

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Subject Description Form

Please read the notes at the end of the table carefully before completing the form.

Subject Code	CHC340 / CHC340P
Subject Title	Understanding Chinese Culture from Life and Fate 從生命與命運理解中國文化
Credit Value	3
Level	3
Pre-requisite/ Co-requisite/ Exclusion	CHC1M44P, CHC1M44 & CHC1M44M
Objectives	Regarding human nature, relations, and development: 1. To guide the students to view life and human nature in a more sophisticated way by discussing fundamental concepts that are related to human development, such as destiny, health, individual cultivation, and community; 2. To show the students that the ultimate concern or existential dilemmas of human beings can be expressed in various ways; 3. While acknowledging the spiritual pursuit as an everlasting drive-in human nature, to highlight the diverse understandings and practices of spirituality, especially some unique aspects of Chinese occult science. Regarding community and organization: 1. To explore how the occult science circulated by different communities, 2. To understand how the theory and practice of the supernatural build organizations in Chinese society. Regarding history, cultures, and world views: 1. To link the Chinese traditional culture and the contemporary life by examining the universally shared spiritual needs and puzzles; 2. To increase the students' cultural literacy of Chinese history and culture.
Intended Learning Outcomes (Note 1)	Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to: (a) Understanding different academic methodologies. (b) Discovering the worldview of Chinese occult science and its function in Chinese society.

	(c) Observing the transformation and meanings of occult science in ancient China and the modern world. (d) Evaluating the values of occult science from different aspects.
Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus <i>(Note 2)</i>	1. Introduction: Occult Science—a Way of Understanding Ultimate Concern (數術方技——理解生命的途徑) 2. The Methodology of Occult Science Study (有關數術方技的研究方法) 3. The Beginning of Occult Science: The Magic Tradition in Ancient China and its Decline (數術方技的起點：中國古代的巫及其衰落) 4. Understanding the Healing Tradition from Acupuncture (從針灸理解中國古代的治療傳統) 5. Supernatural Treatment and the Way of Interpretation (超自然療法與中國古代的詮釋) 6. Regimen Tradition and the Historical writing (養生文化與歷史書寫) 7. Alchemy and Creation of Immortality System and its Social community (丹術與永生系統的創造及其群體) 8. Becoming Animals—a Way of Physical Training in Ancient China and its Modern Values (成為動物—中國古代的身體訓練及其現代價值) 9. Divination: A Forecasting or a Superstition (占卜：預測還是迷信) 10. Natal Chart: Inevitable or Variable (命盤：註定還是可變) 11. Geomancy as a Moral Practice or a Profit Gain (風水作為倫理實現的形式或利益的工具) 12. To Understand the Ways of Reading from Hexagram (從卦象了解多元的解讀方法) 13. The Modernity of Occult Science as an Intangible Cultural Heritage (數術方技的現代性：非物質文化遺產) In this subject, students understand not only the ideational world of health and prediction in Chinese tradition but also its practical aspect.

	In week 1, the subject teacher will introduce the subject. The subject requirements will be presented clearly. Also, the core of occult science will be discussed. In week 2, the subject teacher will introduce different methodologies such as history, sociology, and anthropology. Also, the writing and requirements of a book review will be discussed. In week 3, the subject teacher will analyze the beginning of health and prediction traditions in ancient China. Also, the meaning of human existence will be discussed. In week 4, through acupuncture, the subject teacher will share the metaphysics of Chinese medicine, including tunnels, blood, Qi, etc, and the ways of acupuncture will be demonstrated. In weeks 5 - 7, from the supernatural treatment, regimen tradition and alchemy, the subject teacher will present the characteristics of Chinese interpretation and the importance of cultural elites. In week 8, the subject teacher will introduce the ideas of imitating animals as a form of physical training and discuss their modern meaning. Physical training will be offered to students this week. In weeks 9 – 11, through divination, natal chart and geomancy, the subject will lead discussion about the border between prediction and superstition, the nature of destiny and the decision making between moral and profit. In week 12, by using the <i>book of Change</i>, the subject teacher will share the ways of divination and the way of thinking in Chinese culture. In week 13, the subject teacher will present ideas of intangible cultural heritage and how to evaluate the values of occult science from different perspectives.
Teaching/Learning Methodology <i>(Note 3)</i>	Subject teacher will follow the syllabus to teach every topic clearly and to analyse variety primary and secondary sources, including documents, pictures, literatures, and movies. Discussion will be an activity in the lesson to encourage interaction between subject teacher and students. Also, physical training, the ways of acupuncture and divination, will offer and demonstrate to students. Students have to finish the assessments including oral presentation, book review, quiz and term paper. From the assessments, students will learn how to analyse variety of written and cultural texts, including classical works, historical documents, pictures and modern research studies. In this subject, students are required to submit a written final paper developed from a self-selected topic and in accordance with the subject teacher's suggestions. Also, subject teacher will fully explain the criteria of the assessments including, topic selection, literature review and writing.

	Consultations are provided by the subject teacher to help the students to prepare their presentations, term paper and to understand the subject matters.							
Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes (Note 4)	Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)					
			a	b	c	d		
	1. Group Presentation	20		✓	✓			
	2. Book Review	20	✓			✓		
	3. Quiz	20			✓	✓		
	4. Term Paper	40	✓	✓				
	Total	100 %						
	Explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes: 1. Group Presentation (20%): measuring the student’s ability on collecting, analysing, and expressing of written and cultural texts. Based on the presentation topic, students will form in groups and students have to read multiple sources and to discuss with group members. An overall grasp of the knowledge, specifically the to find out the function of occult science, will be assessed. 2. Book Review (20%): measuring the student’s understanding on the research of occult science study and demonstrate how to evaluate of its from different aspects. 3. Quiz (20%): closed book Multiple choice and short question will be used to assess the level of knowledge students have achieved and their ability to reflect on different topics about occult science in China and the personal experience as well. 4. Term Paper (30%): personal paper measuring the student’s ability on collecting and analysing of written and cultural texts, as well as their writing ability. Inquiry and creativity are focal points. The writing requirement of the final paper is 3500-5000 words for Chinese or English. The topic of the paper has to be related to occult science in China.							
Student Study Effort Expected	Class contact:							
	▪ Lectures						20 Hrs.	
	▪ Tutorials						13 Hrs.	

	▪ Workshop	6 Hrs
	Other student study effort:	
	▪ Readings	48 Hrs.
	▪ Written Report	33 Hrs.
	▪ Discussion	12 Hrs.
	Total student study effort	132 Hrs.
Reading List and References	Major Reading 1. 李零，〈緒論：術數方技與古代思想的再認識〉，《中國方術考》(北京：中華書局，2019)，頁 1-68,240-270。 2. 宋會群，〈緒論〉，《中國術數文化史》(開封：河南大學出版社，1999)，頁 13-61。 3. 李建民：〈古典醫學的知識根源〉，《從中醫看中國文化》(香港：三聯書店，2018)，頁 9-64。 4. 陳進國，〈走出恐聞：一個鄉土文化幽靈的探尋與觀照〉，《信仰，儀式與鄉土社會：風水的歷史人類學探索》(北京：中國社會科學，2005)，頁 1-36。 5. Lackner, Michael. Coping with the Future: Theories and Practices of Divination in East Asia. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2017, pp.1-19,99-125,255-288. 6. Kohn, Livia. Chinese Healing Exercises: the Tradition of Daoyin. Honolulu: University of Hawai Press, 2008, pp.98-161. 7. Matthews, William. Cosmic Coherence: a Cognitive Anthropology through Chinese Divination. New York, NY: Berghahn Books, 2021, pp.64-81. 8. Wang, Xing. Physiognomy in Ming China: Fortune and the Body. Leiden: Brill, 2020, pp.112-146,260-277. Recommended Reading 1. 戈國龍，《道教內丹學溯源：修道·方術·煉丹·佛學》(中國：宗教文化出版社，2004 年)。 2. 王立杰，《觀人與人觀：中國古代相人術的人類學研究》(北京：中國社會科學，2017)。 3. 王強，《遮蔽的文明：性觀念與古中國文化》(台北：文津，2003)。 4. 吳偉明，《東亞易學史：《周易》在日韓越琉的傳播與影響》(台北：國立台灣大學，2017)。 5. 李經緯，朱建平，《中國傳統健身養生圖說》(北京：中國書店，1990)。 6. 李零，《中國方術考》(北京：中華書局，2019)。 7. 周世榮，《馬王堆導引術》(長沙：岳麓書社，2005)。 8. 林國平，《籤占與中國社會文化》(北京：人民，2014)。 9. 張玉蓮，《中古道教仙傳文學研究》(北京：中華書局，2023)。 10. 張珣等，《人神共歆：宗教與養生飲食》(台北：財團法人中華飲食文化基金會，2009)。 11. Brown, Tristan G. Laws of the Land: Fengshui and the state in Qing Dynasty China. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2023.	

	12. Bruun, Ole. <i>Fengshui in China: Geomantic Divination between State Orthodoxy and Popular Religion</i>. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003. 13. Cai, Liang. <i>Witchcraft and the rise of the first Confucian Empire</i>. Albany, NY: Suny Press, 2014. 14. Chiang, Howard. <i>Sexuality in China: Histories of Power and Pleasure</i>. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018. 15. Company, Robert Ford, <i>Making Transcendent: Ascetics and Social Memory in Early Medieval China</i>. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009. 16. Cooper, J.C. <i>Chinese Alchemy: Taoism, the Power of Gold, and the Quest for Immortality</i>. Newburyport, Massachusettes: Weiser Books, 2016. 17. Davis, Edward L. <i>Society and the Supernatural in Song China</i>. Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 2001. 18. DeWoskin, Kenneth J. <i>Doctors, Diviners and Magicians of Ancient China: Biographies of Fang-shih</i>. New York: Columbia University Press, 1983. 19. Grim, Patrick. <i>Philosophy of Science and the Occult</i>. Albany, N.Y.: Sate University of New York Press, 1990. 20. Guo, Zibin. <i>Ginseng and Aspirin: Health Care Alternatives for Aging Chinese in New York</i>. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018.
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Note 1: Intended Learning Outcomes

Intended learning outcomes should state what students should be able to do or attain upon subject completion. Subject outcomes are expected to contribute to the attainment of the overall programme outcomes.

Note 2: Subject Synopsis/Indicative Syllabus

The syllabus should adequately address the intended learning outcomes. At the same time, overcrowding of the syllabus should be avoided.

Note 3: Teaching/Learning Methodology

This section should include a brief description of the teaching and learning methods to be employed to facilitate learning, and a justification of how the methods are aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the subject.

Note 4: Assessment Method

This section should include the assessment method(s) to be used and its relative weighting, and indicate which of the subject intended learning outcomes that each method is intended to assess. It should also provide a brief explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes.

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