

**EAST 533 Classical Chinese I**  
**Winter term 2021**  
**Tuesday & Thursday 10:05-11:25**

**Instructor:** Prof. Grace S. Fong  
**Office hours:** by appointment  
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**Course description:**

This course introduces the basic grammar, vocabulary, and prose styles of the classical Chinese language (古文), also known as literary Chinese (文言), the official written language in use throughout the history of early and imperial China until the beginning of the twentieth century.

**Objectives:**

The course aims to equip students with a working knowledge of basic grammatical patterns and sentence structures of the classical Chinese language and to develop proficiency in reading classical Chinese texts for research and advanced studies. Students will read the stories and anecdotes about historical personages that are the basis of proverbs and allusions that inform and influence modern Chinese language and culture. Students will also learn to appreciate and enjoy the beauty and economy of the classical language and the rich cultural tradition that has been transmitted through this written medium for more than two millennia.

**Course format: Remote delivery on Zoom**

Classes will be held synchronously at the scheduled time and will be recorded and uploaded on myCourses for review purposes and other contingencies.

**Textbook:**

Yuan Naiying, Tang Haitao, and James Geiss. *Classical Chinese: A Basic Reader* 文言基礎讀本. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004. E-book: <https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/971366160>

**Methods of Evaluation (draft):**

Preparation and participation 25%

- The textbook is written in traditional complex characters 繁體字 (*fantizi*). Students are expected to learn the complex forms and be able to read them and use them when typing characters. You may use the simplified forms when you write by hand.
- You should learn the vocabulary, both characters and pronunciation, for each lesson. We will read the texts aloud and discuss the translations in modern Chinese and English provided in the textbook. You will also be asked to read the texts without the *pinyin* romanization.

Discussion posts 15%

- You should post at least one question or comment for each class by 8:00pm the day before. The post can be a question on a point encountered in the text or the translations, a comment on the text, or a short response to the discussion questions in the exercise. We will discuss other possibilities.

Homework assignments 30%

In-class quiz (3x10%) 30%