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	CHC1M52
Subject Title	Tracing Eras and Intellectuals in Historical China - Digital Humanities Approach 數位人文視野下：中國歷史上的時代與知識份子
Credit Value	3
Level	1
Pre-requisite/ Co-requisite/ Exclusion	Nil
Objectives	*The Analects* famously stated, "The officer may not be without breadth of mind and vigorous endurance. His burden is heavy and his course is long." This quotation aptly captures the crucial role played by intellectuals, also known as 'shi', within the traditional Chinese social hierarchy. These scholar-officials held a pivotal position, shaping the political, governance, social, and cultural landscapes of imperial China. This course aims to study the major historical developments in China, examining the roles played by intellectuals across different eras and how they responded to the challenges of their time. Particularly, the course will utilize digital tools like Gephi and China Biographical Database Project (CBDB) to reveal how these scholar-officials leveraged their marriage, family, and friendship networks to drive reforms in the imperial courts, reconstruct social order, and shape cultural customs in line with their political ideals and aspirations, as the course will explore how intellectuals proposed solutions to the pressing problems of their era and promoted progress.
Intended Learning Outcomes *(Note 1)*	Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to: (a) examine the major historical developments and distinguishing characteristics of different periods in Chinese history through the perspective of intellectuals (b) cultivate abilities in historical critical thinking and analysis (c) facilitate the development of proficiencies in recognizing and applying digital research methodologies pertinent to the field of digital humanities (d) leverage digital tools and methodologies to explore and cultivate deeper understandings of Chinese history, culture, and other traditional knowledge domains (e) Fulfil English Reading and Writing Requirements

Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus *(Note 2)*	1. **Axial Breakthrough and the Ritual Tradition** This topic focuses on examining the emergence of Confucianism as a pivotal "Axial Breakthrough" in ancient China, representing a significant ideological transformation rooted in the existing ritual traditions, by exploring how Confucius, in the turbulent era of the Spring and Autumn Period, sought to articulate a new moral and political philosophy that would restore social harmony and stability. **2. Ancient China in Transition: An Analysis of Social Mobility in the Spring and Autumn Period and Warring States Period** This topic focuses on examining the changing social landscape that emerged during the Spring and Autumn Period and Warring States Period in ancient China, which provided the fertile grounds for the rise of a new class of intellectuals known as the shi. As the various warring states competed for supremacy, these scholar-officials became increasingly influential as political advisors, strategists, and administrators - leveraging their expertise in philosophy, statecraft, and military affairs to shape the trajectories of the competing state. **3. Confucian Orthodoxy and the Rise of Civil Governance in the Han Dynasty** This topic examines the rise of Confucianism as state orthodoxy in the Han dynasty, enabling the ascendance of civil governance and influential Confucian scholars. Han emperors promoted Confucian philosophy, empowering a new class of Confucian-educated officials and diminishing military aristocrats. Notable thinkers like Zheng Xuan(127-200) and Ma Rong(79-166) shaped Han governance through their works on Confucian classics and statecraft. However, factional infighting towards the dynasty's end threatened the Confucian political order in the "Disasters of the Partisan Prohibitions". **4. The Émigré Elite Families of the Northern and Southern Dynasties** This topic examines the rise of Émigré Elite Families during the Wei-Jin and Northern and Southern Dynasties period, and how they came to dominate the political power at the time, contributing to the chaos and coups of that era. The analysis will focus particularly on the Sima family, leveraging digital tools to reveal how they utilized their extensive marriage and friendship networks to consolidate their political supremacy. **5. Cosmopolitan Culture of the Tang Aristocracy** This topic aims to utilize the Tang dynasty epitaphs to examine the rise and fall of the Tang aristocracy, delving into the underlying elements and social networks that drove these significant sociopolitical shifts. This topic will have a particular focus on key figures such as: Fang Xuanling (579-648) and Li Deyu (787-850), examining their political networks, which were shaped by the Guanlong Group and nobles from Shandong, among others, to shed light on the dynamics that influenced the fortunes of the Tang aristocracy. To facilitate this exploration, the study will leverage the China Biographical Database (CBDB) and geographical information systems (GIS) tools. **6. The Political Culture of Scholar-Officials in the Song Dynasty** This topic examines the political aspirations and reform efforts of three prominent intellectuals during the Song dynasty: Fan Zhongyan (989-1052), Wang Anshi (1021-1086), and Zhu Xi (1130-1200). It will explore how these individuals sought to reshape the country and society through their policy proposals and governance initiatives, with a focus on analyzing their social networks using the China Biographical Database (CBDB) and network visualization software like Gephi to

shed light on how they leveraged their social connections and ideological influence to advance their visions for political and social reform during the Song period.

7. The Alien-Ruling Confucian Intellectuals in Conquest Dynasties

This topic examines the significant role that intellectuals, such as Yelu Chucai (1190-1244), played in the governance and institutional development of the Mongol Empire and the subsequent Yuan dynasty. Despite their Khitan or non-Han origins, these intellectuals were deeply influenced by Confucianism and were able to leverage their expertise to shape the policies and structures of the ruling Mongol regime.

8. Statecraft Ideals and their Implementation in Ming China

This topic examines the statecraft ideals that emerged during the Ming dynasty, highlighting how representative intellectuals such as Qiu Jun (1421-1495) and Wang Yangming (1472-1529) put forward their visions for reforming the state, society, and ideology through their works and philosophical systems, with the analysis leveraging AI and digital tools to aid in the close reading and interpretation of these intellectuals' ideas.

9. Western Challenges and the Response of Late Qing Intellectuals

This topic examines how eminent intellectuals such as Wei Yuan(1794-1857) and Yan Fu(1854-1921) navigated the late Qing in the face of foreign threats and the influx of Western knowledge.

10. Rescuing the Nation: The Rise of Modern Chinese Intellectuals

This topic focuses on how Liang Qichao (1873-1929) and Hu Shi (1891-1962), two of the greatest and most influential intellectuals in modern Chinese history, helped save the country through their scholarship and advocacy. The analysis will leverage database resources and big data analysis to shed light on the shaping concepts and the broader ideological landscapes that influenced their work and impact.

Teaching/Learning Methodology *(Note 3)*	Lectures will provide the theoretical framework to analyze the subject matter, while tutorials will facilitate in-depth discussions of selected topics from the assigned readings and digital tools. Students, working in teams, will be required to deliver oral presentations on assigned topics, enabling them to reflect on and consolidate their learning. A midterm quiz will assess students' comprehension of the course content. A term paper will further solidify students' knowledge of the subject while cultivating their independent thinking and writing skills. Students are encouraged to leverage digital tools to enhance their presentations and term paper research and writing.

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	e
	1. Quiz	30	✓	✓			✓
	2. Presentation	30	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3. Term Paper (EW requirement)	40 (10% graded by the ELC and 30% by the subject instructor)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Total	100 %					

Explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes:

For the tutorial sessions, the class will be given readings on designated topics. Students will work in groups to analyze and summarize the viewpoints and arguments presented, and then deliver an oral presentation. Other students in the class will be encouraged to engage in a discussion based on the materials and presentation, thereby enhancing their critical thinking and comprehensive understanding of this subject.

The quiz will include both factual and interpretive questions that challenge students to construct arguments related to ILOs (a), (b) &(e). Additionally, some questions will be based on readings related to ILO (e). Students are required to submit a term paper of 1500- 2500 words with detailed footnotes and references to fulfill the coursework requirement. Students may choose to submit the term paper on a particular topic that reflects their comprehensive training in ILOs (a) to (d) and demonstrates their ability to apply that knowledge.

The Term Paper will serve as the writing requirement, and will be assessed as part of the overall performance evaluation for the subject. To pass the subject, students must achieve a grade of D or above on the Writing Requirement assignment to pass the subject. And students are expected to complete all the required readings on the reading list in order to fulfil the reading requirement.

Student Study Effort Expected	Class contact:	
	▪ Lectures	26 Hrs.
	▪ Tutorials	13 Hrs.
	Other student study effort:	

	▪ Readings	40 Hrs.
	▪ Discussion	15 Hrs.
	▪ Writing	25 Hrs
	Total student study effort	119 Hrs.
Reading List and References	**Required readings (Total 330 pages):** (ER)Ying-shih Yü, *Chinese History and Culture: Sixth Century B.C.E. to Seventeenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), pp.1-90, 134-373. **References:** Benjamin A. Elman & Martin Kern, *Statecraft and Classical Learning: The Rituals of Zhou in East Asian History* (Boston: Brill, 2010) Benjamin A. Elman, *From Philosophy to Philology: Intellectual and Social Aspects of Change in Late Imperial China* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001) Chow, Kai Wing, *The Rise of Confucian Ritualism in Late Imperial China: Ethics, Classics, and Lineage Discourse* (Stanford: Stanford University Press,1994) De Bary, William Theodore. *Neo-Confucian Orthodoxy and the Learning of the Mind-and-Heart* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981) Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy, eds., *The Cambridge History of Ancient China: From the Origins of Civilization to 221 B.C.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), Michael Loewe, *The Men Who Governed Han China: Companion to A Biographical Dictionary of the Qin, Former Han and Xin Periods* (Leiden: Brill, 2004) Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *Confucianism and Family Rituals in lmperial China: A Social History of Writing About Rites* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991) Peter K. Bol, *Neo-Confucianism in History*. Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center-Harvard University Press; 2008. Peter K. Bol, *This Culture of Ours: Intellectual Transitions in T'ang and Sung China* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992) Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995) Yu, Pauline, Peter Bol, Stephen Owen and Willard Peterson, eds. *Ways with Words: Writing about Reading Texts from Early China* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press,2000)

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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