Introduction to Mandarin Chinese

CHIN 1B (Fall 2009)

General Description

This course introduces the student to basic knowledge about the Chinese language and develops your skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in Mandarin Chinese. You will learn the *pinyin* pronunciation system, about 350 traditional characters, basic grammar structures, and the most frequently used vocabulary in real-life situations. The goal for the student, upon successful completion of the course, will be to attain a “high-Novice” level of proficiency in Mandarin Chinese, meaning that you should have acquired the ability to understand simple questions and statements, engage in basic conversations, and to read and write about everyday topics and situations.1

Required Texts


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1 For more information on proficiency levels in Chinese, you may refer to the guidelines provided by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) on the following website: http://www.sil.org/lingualinks/languagelearning/OtherResources/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines.htm
Homework and Assignments

Prepare for class: It is very important to familiarize yourself with new vocabulary, characters, and the text in advance in order to perform well in class. The weekly schedule will inform you of what to prepare before class time.

Listening comprehension: You are expected to listen daily to audio files that correspond to our textbook and workbook materials in order to improve your listening comprehension. This is EXTREMELY important for developing your Chinese language proficiency. We recommend that you listen at least half an hour each day. There will be additional listening assignments during the semester. Details will follow at a later date.

Weekly writing assignments: Homework and assignments with due dates will be listed on our weekly schedules. All homework and assignments must be turned in on the due date as indicated on the weekly schedule. Credit will be reduced for late homework and such assignments will not be accepted if more than one week late. Homework that is incomplete must be handed in again to receive full credit.

*Please tear out and hand in your character workbook exercises assignment by assignment. If you don’t want to tear pages out of your character workbook, a photocopy will be acceptable.

*For assignments in your other workbook, you may tear out the pages and submit them, you may use a photocopy or your own paper and submit them. If you do use your own paper, please clearly indicate the lessons and assigned portions on your answer sheets, and please double-space between your answers.

Quizzes and Exams

Vocabulary Quizzes: two per lesson
Chapter Quizzes: one every lesson
Written exams: a midterm and a final
Final oral exam: an individual oral exam based on what you have learned from this course will be conducted before the final written exam.

Evaluation and Grading

Attendance* 5%
Class Performance 10% (includes class participation, listening exercises, and tutorial attendance)
Homework** 20%
Quizzes*** 15% (vocabulary quizzes 5%; chapter quizzes 10%)
Midterm exam 20%
Final oral exam 10%
Final written exam 20%
*Unexcused absences and multiple “lates” will affect your final grade. Extended absence due to illness requires a doctor’s note. If you have to be absent for other important reasons, you must inform us in advance.

**All homework will be graded on the check system (✓+, ✓, ✓-).

***All quizzes and tests will be graded with numerical scores. Vocabulary quizzes will not be made up. Chapter quizzes may only be made up if you notify us in advance.

The grading scale is as follows:

- 93-100=A
- 90-92=A-
- 87-89=B+
- 84-86=B
- 80-83=B-
- 76-79=C+
- 73-75=C
- 70-72=C-
- 66-69=D+
- 63-65=D
- 60-62=D-
- Below 60=F

**Useful Multimedia Resources**

Course documents and other handouts will be posted on Blackboard for your use.

Audio recordings for the textbook and workbook are available on the Language Resource Center (LRC) website (http://lrc.swarthmore.edu). You may also download the audio files to your computer or iPod by visiting the iTunes University website via Blackboard.

For class info, exercises and other activities, see the First Year Chinese (1B & 2B) web page, URL http://www.swarthmore.edu/Humanities/kspeide1/chinese1/.


For other learning assistance and tools, see

- http://www.csulb.edu/~txie/online.htm
- http://nciku.com (on-line dictionary)
- http://www.mdbg.net/chindict/chindict.php (on-line dictionary)
- http://www.mandarintoools.com

**After-Class Activities**

**Tutorial Hours:** Weekly tutorial visits are mandatory for oral practice. You will come to our office with one of your classmates. You are expected to prepare the “Speaking Exercise” section in each lesson in the workbook before you come. Tutorial visits will begin during the second week of classes.

**Office Hours:** In addition to tutorial hours, you are welcome to practice your Chinese with us or ask us questions during our office hours.
**Chinese Lunch Table:** Chinese lunch table, a good opportunity to practice your Chinese with teachers and other students, is strongly recommended. It will be held twice a week in Sharples Dining Hall, beginning the second week of classes. Please do come to enjoy learning the language in a more relaxed setting. 😊