

**HURON UNIVERSITY COLLEGE**  
**CHN 2650F Fiction and Traditional Chinese Society**  
**Fall 2018**  
**Course Outline**

**Instructor:** Dr. Yan Lu  
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**Class:** 2:30PM-4:30PM Tuesday, 2:30PM-3:30PM Thursday  
Classroom HC-W108, Huron University College

**Office Hour:** 3:30PM-4:30PM Thursday or by appointment

**Course Description:**

This course examines various aspects of traditional Chinese society through the lens of fiction. It introduces students the major genres of Chinese fiction (tales, short stories, and novels) from the early period to late Qing. Students will explore artistic features of selected texts and situate the narratives within specific historical contexts and social conditions. The course presents a kaleidoscopic insight into traditional Chinese society, including the social and political order, economic development, religious beliefs, legal justice, as well as daily lives of people of different genders and classes. Literary narratives of Chinese fiction enhance students' understanding of the development of premodern Chinese society and its gradual transition to the modern period. The course is taught in English.

**Antirequisite(s):** The former Centre for Global Studies 2310F/G

**Learning Objectives:**

By the end of this course, students will be able to

- Distinguish Chinese notion of fiction from its Western counterpart;
- Understand the origins and developments in the history of Chinese fiction;
- Identify major narrative forms in traditional Chinese fiction and their generic features;
- Develop analytical skills and critical thinking abilities in studying traditional Chinese fiction;
- Elaborate the political, social, economic, and cultural characteristics of premodern Chinese society.

**Textbooks and Other Required Resources:**

Course package available at Custom Course Books, The Book Store, UCC.

**Class Methods:**

Classes are usually composed of a lecture and a discussion session led by students. Discussion will be based on the assigned readings. Students are required to participate actively in the discussion.

### **Methods of Evaluation:**

Attendance and Participation:	10%
Presentation and Discussion:	10%
Presentation Follow-up Paper:	15% (Due one week after your presentation)
In-class Mid-term Test:	25%
Final Examination:	40%

### Attendance and Participation

Attendance and participation do not simply mean that you attend all classes, coming to class on time and staying until the end. It is most important that you read the texts and come to class prepared. You must actively participate in the discussion and interact with the instructor and your fellow students.

### Presentation and Follow-up Paper

Students will sign up for the session that they plan to do their presentation. The presentation topics will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. You must inform the instructor of your plan for the discussion session one week before your presentation. You should prepare a short oral presentation for 10 minutes and at least three questions for discussion. You are required to submit a follow-up paper one week after your presentation, which includes your presentation and a report of the discussion session. Specific instructions for the presentation and follow-up paper will be provided in class.

### Tests

The mid-term test will take place in class on Oct. 16. It is two hours in length and covers lectures and readings in the first five weeks. The final exam is scheduled during the exam period. It is three hours and will be based on all lectures and readings covered this semester. No use of reference materials or electronic devices is permitted for both tests. Exam format will be given in class prior to the exam.

### **Special Instructions:**

1. Once you sign up your presentation, you cannot change your topic without the permission of the instructor. Presentation and discussion are done in class and there is **no make-up** except in the case of documented medical or compassionate circumstances. In these exceptional circumstances, you must notify the instructor **one week** in advance. There will be no grade given in the case of no-show without prior notice.
2. There is a penalty for late submission of presentation follow-up paper. Penalty is **5%** for **each calendar day** to a total of **seven** days. Assignments more than seven days late will not be accepted.
3. **No make-ups** will be given for tests, except in the case of documented medical or compassionate circumstances.
4. All the primary and secondary sources must be appropriately cited. No form of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be tolerated.

**Please see the accommodation policies outlined in the Huron Appendix to Course Outlines, posted on the OWL course site.**

## Schedule of Classes

### Week 1 Sept. 6 Introduction

#### Week 2 Sept. 11 & 13 The Origin of Chinese Fiction: Mythology and Historiography

Reading: "P'an-ku" in *Myth and Meaning in Early Taoism*, 193-194;

"Nü Kua" in *Huai-nan Tzu*, 155-163;

"The Biography of Jing Ke" in *Records of the Grand Historian*, 167-178.

#### Week 3 Sept. 18 & 20 The *Chih-kuai* Tales: The Traditional Society and Its Discontents

Reading: "Kan Chiang and Mo Yeh" in *Classical Chinese Tales*, 73-75;

"The Free and Unrestrained" in *Shih-shuo Hsin-yü*, 399-422.

#### Week 4 Sept. 25 & 27 The *Ch'uan-ch'i* Tales: Literary Men and Courtesans

Reading: "The Courtesan Li Wa" in *Traditional Chinese Stories*, 163-171.

#### Week 5 Oct. 2 & 4 The *Ch'uan-ch'i* Tales: The Lady Knight-Errant

Reading: "Nieh Yin-niang" in *Classical Chinese Tales*, 357-362.

Film: *The Assassin*

### Oct. 9 & 11 Reading Week

#### Week 6 Oct. 16 Mid-term Test

Oct. 18 Discussion Session: "Nieh Yin-niang" and *The Assassin*

#### Week 7 Oct. 23 & Oct. 25 The *Hua-pen* Stories: Marriage and Seduction

Reading: "The Pearl Shirt Reencountered" in *Traditional Chinese Stories*, 264-292.

#### Week 8 Oct. 30 & Nov. 1 The *Hua-pen* Stories: Transgression and Punishment

Reading: "The Jest That Leads to Disaster" in *Traditional Chinese Stories*, 467-478.

#### Week 9 Nov. 6 & 8 The Ming Novel: Money and the Changing Social Order

Reading: *The Plum in the Golden Vase*, Volume 1, Chapter 19, 376-400.

#### Week 10 Nov. 13 & 15 The Ming Novel: The Clash of Religions

Reading: *The Journey to the West*, Volume 2, Chapter 44-46, 300-352.

#### Week 11 Nov. 20 & 22 Short Stories: Sex and Gender

Reading: "Miss Ying-ning, or The Laughing Girl" in *Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio*, 65-76.

#### Week 12 Nov. 27 & 29 The Qing Novel: Utopia or Dystopia

Reading: *Flowers in the Mirror*, 58-66, 107-123.

#### Week 13 Dec. 4 & 6 The Qing Novel: The Lure of the Modern

Reading: *The Travels of Lao Ts'an*, Chapter 1, 3-11.



**The Appendix to Course Outlines is posted on the OWL course site.**