

## CHI 3403 -- CHINESE CALLIGRAPHY

Class Number: 11536, section: 1F65, University of Florida, Spring 2019

Days, Times, and Room: Tuesday, period 10 and Thursday, periods 10-11 at Pugh Hall 120

Instructor: Ruth Sheng (Email, [rsheng@ufl.edu](mailto:rsheng@ufl.edu); Phone, 352-273-2955 or 392-2422)

Office and Hours: 310 Pugh Hall; Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 2:00-4:00

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

Being one of the most revered arts in China, calligraphy (the art of writing -- 書法 *shufa*) has been an essential part of Chinese culture. This course is designed to introduce the importance of calligraphy in its development intergrated with Chinese art, history and culture, with emphasis on incorporating calligraphy into the more comprehensive objective of achieving cultural proficiency. Consequently this class provides students the opportunity not only to learn how to appreciate and to write Chinese calligraphy, but also to understand how the calligraphy intertwining with various aspects of culture element in China and its influence to many neighboring countries.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

In addition to the various scripts of calligraphy, students are introduced to many related subjects: the origin and evolution of Chinese writing system, the historical development and aesthetic principles of Chinese calligraphy, inscriptions on the prominent steles/epitaphic stones, writings on scrolls and/or album leaves by major artists, as well as the close relationships with painting and poetry. Persistent hands-on practice is required of all students; there are in-class practice and weekly take-home assignments. Students receive the individual instructions in the classroom as well as in the instructor's office on the regular basis (be aware the sign-up sheet for the weekly visit)

### READING

*Chinese Calligraphy: an introduction of its aesthetic and technique* by Chiang Yee (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), though an earlier publication, but covers essential and brief information on the aesthetic principles and technical information of Chinese calligraphy.

*Chinese Calligraphy* compiled by Ouyang Zhongshi and Wen Fong (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008) offers the more details on the evolution of various scripts and historical development of calligraphic styles.

Most of the designated weekly reading requirements are selected from the above two resources. In addition, a comprehensive list of bibliography is provided at the end of the syllabus. Items included on the list can be found in the Fine Arts Library and some are held as the reserve books. Frequent use of these books, which contain numerous fine reproductions of calligraphy, is highly encouraged. An extra important reading list mostly in articles can be found in "e-Learning" under this course.

### COURSE FORMAT

This course combines lectures with visual materials, discussions of reading and/or visual evidence, as well as hands-on practice with brush and ink. The lectures are usually given during the meetings on Tuesday, while the hands-on practice and the observation of instructor's demonstration either in the classroom or from the taped videos are taken place mostly on Thursday. Students should be aware that the most of the learning from this class due to the nature of this course can only be acquired in the classroom; therefore, to attend all class meetings is essential and strongly advised.

## REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

**Class attendance and participation (20%)** - Perfect **attendance** will be rewarded with a bonus point, while the non-excused absence and tardiness adversely affects your grade (one point deduction for each unexcused absence & half point for the tardiness). 10 non-excused absences results in a failing grade. Absences are permitted for medical reasons, school related activities, and the matters of emergency. Previewing and reviewing the readings will enhance your **participation** in the class. Good attitude and enthusiasm on hands-on practice is also counted for **participation**.

**Take home calligraphy assignments (20%)** - Be responsible for completing the assigned weekly homework practice, and turn in on time in order to receive proper credit. The assignment of weekly homework/practice will be instructed in the classroom and also posted on the UF **e-Learning** system.

**Term paper assignment (10%)** - Choose one article or a chapter from reading assignments to write a review/critique paper. The structure of the paper should begin with a gist of chosen reading piece as the introduction, proceed with comments and responses, critiques and questions as the main body, sum up with a conclusion, and at the end list a brief bibliography for the related readings. The purpose of this assignment is to urge students to read critically and diligently as soon as the class begins. Although the due date is **March 12**, students are encouraged to turn it in as early as possible (awarded with bonus point). Only three pages is required, and it should be done with normal margin, 1.5/double spacing. Turn in a hard copy and an online file via email attachment.

**Quizzes (10%)** - Expect many quizzes throughout the semester, and no make-up allowed.

**Exam (25%)** - One exam is given in the format of multiple choices, script and image identifications/comparisons, and essay. Make-up exam allows only with medical documentation.

**Class presentation (10%)** - Prepare and perform a 15 minutes class presentation on one's own choice of topic, in the categories such as "Where to Locate Asian Calligraphy," "My Favorite Calligrapher," "Calligraphy and Painting," etc, and preferably to be conducted as a group presentation (2-3 students). The format is open choice. To discuss the potential topic with instructor is required.

**Final piece (5%)** - Towards the end of semester, students need to submit at least one piece of presentable work of calligraphy for the class exhibition held on **April 23** (the last day of class).

**Each student will receive the best grade one deserves:**

**Grading scale** - Grades are tabulated on a 100-point scale and a letter grade is assigned as follows:

A = 93 & above, A- = 90-92, B+ = 87-89, B = 83-86, B- = 80-82, C+ = 77-79,  
C = 73-76, C- = 70-72, D+ = 67-69, D = 63-66, D- = 60-62, E = 59 & below

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

**The needed writing tools** can be purchased via Amazon. Students will receive the guideline of what to order during the 1st week meeting; the actual hands-on practice will not occur until the 3rd week.

**The changes** in class scheduling or **special announcement** will be posted via email or in e-Learning.

**Disability accommodations** can be requested by registering with the Dean of Students Office for proper documentation, inquiring see web link <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>.

**Academic honesty, and student conduct related to the honor code will be strictly enforced.** Be aware that plagiarism will result in a failing grade, see <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/>.

**Online course evaluation is conducted at** <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Students are encouraged to participate in order to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course.

**PASS/FAIL** is allowed in this class; however, completion of all requirements in order to pass is still needed.

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

- Week 1**      Reading: Ouyang Zhongshi and Wen Fong, *Chinese Calligraphy*, p. 1-31, 415-37  
Billeter, J. F., "Learning the Craft" in *The Chinese Art of Writing*, p. 109-34
- Jan. 8/T      Organizational introduction with the discussion of course syllabus and requirements  
Jan. 10/R      Highlights of the historical development and aesthetic principles of Chinese calligraphy in general
- Week 2**      Reading: Chiang Yee, *Chinese Calligraphy*, p. 133-44  
Billeter, J. F., "Maneuvering the Brush" in *The Chinese Art of Writing*, p. 45-84
- Jan. 15/T      Four essential tools on writing Chinese calligraphy (*Wenfang sibao* 文房四寶)  
Jan. 17/R      Correct gesture of holding brush, writing with brush, along with the proper way of rendering the ink; calligraphy demonstration by instructor
- Week 3**      Reading: Chiang, Yee, *Chinese Calligraphy*, p. 41-67  
Ouyang, Zhongshi and Wen Fong, *Chinese Calligraphy*, p. 34-36, 56-60, 67-131
- Jan. 22/T      Early writing and scripts: oracle bone inscription (*jiaguwen* 甲骨文), bronze inscriptions (*jinwen* 金文- also known as the greater or large seal script, *dazhuan* 大篆), lesser/small seal script (*xiaozhuan* 小篆), and clerical/official script (*lishu* 隸書)  
Jan. 24/R      The small seal script: basics on writing technique and practice
- Week 4**      Reading: Chiang, Yee, *Chinese Calligraphy*, p. 18-35, 145-65  
Ouyang, Zhongshi and Wen Fong, *Chinese Calligraphy*, p. 47-55
- Jan. 29/T      Conceptual principles on the formation of Chinese characters with the introduction of the first Chinese dictionary, *Shuowen Jiezi* 說文解字  
Jan. 31/R      "Eight strokes of character *yong* 永" (*yongzi bafa* 永字八法): basics of the standard script; celebrating Chinese New Year (Lunar New Year falls on Feb. 5<sup>th</sup>)
- Week 5**      Reading: Chiang, Yee, *Chinese Calligraphy*, p. 67-105  
Ouyang, Zhongshi and Wen Fong, *Chinese Calligraphy*, p. 133-239 (browsing)  
Ledderose, Lothar, "Chinese Calligraphy: its aesthetic dimension and social function," *Orientalism* 17, no. 10 (Oct. 1986), p. 35-50
- Feb. 5/T      Development of various scripts: standard/regular script (*kaishu* 楷書), running script (*xingshu* 行書), and cursive/grass script (*caoshu* 草書); leading masters from the Six Dynasties to early Tang 唐: Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (303-361), and his followers  
Feb. 7/R      High Tang masters: the stylistic comparison of standard script masters, Yan Zhenqing 顏真卿 and Liu Gongquan 柳公權, and cursive script masters, Zhang Xu 張旭 and Huaisu 懷素; practicing standard script

- Week 6**      Reading: Ouyang, Zhongshi and Wen Fong, *Chinese Calligraphy*, p. 241-69  
 Xu, J., "Opposite Paths to Originality: Huang Ting-chien 黄庭堅 and Mi Fu 米芾"  
 in *The Embodied Image* ed. by Robert Harris and Wen Fong, p. 260-79
- Feb. 12/T      Leading masters of the Song 宋 dynasty.  
 Feb. 14/R      Continuing the practice on the standard script; exploring the running and cursive;  
                          introducing the model books in various scripts
- Week 7**      Reading: Ouyang, Zhongshi and Wen Fong, *Chinese Calligraphy*, p. 284-377 (browsing)
- Feb. 19/T      Masters of the Yuan 元, Ming 明, and Qing 清 dynasties  
 Feb. 21/R      Refining the techniques on the standard script; getting more familiar with the model  
                          books in various scripts
- Week 8**      Reading: Erickson, B., *The Art of Xu Bing, words without meaning, meaning without  
 words*, p. 33-70  
 Barrass, G. S., *The Art of Calligraphy in Modern China*, p. 11-58  
 Ouyang, Zhongshi and Wen Fong, *Chinese Calligraphy*, p. 378-413  
 Chiang, Yee, *Chinese Calligraphy*, p. 166-88
- Feb. 26/T      Modern and avant-garde movement in China; introducing contemporary calligraphy—  
                          the art of Xu Bing 徐冰 and his "Square Word Calligraphy"  
 Feb. 28/R      Shaping the characters: major principles of how to properly combine components of  
                          a Chinese character; reinforcing the strokes, form and correlation in standard  
                          script; experimenting contemporary calligraphy
- Week 9**      ☺ **Spring Break** ☺
- Week 10**      Reading: Harrist, Robert, "The Two Perfections: Reading Poetry and Calligraphy" in  
                          *The Embodied Image*, ed. by Robert Harris and Fong Wen, p. 281-301  
                          Qi Gong, "The Relationships between Poetry, Calligraphy, and Painting" in *Words and  
                          Images: Chinese poetry, calligraphy, and painting*, ed. by Alfreda Murck and Wen  
                          Fong, p 11-20  
                          Sullivan, M., *The Three Perfections*, p. 11-80
- Mar. 12/T      Calligraphy and poetry; **last day to turn in the term paper**  
 Mar. 14/R      Refining the standard script with text from selected Tang poem

- Week 11**      Reading: Chiang, Yee, "Calligraphy and Painting" in *Chinese Calligraphy*, p. 206-13  
 Fu Shen, "Format and the Integration of Painting and Calligraphy" in *Traces of the Brush*, p. 179-201  
 Kwo, Da-wei, "Aesthetics of Brushwork" in *Chinese Brushwork in Calligraphy and Painting: its history, aesthetics, and techniques*, p. 53-111  
 Hay, John, "The Human Body as a Microcosmic Source of Macrocosmic Values in Calligraphy" in *Theories of the Arts in China* by Susan Bush, p. 58-74
- Mar. 19/T      Calligraphy and painting  
 Mar. 21/R      Integrating calligraphic skill to create Chinese ink painting; **reviewing for exam**
- Week 12**  
 Mar. 26/T      **Exam**  
 Mar. 28/R      Refining the final piece; **due on the presentation topic and group arrangement**
- Week 13**      Reading: Yonemura, Ann, "Japanese Calligraphy" in *From Concept to Context, Approaches to Asian and Islamic Calligraphy* by Fu Shen and A. Yonemura, p. 62-100  
 Boudonnat, Louise and Harumi Kushizaki, *Traces of the Brush: the art of Japanese calligraphy*, p. 53-95
- Apr. 2/T      Historical development of Japanese calligraphy and its relationship with Chinese calligraphy  
 Apr. 4/R      Refining the final piece
- Week 14**      Reading: Kwo, D. W., "The Role of the Seal" in *Chinese Brushwork in Calligraphy and Painting*, p. 179-83  
 Billeter, J. F. "Notes on Seal Engraving" in *The Chinese Art of Writing*, p. 286-89
- Apr. 9/T      Role of Seal (*yin*, 印) in calligraphy and painting; learning the seal making  
 Apr. 11/R      Creating seals and applying them on the completed final calligraphy piece; **finishing up the final calligraphy piece**
- Week 15**  
 Apr. 16/T      **Class presentation**  
 Apr. 18/R      **Class presentation**
- Week 16**  
 Apr. 23/T      **Class Exhibition**

- Have a great summer -  
**Practicing calligraphy is good for your soul and body**

## Bibliography

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- Bjorksten, Johan. *Learn to Write Chinese Characters*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994. PL1171.B5613 1994 (on reserve)
- Bonan, Guo. *Gate to Chinese Calligraphy*. Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1995. NK3634.A3 B66
- Boudonnat, Louise, and Harumi Kushizaki. *Traces of the Brush: the Art of Japanese Calligraphy*. France: Editions du Seuil, 2003. HK3637.A3 B6813 2003
- Briessen, Fritz van. *The Way of the Brush: Painting Techniques of China and Japan*. Boston, Tokyo: Tuttle Publishing, 1998. ND1040.B69 1998
- Bush, Susan, and Christian Murck (eds). *Theories of the Arts in China*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983. NX583.A1 T48 1983
- Chang, Leon L-y, and P. Miller. *Four Thousand Years of Chinese Calligraphy*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1990. (It begins with the modern period and goes backwards to the ancient Shang dynasty; interesting arrangement) NK3634.A2 C44 1990
- Chen, Tingyou. *Chinese Calligraphy* (Cultural Chinese Series). Beijing: China International Press, 2003. NK3634.A2 C4567 2003 (on reserve)
- Chiang, Yee. *Chinese Calligraphy: An Introduction to its Aesthetic and Technique*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973 (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) PL1171.58 (on reserve)
- Erickson, Britta. *The Art of Xu Bing: Words without Meaning, Meaning without Words*. Washington, D.C.: Seattle: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery; in association with the University of Washington Press, 2001. N7349.X8 A4 2001 (on reserve)
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- Komatsu, Shigemi and Kwan S. Wong (comp.) *Chinese and Japanese Calligraphy: Spanning Two Thousand Years: The Heinz Gotze Collection Heidelberg*. Munich: Prestel-Verlag, 1989. NK3634.A2 C4713 1989
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- Liu, Cary Y. (ed.) *Character & Context in Chinese Calligraphy*. Princeton: The Art Museum, Princeton University, 1999. NK 3634.A2 C4566 1999 (on reserve)
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- Shi, Bo. *Between Heaven and Earth: a history of Chinese writing*. Boston and London: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 2003. NK3634.A2 S53413 2003
- Starr, Kenneth. *Black Tigers: a grammar of Chinese rubbings*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008. NC915.R8 S73 2008
- Sullivan, Michael. *The Three Perfections: Chinese painting, poetry and calligraphy*. New York: George Braziller, 1999, revised edition. ND1040.S78 1999 (on reserve)
- Tseng, Yuho Ecke. *Chinese Calligraphy (exhibition catalogue)*. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1971. NK3634.A2 E25
- . *A History of Chinese Calligraphy*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1993. NK3634.A2 T7381 1993
- Words in Motion: Modern Japanese Calligraphy*. An Exhibition by the Library of Congress and the Yomiuri Shimbun, June-September 1984. Japan: Yomiuri Shimbun, 1984. ND1457.J3 W67x 1984

## USEFUL CALLIGRAPHY WEBSITES:

Art of Chinese Calligraphy

<http://www.chinapage.com/callig1.html>

Asian Art Appreciation (or Chinese Calligraphy)

<http://www.asia-art.net/calligraphy.html>

Eastern Asian Calligraphy

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese\\_calligraphy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_calligraphy)

Tools and learning Chinese Calligraphy

<http://www.chinese-tools.com/learn/characters>

Chinese characters, script, and writing

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese\\_character](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_character)

Chinese Calligraphy with basic knowledge and step by step instructions.

<http://www.chinavoc.com/arts/>

Learning basic strokes

<http://www.macauweb.com/handwrite/learn.html>

Chinese etymology

<http://internationalscientific.org/>

漢典 Chinese Dictionary for characters and various scripts

<http://www.zdic.net/>

說文解字—篆書字典 Dictionary for the seal script

<http://www.shuowen.org/>

## WRITING TOOL SUPPLIERS:

Amazon

<http://www.amazon.com/>

Yasutomo

<http://www.yasutomo.com/>

Acorn Planet

<http://www.acornplanet.com/>