

Intercultural Seminar

Last Updated: Sun, 01/04/2026

Course prefix: CHIN

Course number: 4500/6500

Section: A

CRN (you may add up to five):
33010 35597

Instructor First Name: Jin

Instructor Last Name: Liu

Semester: Spring

Academic year: 2026

Course description:

The capstone course is designed to equip students with strong intercultural communication and critical thinking skills in business, economics, politics, international relations, education, media, etc., in an increasingly globalized world. The course begins with an introduction to key concepts in Chinese culture, philosophy, and thoughts. In particular, students will read and discuss the passages from *Analects* and *Daodejing*. It then moves on to discuss Sino-U.S. intercultural communication in modern history, focusing on the shared history of the Chinese and American people in education and culture. Next, it examines case studies in contemporary popular culture, academic exchange, and business industry, in particular in terms of cross-cultural conflict, misunderstanding, and appropriation. Finally, students apply the theoretical and cultural concepts they have learned from this course and conduct research with enhanced intercultural sensibility, a comparative perspective, and an open mind.

Course learning outcomes:

The overall goal is to raise students' cultural, intercultural, and linguistic competence in an integrated way. Specifically, upon successful completion of the required coursework, students are expected to achieve a higher (1) *cultural competence* by learning key concepts and notions in traditional Chinese thoughts and philosophy, the DNA of the Chinese culture, (2) *intercultural competence* through subject learning, and (3) *linguistic competence* in a naturally paced interactive environment.

Required course materials:

Required readings will be uploaded on the Canvas.

Grading policy:

1. Attendance and Class Participation/Discussion (5%)

1. You should notify the instructor in advance if you're sick or have to miss the class
2. **Three** unexcused absences will automatically lower one level of your grade
3. You are expected to **actively participate in the class discussions** and other class activities.

2. Reading Homework (40%, 10x4points)

Reading guide and questions for each paper will be posted, and you are required to complete all the homework assignments and be well prepared for class participation and discussion. Each homework is due one day before the class covers it. Grading will be based on the quality of your work. An excellent response is not only accurate, but also demonstrates thoughtful reading of the papers.

Grading: close reading and accuracy (70%), arguments and critical thinking (20%), timely submission (10%)

3. Unit Review Essay and Presentation (30%, 3x10 points)

You're required to go over each unit's content and write a unit review essay. 3 units in total. Each essay is about 1,000-1,500 characters or equivalent to your language level.

Besides the summary of what you've learned in this unit, I'm interested in YOUR thoughts on issues discussed in the papers, asking interesting, challenging questions about the author's argument and analysis, relating the articles to issues we've discussed earlier, applying what you've read or learned from the class to relevant examples and phenomena from your own experiences.

Grading: close reading (30%), arguments and critical thinking (30%), language accuracy (15%), length and words (15%), and oral presentation (10%).

4. Topic Presentation and Discussion Leader (5 points)

Each student will have an opportunity to do a lesson presentation on a suggested topic, as well as leading the class discussion on that topic.

5. Final Paper (20%)

This should be an academic research paper that shows intercultural analysis, solid research, and critical thinking. Your final project consists of an oral presentation and a written research paper in Chinese, about 3000 characters or equivalent to your language level.

Grading: Research, methodology, data (60%), Arguments and Critical Thinking (15%), Organization and Structure (5%), accuracy of language use (10%), and oral presentation (10%).

Attendance policy:

1. Arrival in the classroom more than 10 minutes late or leaving more than 10 minutes early (without permission of the instructor) will result in being marked lateness. If you must leave the class early please notify the instructor before the start of the class.
2. Each **three latenesses** will be treated the same as one missed class. **Three** unexcused absences will automatically lower one level of your grade.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

The use of AI is not permitted in this course and is considered a violation of academic integrity. Consequences are severe: any assignment found to involve AI use will receive a grade of zero; the student will be advised to withdraw from the course at any point during the semester; and the incident will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity.

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Humanities area. Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational

academic areas. This course will help students master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals. This course should direct students toward a broad orienting question: How do I interpret human experience through creative, linguistic, and philosophical works? Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following learning outcome: students will effectively analyze and interpret the meaning, cultural significance, and ethical implications of literary and philosophical texts or of works in the visual/performing arts. Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following career-ready competencies: ethical reasoning, information literacy, and intercultural competence.