9, and 10 above with three papers as required by their subsidiary option. Please see the corresponding RPT tables in the AMES UG Subsidiary Languages handbook.

Teaching Staff

- Dr [Mark Czeller](#), Departmental Lecturer in modern Chinese history
- Ms. [Jing Fang](#), Lecturer in Chinese Language (University)
- Prof. [Henrietta Harrison](#), Professor of Modern Chinese History (Pembroke) (Faculty Board Chair 2024-27)
- Prof. [Margaret Hillenbrand](#), Professor of Modern Chinese Literature and Culture (Wadham)
- Ms. [Bo Hu](#), Lecturer in Chinese Language (Queen's)
- Prof. [Ted Hui](#), Associate Professor of Chinese (St Anne's)
- Mr. [Shio-yun Kan](#), Senior Lecturer in Modern Chinese Language (Wadham)
- Prof. [Dirk Meyer](#), Associate Professor of Chinese (Queen's)
- Dr [Bingbing Shi](#), Departmental Lecturer in modern Chinese literature and culture
- Ms. [Yang Song](#), Shaw Instructor in Chinese (St Hilda's)
- Prof. [Tian Yuan Tan](#), Shaw Professor of Chinese (University college)
- Prof. [Shelagh Vainker](#), Associate Professor of Chinese Art (St Hugh's)

Examinations and Assessment

Please refer to the [Examination Regulations for Prelims and FHS](#).

In Trinity Term of Year 1, students will sit 3 written examinations and 1 oral/aural examination. Students must pass all papers to proceed into Year 2 of the course.

Please refer to the conventions for Prelims examinations for the papers to be taken, available on Canvas towards the end of Michaelmas Term.

In Michaelmas Term of Year 4, students doing options will submit their extended essays.

In Trinity Term of Year 4, students will take a total of 9 examinations. Students will submit their dissertations in Hilary Term.

Please refer to the conventions for FHS examinations for detail of compulsory papers, and papers for Chinese Studies and Chinese with a subsidiary language.

Required Handwritten Language Components

The ability to produce East Asian scripts independently is an essential competence standard of this course. This means that it is necessary for students to demonstrate these skills in order to successfully complete the degree programme.

Since all available software for inputting certain target scripts on a computer includes a 'predictive text' function which cannot be turned off, using such a program would prevent examiners from understanding whether the student has achieved the required proficiency in the target language. Handwriting the script is therefore required to demonstrate that the student has reached the required level of competence, ability and knowledge of the target language.

All students will be required to handwrite these papers. Although they cannot be removed or substituted with alternative papers, and no adjustments to this mode of completion of

the assessment can be made, reasonable adjustments may be available to the conditions in which the assessment is completed, such as extra time and rest breaks.

The Faculty appreciates the impact that these requirements may have on students with certain accessibility needs and works closely with the Disability Advisory Service (DAS) to provide appropriate support in line with our responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010). Support within the Faculty is available in the first instance by speaking to the designated Disability Coordinators (see *Welfare and Support* below).

The papers covered by this provision are enumerated in the table below:

Preliminary Examination in Japanese	Modern Japanese I
BA in Chinese	Paper I: Modern Chinese I
BA in Japanese with Chinese	Chinese (as 2nd Language): Chinese Language
BA Japanese	Japanese: Modern Japanese I
BA Chinese with Japanese	Paper I: Japanese Language
BA Chinese with Korean and BA Japanese with Korean	Korean (as 2nd Language): Korean Language
First Public Examination in Chinese	Chinese I: Modern

If you have any questions or concerns relating to this please speak with your Course Co-ordinator or the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

Examination Regulations

The Examination Regulations relating to this course are available at <https://examregs.admin.ox.ac.uk/>

If there is a conflict between information in this handbook and the Examination Regulations then you should follow the Examination Regulations.

Deadlines

Date	Year of Course	Event	How
8 th Week Trinity Term	1	Oral examination for the First Public Examinations.	
Monday 9 th Week Trinity Term	1	Provisional start date of the First Public Examinations.	
12 noon Wednesday 9 th Week Trinity Term	3	Deadline for submission of Special Option III: Extended Essay	Via University online submission platform (Inspera)
Friday 4 th Week Michaelmas Term	4	Deadline for exam entry.	Via Student Self Service
12 noon Monday 0 th Week Hilary Term	4	Deadline for submission of dissertation titles for Faculty Board approval.	Online Thesis Title Approval Form available through the Intranet Approval Forms page
12 noon Friday 10 th Week Hilary Term	4	Deadline for submission of dissertation.	Via University online submission platform (Inspera)
0 th Week Trinity Term	4	Oral examination for Chinese language. Timetables available about 5 weeks before the oral exams.	
Monday 7 th Week Trinity Term	4	Provisional start date of the Final Honour School examinations.	

Student Information and Support

Student Hub

The [Student Hub](#) is an ongoing project to provide a live online version of the handbook, together with more detailed course information and further resources such as forms and exam conventions, as well as archived documents from previous years. You can also access the Student Hub through the top bar of the Faculty Website, through the '**NEW Faculty Intranet**' button. You will need to log in using your SSO.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

In accordance with our [Statement of Values](#), the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies is committed to creating a teaching, learning, and research environment in which every member of our community – at every academic level from undergraduate to senior academic, and among library and administrative staff – can achieve their full professional potential without discrimination on the basis of age, disability, gender, marriage or civil partnership, nationality, pregnancy or parenthood, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

We welcome suggestions for making our courses more diverse and inclusive. In general, you are encouraged to tell us if you see any ways in which the courses or this handbook might be improved. Staff and students are welcome to contact the Equality and Diversity team with any suggestions or concerns:

Chinese Subject Group Equality and Diversity Representative: TBC

Faculty Equality and Diversity Officer: [Dominic Brookshaw](#)

Welfare and Support

Our community aims to encourage and support all students. The student experience at Oxford offers lots of opportunities for you to thrive, grow, and look after your own wellbeing, but we know that sometimes there can be stresses and challenges too.

We want to give you the agency to navigate welfare support, and to make your own decisions. This includes by:

- Keeping in touch with your College and Department, and letting them know if you need help
- Seeking support when needed
- Supporting your fellow students
- Registering with Disability Advisory Service for structured support if you have a disability

Should you have any concerns, or for guidance and support, please do not hesitate to contact the following people:

Disability Coordinators: [Thomas Hall](#) and [Edmund Howard](#)

Welfare Contact: [Edmund Howard](#)

Harassment Officers: [Laurence Mann](#) and [Leyla Najafzada](#)

Details of the range of sources of support available in the University are available from the [Oxford Students](#) website, including in relation to mental and physical health and disability.

More information about the support and resources available can be found in the general Undergraduate Handbook and on the Faculty and University websites.