



# The Beijing Center

北京中国学中心

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## TBC 1142 Modern Chinese Literature in Translation

*Please Note: This is a sample syllabus, and the course schedule is subject to change. Students will receive the updated syllabus prior to the start of first class.*

### Course Description

This course is a survey of the modern Chinese literature from 1918 to 2000. It will focus on fiction and poetry during 3 periods (1918 ~ 1949; 1949 ~ 1976; since 1976) in the 20th century. Through a close study of famous Chinese writers and poets such as Lu Xun, Yu Dafu, Xu Zhimo, Wen Yiduo, Mao Dun, Lao She, Shen Congwen, Ba Jin, Chang Eileen, Ai Qing, Chen Yingzhen, Wang Meng, Yu Hua, Gao Xingjian and Mo Yan, as well as some of the avant-garde writers such as Can Xue, students will have the opportunity to explore the development of the Chinese literature in the 20th century, and be informed of one of the important sides of the modern Chinese culture, as well as the styles of literary creation of those great Chinese writers such as LuXun, Xu Zhimo, Lao She, Shen Congwen, and so on. Because the modern Chinese literature has been greatly influenced by many historical events during the 20th century as well as by Western thoughts, aesthetics, literature and culture, the historical and Western influences on modern Chinese literature and the combination of the old Chinese literary tradition and the newly introduced Western literary tradition in modern Chinese literature are to be explored, too.

### Learning Outcome

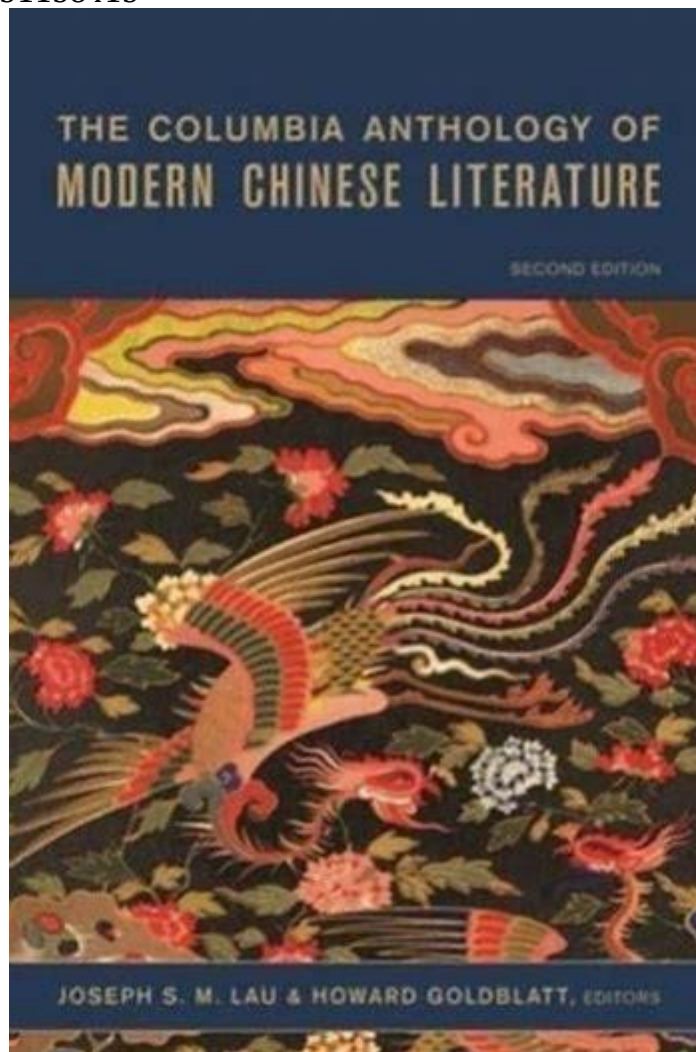
Lectures, readings, paper assignments, and discussions are designed to help you develop the skills to:

- Think aesthetically, read critically, and write and speak persuasively.
- Connect and integrate aesthetic appreciations and cultural understandings of the modern Chinese literature, and grasp the styles and creative skills of different Chinese poets and writers.
- Develop the skill of literary criticism in a combination of both Western and Chinese literary and cultural theories.
- Develop the practice of reading literary texts within their peculiar Chinese social, historical, cultural and mental contexts.
- Use primary and secondary sources to construct original, complex, logical and aesthetical interpretations of the modern Chinese literary works.

### Required Textbook

Lau, Joseph S.M. & Howard Goldblatt, eds.. *Columbia Anthology of Modern Chinese Literature*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007.

<<https://www.amazon.com/Columbia-Anthology-Modern-Chinese-Literature/dp/0231138415>>



## Course Requirements

### 1. Recommended readings

#### **Primary Resources on Reserve at the TBC Library**

1. Lu, Xun: *Selected Works*, vol. I, Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1956
2. Lao, She: *Camel Xiangzi*, Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1978
3. Shen Congwen: *Imperfect Paradise*, University of Hawaii Press, 1995
4. Chang, Eileen: *The Rice-Sprout Song*, University of California Press, 1955
5. Wang, Meng: *The Butterfly and Other Stories*, Beijing: Chinese Literature Press, 1987
6. Wang, Jing (ed.): *China's Avant-garde Fiction*, Duke University Press, 1998
7. Howard Goldblatt: *Chairman Mao Would Not Be Amused: Fiction from Today's China*, Grove Press, 1995
8. Mo Yan: *Red Sorghum*, Penguin Books, 1993

#### **Secondary Resources**

1. Denton, Kirk A., ed. *The Columbia Companion to Modern Chinese Literature*. New York: Columbia UP, 2016.
2. Gu, Ming Dong, ed. *Routledge Handbook of Modern Chinese Literature*. London: Routledge, 2018.

## 2. Assignments & Exams

Three short essays are expected (each one, over 500 words, double space, Times New Roman), and final paper or creative writing a longer one (over 1,500 words for the final paper, or over 1,000 words for creative writing, double space, Times New Roman).

### **Plagiarism is absolutely forbidden.**

The short essays will count for 30% of the final grade.

The final paper will count for 40% of the final grade.

The class participation (including presentation, discussion, in-class paragraph writing and class attendance) will count for 20%.

Late paper policy: All students are allowed one late paper among the three short papers, provided it is not more than one week late. The second late paper will result in a full grade reduction for the course. The third late paper will result in failure for the course

## 3. Attendance Policy

Only valid medical or family emergencies qualify as an absence, and documentation of the same must be presented to the professor no later than the next class meeting. All other absences are considered to be unexcused. Unexcused absences will affect your grade (see below). Arriving more than 10 minutes late for any three classes will cumulatively count as one unexcused absence, while arriving 30 minutes late for any class will count as an unexcused absence.

Penalties for unexcused absences:

1 absence – class participation grade drops one full letter grade (example: A- to B-)

2 absences – class participation grade drops two full letter grades

3 absences – class participation grade drops three full letter grades

4 or more absences – class participation grade is a failing grade

Any absence, whether excused or not, will require catch-up reading.

## 4. Grading

(a) Class participation (20%) including reading circle presentation, discussion, in-class paragraph writing and class attendance

(b) Short essay (30%)

(c) video (10%)

(c) Final paper or creative writing (40%)

## 5. Academic Honesty Statement

Please click the following link to see the Beijing Center's policy on Academic Integrity: <https://thebeijingcenter.org/academics/academic-integrity/>

## Course Schedule

### Week One

#### Offline session (TBC Classroom)

a) Class introduction

b) Historical background of the modern Chinese literature

c) A short introduction to the ideological, emotional and artistic features of the modern Chinese literature

d) Movie: Camel Xiangzi

**Reading assignments:** Textbook, p. 3 ~ 20

## **Week Two**

### **Offline session(Lu Xun's Former Residence in Beijing)**

Lu Xun, "Preface to the First Collection of Short Stories, *Call to Arms*"

"A Madman's Diary"

"Kong Yiji"

**Field trip study:** Visit the former residence of Lu Xun, know his life and then have a discussion on his writings

**Reading assignments:** Textbook, p.21 ~ 43; 111 ~ 119

## **Week Three**

### **Offline session (Shijia Hutong Museum)**

a) Xu Dishan, "The Merchant's Wife"

b) Ye Shaojun, "A Posthumous Son"

c) Lin Shuhua, "The Night of Midautumn Festival"

**Field trip study:** Visit Shijia Hutong Museum which used to be the dwelling place of Lin Shuhua.

**Reading assignments:** Textbook, p.70-88; 120-125; 174-187

## **Week Four**

### **Offline session (National Museum of Modern Chinese Literature)**

a) Mao Dun, "Spring Silkworms"

b) Ba Jin, "Dog"

c) Xiao Hong, "Hands"

**Field trip study:** Visit National Museum of Modern Chinese Literature. Have an overview of modern Chinese literature and further our understanding of Mao Dun.

**Reading assignments:** Textbook, p. 44 ~ 69; 126 ~ 135; 188 ~ 199

## **Week Five**

### **Online session (short essay 1)**

a) Shi Zhicun, "One Evening in the Rainy Season"

b) Zhang Ailing, "Sealed Off"

c) Yu Dafu, *Sinking*

**Reading assignments:** Textbook, p. 89-110

## **Week Six**

### **Online (Video, at least 10 mins)**

Make a video on modern Chinese literature related topic (You decide the topic, for example, a famous Chinese writer or a literary work, or anything else related with modern Chinese literature). You can interview a college student and have a cross-cultural communication on literature. Or you can think about a place related with a writer or a literary work.

## **Week Seven**

### **Offline session (TBC Classroom)**

a) Comment on the short essay and the video (teacher's evaluation and suggestions)

- b) Shen Congwen, "Xiaoxiao"
  - c) Lao She, "An Old and Established Name"
- Reading assignments:** Textbook, p. 201~ 220; 246 ~ 254

### **Week Eight**

#### **Online session (short essay 2)**

- a) Zhu Xining, "Molten Iron"
- b) Huang Chunming, "Ringworms"
- c) Chen Yingzhen, "My Kid Brother Kangxiong"

**Reading assignments:** Textbook, p. 301 ~ 314; 416 ~ 428; 474-484

### **Week Nine**

#### **Offline session (TBC Classroom)**

- a) Chen Ruoxi, "The Tunnel"
- b) Liu Heng, "Dogshit Food"
- c) Tie Ning, "Octday"
- d) final paper or creative writing proposal session

**Reading assignments:** Textbook, p. 485-500

### **Week Ten**

#### **Online session (short essay 3)**

- a) Su Tong, "Escape"
- b) Yu Hua, "On the Road at Eighteen"

**Reading assignments:** Textbook, p. 429 ~ 443; 383 ~ 386

### **Week Eleven**

#### **Offline session (TBC Classroom)**

- a) Mo Yan, "Autumn Waters"
- b) Can Xue, "Hut on the Mountain"

**Reading assignments:** Textbook, p. 503; 506; 509; 513; 519

### **Week Twelve**

#### **Online session**

- a) Xu Zhimo, "Second Farewell to Cambridge", etc.
- b) Wen Yiduo, "Dead Water", etc.
- c) Li Jinfa, "Woman Abandoned"
- d) Dai Wangshu, "Rainy Alley"
- e) Ai Qing, "Snow Falls on China's Land"

**Reading assignments:** Textbook, p. 533; 569; 572; 625~626; 653~656

### **Week Thirteen**

#### **Online session (Final Paper)**

FINAL PAPER DUE (an essay on modern Chinese literature or a piece of creative writing)