

21F.044 Traditional Chinese Literature: Poetry, Fiction and Drama

This course is an introduction to three of the major genres of traditional Chinese literature—poetry, fiction and drama. This year the course will focus on fiction drama. We will read translations of a number of the “masterworks” of Chinese fiction and drama. We will also examine the intertextuality between these genres -- how poetry blends into narrative, how fiction becomes drama, and drama inspires fiction. Through reading these selected works of traditional Chinese literature, we will examine some of the major features of traditional Chinese society: religious and philosophical beliefs, the imperial system and dynastic change, gender relations, notions of class and ethnicity, family, romance and sexuality. All works are read in translation; no language background is necessary.

Requirements: Weekly reading journal (graded at mid-term and end of term) and short oral presentations. Active class participation and regular attendance.***

Grade: Class participation 30%, reading journal 50%, weekly journal submissions 20% (see description at end of syllabus).

Required Texts:

Shapiro, trans, *Outlaws of the Marsh: Abridged Version*.
Waley, trans, *Monkey*.
Roy, trans, *Plum in the Golden Vase*.
Cao Xueqin, (Hawkes, trans), *Story of the Stone*, Volumes 1-5.
Wang Shifu, *Story of the Western Wing*.
Birch, trans, *Peony Pavilion*.

Course Reader for 21F.044: (readings marked with*)

Recommended Texts:

Stephen Owen, *An Anthology of Chinese Literature: Beginnings to 1911*.
Moss Roberts, *Three Kingdoms*.
Shen Fu, *Six Records of a Floating Life*.

Please consult reading assignments before purchasing books, as many works will not be ready in their entirety.

*****No class absence, except in cases of illness, or family emergency. Please inform me in advance.**

Week 1: Introduction

Week 2: Tang Classical Tales

From Owen Anthology:

The Tang Dynasty: Introductions p. 365-384.

Xuan-zong & Yang the Prized Consort p. 441.

Bo Ju-yi "Song of Lasting Pain" p. 442-447.

Chen Hong - "An Account to go with the 'Song of Lasting Pain'" p. 448-452.

"Ren's Story" p. 518-526.

"Huo Xiao-yu's Story" p. 531-540.

"Ying-ying's Story" p. 540-549.

*From packet:

"An Account of the Governor of the Southern Branch"

Week 3: Introduction to Drama: *The Story of the Western Wing*

From Owen Anthology:

The Classic of Poetry: "Airs", ("Fishhawk", "The Han so wide") p. 30-32.

The Story of the Western Wing,

for discussion focus on pages 191-245, 277-286.

Film Clip: *Farewell My Concubine*.

Week 4: Introduction to the Novel: *Outlaws of the Marsh*

Discuss *Outlaws of the Marsh*.

*Chapter 1 from packet.

Chapters 1-3, 6, 9-13, 15, 18 from abridged version.

*Chapters 82, 100 from packet.

Week 5: *The Journey to the West*

Waley's translation *Monkey*.

*From packet: "Kingdom of Women" Episode, chapters 54-55.

Note: If you are pressed for time skip Chapters 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, 18, 23, and 27.

Week 6: *The Plum in the Golden Vase*

Read "Summary of Plot" pages xxxiii-xxxv.

Discuss Chapters 1-6, 9, 12, 15.

***Week 7: Ming Drama**

Submit reading journal for grading

The Peony Pavilion

For discussion focus on the following scenes:

"The Schoolroom."

"Sweeping the Garden."

"The Interrupted Dream."

"Pursuing the Dream."

Week 8: *Peony Pavilion* continued

"The Portrait."

"Sorceress of the Tao."

"The Portrait Recovered."

"Union in the Shades."

"Resurrection."

Week 9: Vernacular Stories

From Owen Anthology: "Du Tenth Sinks the Jewel Box" pages 834-856.

*From packet:

"The Pearl Shirt Reencountered."

"The Canary Murders."

"Artisan Tsui and his Ghost Wife."

Stories of Li Yu

*From packet: "An Ugly Husband Fears a Pretty Wife."

"The Female Chen Ping Saves Her Life . . ."

“A Male Mencius’s Mother Raises her Son Properly.”

Stories of Pu Songling

*From Packet:

“The Painted Wall.”

“A Fox Dream” .

“The Human Prodigy”:

“Miss Yan” .

“The Taoist of Lao Mountain.”

“The Cricket. ”

“The Lady Knight-Errant.”

Week 10: Field trip to MFA

(special journal assignment)

Begin reading *The Story of the Stone*.

Selections to be read:

From vol. 1: 1-4, 5,6,8, 11-13, 15, 17, [22], 23, 25.

Vol. 2: 37, 38, 39, 41.

Vol. 3: 73, 74.

Vol. 4: 94, 95, 96, 97, 98.

Vol. 5: 116, 119, 120.

Week 11: *The Dream of the Red Chamber (Story of the Stone)*

Discuss *The Story of the Stone*, Chapters 1-5.

Chapters 11-13, 15.

Week 12: *The Dream of the Red Chamber*

The Story of the Stone

Chapters 17, 22, 23, 37, 38.

Chapters 94, 98, 116, 119, 120.

***Week 13:**

Submit Final Reading Journal

Watch clips from *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*.

Recommended Readings:

From Owen Anthology:

The Classic of Poetry: “Airs”, (“Fishhawk”, “The Han so wide”) p. 30-32.

Tao Qian: “An Account of Peach Blossom Spring” p. 309-310.

Selected Poetry of Tao Qian p. 311-316.
Ballad of Mulan p. 241-243..
High Tang Poetry
 Wang Wei p. 385-388.
 Li Bo p. 397-404.
 Du Fu p.413-414.
 (skip Mei-pi Lake Song)
 Giving Account of Oneself p. 416-420.
 Poetry of Rebellion p.420-421.
 Kui-zhon and Du Fu's Final Years p. 431-438.
 Yu Xuan-ji p. 509-510.

*From Packet: Zhuangzi (Chuang-tzu) selection.

Instructions for Weekly Reading Journal

Before class: Submit three questions for class discussion to me before **9 AM the day of class** (by e-mail) .

Write your own responses to these questions and any other responses to the readings in your journal (1-2 pages). Bring your journal with you the evening of class for class discussion. **Submit (in hardcopy) your weekly journal to me at the end of class.** This version of your journal does not need to be polished, but should be thoughtful. If you choose not to type your journal, please write neatly. These weekly submissions will be worth 20% of your grade. If I do not receive your journal by the end of class, I will deduct points from this portion of your grade. More points will be deducted for each day that the journal is late.

After class, revise and expand your journal entry based on any new thoughts you have after class discussion.

Week 7 and Week 13: Submit (in hardcopy) your revised cumulative journal to me for grading. I will expect the cumulative journal to be polished, thoughtful and type written, and to go beyond the first draft. I will expect a minimum of two pages of writing per week. In other words, by the end of term you should have written approximately 20 pages total. You will be graded based on content, grammar, style, and creativity. Each cumulative journal submission will be worth 25% of your grade, for a total of 50%.

Late journal submissions will be penalized.

No extensions, except in cases of illness or family emergency.