# Chinese language and culture

## Prof. Natalia Riva

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The aim of this course is to introduce key aspects of modern Chinese language and culture to students **with no prior knowledge of China and the Chinese language**.

In regards to Chinese culture, China’s current realities will be analyzed in light of the country’s long history and deep-rooted civilization. A particular focus will also be placed on 20th century-China in order to follow the path of the historical evolutions and profound transformations that led the country to the achievement of its current status of a major global power. At the end of the course, the students will be able to develop logical connections around the events and phenomena studied. In addition, they will develop critical and communicative skills through classroom discussions and presentations.

Finally, in regards to the Chinese language, they will learn its history, evolution, and characteristics as well as practice daily conversations.

***COURSE CONTENT***

* Introduction to China: historical and geographical background; ethnic and linguistic variety.
* China’s traditional culture, philosophical systems, and values, and how they inform the present.
* Modern and contemporary China: cultural, economic, and political dimensions, and key institutions.
* Domestic and foreign policy challenges that China faces today.
* Characteristics of Chinese, Chinese dialects, and the languages of China.
* Basic Chinese dialogues and daily conversations.

***READING LIST[[1]](#footnote-1)***

D. Moser, *A Billion Voices: China's Search for a Common Language.* Penguin Special China. Penguin Books Ltd., 2016.

J. N. Wasserstrom, *China in the 21st Century: What Everyone Needs to Know*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2013.

Multimedia materials will also be used for language instruction. In preparation for class discussions, attending students will be asked to:

* read assigned papers and articles;
* watch assigned movies and documentaries;
* listen to assigned podcasts;
* partecipate in conferences suggested by the teacher in due time.

Additional study materials will be indicated during the teaching period.

Attending students will be asked to present on a topic agreed upon with the teacher and evaluated as part of the final oral exam.

Non-attending students are required to agree upon a specific program with the teacher.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Theoretical and practical lessons, lectures, and seminars.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Partial written test for attending students and final oral exam for all. Further information regarding the assessment methods and criteria will be given by the teacher during the course.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Attendance is highly recommended.

In case the evolution of Covid-19 pandemic does not allow teaching in presence, online lectures and distance learning will be guaranteed. Channels and modalities will be communicated in due time to all students.

The teacher’s office hours will be announced at the beginning of the course.

1. I testi indicati nella bibliografia sono acquistabili presso le librerie di Ateneo; è possibile acquistarli anche presso altri rivenditori. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)