Instructor:
Madeline K. Spring 司馬老師
Email: mkspring@hawaii.edu
Tel: (808) 956-8798
Office hours: Monday, Tuesday 11:00-12:00 & by appointment
Office location: 383 Moore Hall

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers learners some of the basic tools for reading Classical (Literary) Chinese 文言文, the written language of China from the sixth century B.C. through the second century A.D. and well beyond. Students will read a range of authentic texts including philosophical writings, short literary and historical essays, and a sample of poems from the Tang dynasty (618-907). In addition to having the chance to read, translate, and discuss thought-provoking writings from over a thousand years ago, students will soon see ways that modern Chinese has been influenced by Classical Chinese. This awareness will result in gains in Modern Chinese in vocabulary acquisition, reading and writing ability, as well as improvements in professional or formal spoken language that incorporates elements of Classical or semi-Classical Chinese.

OBJECTIVES

• Acquire the ability to read and translate simple authentic Classical texts without relying on notes or vocabulary lists.

• Gain an introduction to some key philosophical, literary, and historical texts that have been (and still are) influential to understanding Chinese culture.

• Recognize the differences between Classical Chinese and Modern Chinese and be able to identify elements of classical or literary Chinese that have been incorporated into Modern Chinese.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS IN THIS COURSE

Class preparation and participation are critical in this class. In class students will
be expected to work from clean copies of texts, some of which have been studied previously in class, some of which will entail sight translation. Students will read the Chinese passage aloud in modern Chinese and then translate into English, sometimes very literally, and sometimes in a freer manner. Translations will reflect an understanding of basic grammatical features of 文言文, which are the core of the Classical language. For this reason, computers, cell phones, and other mobile devices **may not be used in class**. All students are expected to turn in homework assignments on time and to participate actively in class. Translations taken from those found on websites or other sources are not acceptable and will be considered plagiarism (see below).

There will be short weekly quizzes, which will help students determine how well they understand the materials. Quizzes and homework assignments will also help direct the pace and direction of the course, by giving important feedback to the instructor and to students. In addition to short quizzes, there will be three tests, a midterm, and a final examination.

AND, another great part of this class is that students will memorize approximately one short poem a week. In addition, specific passages from our readings can be memorized for extra credit.

WHY memorization? Chinese students have had that part of their brains activated from a very early age. Although learners of Classical Chinese can seldom catch up to their Chinese peers, it is important to show that even Americans can manage to recall some poems and key phrases. In fact, this often makes the difference between clinching a business deal and not. It will be a little painful at first, but you will be surprised how, with practice, it will become easier and easier.

**REQUIRED MATERIALS:**

*Course Reader*, which will be available for purchase Friday, August 29 ---details forthcoming

Additional handouts will either be given in class or posted on the course website.

**PLAGIARISM**

All material (text, images, and ideas) that is not your own creation should be cited appropriately. Failing to cite your sources is considered plagiarism, and will result in an F in the course. Please refer to the University policy on academic dishonesty for details.
EVALUATION

| Participation and homework assignments (30%) | Your attendance, punctuality, and active participation in class are crucial to the successful completion of this course. **Regular class attendance is mandatory.** If you must miss class due to illness, please notify your instructor as soon as possible. Your grade will be affected considerably after two absences.

Coming to class well prepared is also essential to your learning. All the materials detailed in the syllabus for each class should be read in advance. If you have any questions about the class work, please ask your instructors.

Homework assignments are important in this course so that you can get the most out of each class period. **No late homework is accepted** |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quizzes (15%)</th>
<th>There will be weekly quizzes. <strong>No make-ups will be given.</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major tests and projects (35%)</td>
<td>Four unit tests will be given in this course throughout the course. <strong>No make-ups will be given.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term and Final exam (20%)</td>
<td><strong>No make-ups will be given.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL (100%)</td>
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Some helpful sites about the timeline of China’s dynasties and some historical points.

1. [http://www-chaos.umd.edu/history/time_line.html](http://www-chaos.umd.edu/history/time_line.html)

Week 1:

1. 日出
2. 我知
3. 山高
4. 四海
5. 窗前
6. 下馬
7. 马下
8. 明月
9. 故鄉
10. 父之母
11. 母之父
12. *Primer, first section, #1-40 (in your handout packet)*

Particles: 之，者，也

Passage: 知者不言言者不知。

Poem: 夜思（李白）

床前明月光
疑是地上霜
舉頭望明月
低頭思故鄉