

## East230D First Level Chinese Course Outline

August 28, 2024 – April 11, 2025

**Instructor:** Bill R. Wang

**Office:** Room 253, 680 Sherbrooke W.

**Office Hours:** by appointment only for Thursday afternoons, between 3:40 pm and 5:40 pm.

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**Prerequisite:** None

**Communication:** students must use their McGill email to contact the instructor on course related issues and questions. Please allow up to 48 hours to receive a response due to high volume of emails not including weekends.

### Course Description

This is an Introduction course on Mandarin Chinese, the official language in mainland China, Taiwan, and one of the four official languages in Singapore. The increasing importance of this language has been recognized internationally since 1983, when it was designated by the United Nations as one of its official and working languages. By taking this course, you will learn the basic structures of Mandarin Chinese, the *Pinyin* romanization system, and most frequently used Chinese words and expressions. All the four language skills – listening and speaking, reading and writing will be emphasized equally in the process of your learning.

### Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, you will be expected to have a knowledge of approximately 900 Chinese words, basic patterns of Chinese sentences and unique grammatical features of Chinese language, as well as a cross-cultural awareness while using the target language to communicate. With successful completion of this course, you will also have developed a beginner's level of communicative proficiency in Chinese and be ready to move on to the next level of Chinese course offered by McGill East Asian Studies. Specifically, what you will have achieved in this course are described as follows:

- **Listening and speaking**

You will be able to understand orally simple sentences, short dialogues and stories relevant to everyday life situations, such as appropriate greetings, self-introduction, weather, seasons, shopping, hobbies, regular and routine activities related scheduling and locations– eating, sleeping, getting up, studying, socializing and entertaining. And on this basis, you will be able to talk about these topics and engage in conversations in Mandarin Chinese.

- **Reading and Writing**

You will be able to read, write and understand short pieces of work written in simplified Chinese characters within the scope of the vocabulary and grammatical patterns covered in the course. Moreover, you will be able to identify the basic components and strokes that constitute Chinese characters, in addition to Chinese hand-writing skills that allow you to produce Chinese characters in organized and proper ways.

- **Computer Skills for Reading and Writing**

Your knowledge and ability to use computer and internet to read and write Chinese will be achieved as well, as an expectation for students in this course.

- **Mode of Course Delivery**

Class meetings are held mostly in-person, Monday through Thursday, with lectures and interactive activities in the classroom context. However, Fridays will be reserved for students to work independently on written and oral-listening assignments, and/or group activities or special events such as group visit to Chinatown, participation in local Chinese cultural activities, celebration of Chinese festivals, Chinese calligraphy and arts exhibitions.

Besides the required textbooks and workbooks, electronic platforms such as myCourses, Learning Branch, as well as some relevant internet resources and tools will be used for course management, course material delivery, discussions and practice, as well as class-related announcements.

### **Required Course Materials**

- Liu Xun. *New Practical Chinese Reader - Textbook 1 and Textbook 2*. Beijing Language and Culture University Press.
- Liu Xun. *New Practical Chinese Reader – Workbook 1 and Workbook 2*. Beijing Language and Culture University Press.

### **Importance of Class Attendance:**

Given the intensive nature of this language course, class attendance and active participation in this course are extremely important and mandatory. We will take attendance **10** times during each semester. Students are allowed to be absent **twice** during those 10 times each semester. Absence of more than twice during the dates checked, **that is not backed up by medical documentation**, will result in 1% grade reduction of the final total grade for every missed session. Please note, you should not email to inform the instructor of your intended or planned class absence, as such email notice will not be accepted as an excused and acceptable absence.

The lectures are not to be recorded. Therefore, in case you have missed a lecture/class, you may check with fellow students to share notes with you, and it is encouraged that students help each other and foster a friendly and positive learning community either in person or online, such as in myCourses – Discussion, where discussion groups will be created.

### **Methods of Evaluation:**

- Dictations (10% of the final grade)

A total of 20 dictations (10 in the fall, 10 in the winter) will be given on the Chinese phonetic system *Pinyin* and Chinese characters. Dictations will be given mostly on Mondays in class time and possibly, with a few alternative dates as necessary adjustments of the class schedule are needed. In this case, students will be notified at least 24 hours in advance.

- Assignments (10% of the final grade)

Written and/or listening-oral assignments will be given on a weekly basis, and there will be a total of 20 assignments for the academic year (10 in the fall and 10 in the winter). Specific information and instructions on each assignment will be accessible in **myCourses**, where you go to **Content**, then click on the folder named “**Assignments.**”

- Class attendance (5% of the final grade)

Unexcused absence from class will lead to grade deduction of 1% in your final grade for each time of missing class. Missing class without acceptable reasons supported by valid documents for more than five times will result in grade deduction of 5% in your final grade.

- Preparation before new lessons and active participation in class activities (5% of the final grade)
- Oral presentations (10% of the final grade)

Each student will be required to prepare and give an oral presentation in Chinese each semester, and topics for your presentations are free. Yet, given the limited Chinese vocabulary you will have acquired by the time, students usually talk about themselves, their families and friends, as well as their interest, hobbies and study. The criteria for evaluating your presentations are your pronunciation and tone patterns, fluency and smoothness of your speech, appropriateness in your choice of words and expressions.

- Listening & Oral Tests (10% of the final grade)

There will be a semester-end listening-oral test in Chinese for each semester. The dates for the tests will be available in Class Schedule for Fall semester and Class Schedule for Winter semester, respectively. Instruction on how to prepare for the tests will be accessible on myCourses.

- Midterm written exams (24% of the final grade)

There will be two midterm written exams in the Fall semester, and two midterm written exams in the Winter semester. Each exam will account for 8% of the final grade. Each of the four midterm exams will cover the contents of a few lessons that have been studied before the exam date. Students are required to answer the exam questions in hand-written Chinese characters. For exam dates, please refer to the class schedule.

- Final Assessment (written exam) (26% of the final grade)

The final written exam will be scheduled by the university’s Exam Office in April.

It is a comprehensive exam to test your knowledge of Chinese in reading comprehension and ability in expressing yourselves in Chinese writing.

### **Late Assignment and Missing Dictation**

No extensions will be given for assignments. Late assignments are subject to a penalty of 1% per day for each submission, up to a total grade reduction of 10% in your final grade, calculation of the number of days of delay include weekends. No assignments are accepted after one week past the due date. Exceptions are only made in extraordinary circumstances (illness, family emergency), if arrangements are made in advance of the due date, and appropriate documentation (e.g., a medical note or a funeral notice) is provided to the instructor.

No makeup dictations will be granted, except for acceptable reasons such as serious illness, and such claim must be supported by proper documentation such as a letter from your doctor.

### **Requests for Reread**

Appeals or requests for a re-read of written assignments, quizzes and exams must be made within one week after the graded materials have been returned or otherwise made available for the students to view.

### **McGill Policies and Regulations**

- **Language of Submission**

“In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French written work that is to be graded. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives.” (Approved by Senate on 21 January 2009)

« Conformément à la Charte des droits de l’étudiant de l’Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté, sauf dans le cas des cours

dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue. » (Énoncé approuvé par le Sénat le 21 janvier 2009)

- **Academic Integrity**

“McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures” (Approved by Senate on 29 January 2003) (See McGill’s guide to academic honesty for more information).

« L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et procédures disciplinaires. » (Énoncé approuvé par le Sénat le 29 janvier 2003) (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le guide pour l'honnêteté académique de McGill).

- **Statement on the Use of Generative AI tools**

While we do not encourage it, students may use artificial intelligence tools, including generative AI, in this course as learning aids. **However, students are ultimately accountable for the work they submit.** Students who choose to use generative artificial intelligence tools as they work through the assignments in this course must document their use in an appendix for each assignment. The documentation should include what tool(s) were used, how they were used, and how the results from the AI were incorporated into the submitted work. Any content produced by an artificial intelligence tool must be cited appropriately. Many organizations that publish standard citation formats are now providing information on citing generative AI (e.g., MLA: <https://style.mla.org/citing-generative-ai/> ).

- **Extraordinary Circumstances:** In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the control of McGill University, assessment tasks in a course are subject to change, provided students are sent adequate and timely communications regarding the change.