

Course Title	: Literature, Culture and Translation
Course Code	: TRA3107
Recommended Study Year	: 2
No. of Credits/Term	: 3
Mode of Tuition	: Lecture-tutorial
Class Contact Hours	: 2-hour lecture per week 1-hour tutorial per week
Category	: Required
Prerequisite	: Nil
Co-requisite	: Nil
Exclusion	: Nil
Exemption Requirement	: Nil

Brief Course Description:

This introductory course provides students with a basic understanding of literature in relation to culture and translation. Classical, modern and/or contemporary literary works from various cultural traditions will be selected. Original and translated texts in both English and Chinese, dealing with a set of themes selected from genres like fiction, poetry, drama and prose, will be examined. Different writers' approaches to these themes and writing techniques will be compared.

Language of instruction: English / Chinese

Aims:

Through organized reading and discussion, this course aims at sensitizing students to cultural differences in dealing with translation and other kinds of cross-cultural work.

Learning Outcomes (LOs):

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. describe Chinese and Western views on any theme as expressed in the literary works chosen for study;
2. identify the social, ideological and historical influences on the works studied;
3. master basic techniques in reading and analyzing literature;
4. show a basic knowledge of the differences between cultures; and
5. apply their understanding of literary texts to their translation.

Indicative Content:

This course is structured according to theme. Specific themes include:

1. women and society;
2. tradition and modernity;
3. the individual and society; and
4. history and human affairs.

Teaching Method:

Lectures and tutorials that include oral presentations and class discussion. Emphasis will be put on interactive and constructivist learning.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes:

Students' progress towards the learning outcomes will be measured by means of:

1. An oral presentation on the issues related to one (or more) of the texts, with an emphasis on independent judgment and ability to use basic research tools. [LOs 1-3]
2. A short essay that analyzes one (or more) of the texts discussed in class in relation to the theme highlighted for the course. [LOs 1-3]
3. A translation of an extract taken from the texts. [LO 5]
4. An examination with questions that require students to analyze Chinese and English texts in relation to the main theme from a critical angle. [LOs 1-5]

Assessment:

Examination: 50% (One 2-hour paper)

Continuous assessment: 50%

(Oral presentation 20%, Short essay 10%, Translation 10%, Reflective report 10%)

Required/Essential Readings:

Texts may vary from year to year and according to instructor. Examples are the works of the following modern authors (pre-modern ones can also be chosen for study):

Chinese: 郁達夫、楊絳、張辛欣、劉索拉、張潔、舒婷、王安憶、張抗抗、殘雪、史鐵生、劉青、阿城、莫言、張賢亮、沙葉新、顧城、高行健、王朔、白先勇、王文興、陳映真、張大春、西西、聶華苓、於梨華

Western: Albert Camus, Anton Chekhov, Joseph Conrad, George Eliot, William Faulkner, John Fowles, Elizabeth Gaskell, André Gide, Thomas Hardy, Ernest Hemingway, Franz Kafka, D. H. Lawrence, Thomas Mann, W. Somerset Maugham, Virginia Woolf.

Supplementary Readings:

Guerin, Wilfred. et al., *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*, 6th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Hirsch, E.D. et al., *The New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy*, 3rd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002.

Minford, John and Lau, Joseph S.M., eds., *Classical Chinese Literature*, Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2000.

Seldon, Raman, *Practicing Theory and Reading Literature: An Introduction*, Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1989.

Important Notes:

- (1) Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3 hours of class contact and 6 hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.
- (2) Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is “the presentation of another person’s work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student’s own work”. Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
- (3) Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
- (4) To enhance students’ understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course “Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness” is available on <https://pla.ln.edu.hk/>.

Rubrics for Exams

Traits	Excellent	Competent	Basic	Inadequate
Conception of argument	The argument has a clearly articulated thesis that is analytically interesting; the analysis is perceptive	The argument meets most of the criteria listed in the column to the left, but is lacking in one or more of them – or accomplishes all of them at a slightly lower level than excellence	The argument has an identifiable thesis, but it may be a bit too obvious or uninteresting; the analysis is a little superficial	The argument has an identifiable thesis, but it is quite uninteresting; there is little analysis
Use of supporting evidence	The student provides ample evidence in support of his/her thesis; evidence is well-connected to the thesis	The student provides significant amounts of supporting evidence; some part may not be clearly related to the central thesis	The student provides some supporting evidence, but less than enough; there is an obvious amount of irrelevant detail	The student does not provide enough supporting evidence; the evidence relates only weakly to the thesis
Organization and presentation	The content relates clearly to the central thesis; individual paragraphs have a clear focus; structurally very satisfying; clear connections between paragraphs; the order in which the ideas are presented makes sense	Nearly all parts of the content relate clearly to the central thesis in a clear manner; all or most individual paragraphs have a clear focus; structurally satisfying; the order in which the ideas are presented makes sense	Many parts of the content relate to the thesis in a clear manner, most individual paragraphs have a clear focus, and the order in which the ideas are presented generally makes sense	Most parts of the content do not relate to the central thesis in a clear manner; structurally confusing; ideas not presented in a proper order; connection between ideas not clear or satisfying
Language use	The student displays excellent language skills, with few grammatical usage errors, and the writing is perfectly understandable	The student makes minor errors in grammar and usage, but the writing is clear and generally understandable	The student makes several minor errors and/or a few major ones; the writing is mostly clear but may be difficult to understand in places	The student makes numerous writing errors that are serious enough that the writing is very difficult to understand

Rubrics for Essay Assignments

Traits	Excellent	Competent	Basic	Inadequate
Conception of argument	Essay has a clearly articulated thesis that is analytically interesting and somewhat original; the analysis is perceptive	Essay meets most of the criteria listed in the column to the left, but is lacking in one or more of them—or accomplishes all of them at a slightly lower level than excellence	Essay has an identifiable thesis, but it may be a bit too obvious or uninteresting, and not particularly original; the analysis is a little superficial	Essay has an identifiable thesis, but it is quite uninteresting and not at all original; there is little analysis
Use of supporting evidence	Essay provides ample evidence in support of its thesis; showing some serious research; evidence is well-connected to the thesis; documentation is clear, as in the use of footnotes and references	Essay provides significant amounts of supporting evidence, well-connected to the thesis; some part may not be clearly related to the central thesis; documentation is mostly clear	Essay provides some supporting evidence, but less than enough; only a small amount of research is conducted; there is an obvious amount of irrelevant detail; documentation is incomplete or not too clear	The evidence in the essay relates only weakly to the thesis; hardly any research is done; the evidence is poorly documented
Organization and presentation	All paragraphs relate clearly to the central thesis; individual paragraphs have a clear focus; structurally very satisfying; clear connections between paragraphs; the order in which the ideas are presented makes sense	Nearly all paragraphs relate clearly to the central thesis in a clear manner; all or most individual paragraphs have a clear focus; structurally satisfying; the order in which the ideas are presented makes sense	Most paragraphs relate to the thesis in a clear manner, most individual paragraphs have a clear focus, and the order in which the ideas are presented generally makes sense	Most paragraphs do not relate to the central thesis in a clear manner; structurally confusing; ideas not presented in the proper order; connection between ideas not clear or satisfying

Language use	Essay displays excellent English language skills, with few grammatical and usage errors, and is perfectly understandable	Essay contains minor errors in grammar and usage, but the writing is clear and generally understandable	Essay contains several minor errors and/ or a few major ones; the writing is mostly clear but may be difficult to understand in places	Essay contains numerous writing errors that are serious enough that the essay is very difficult to understand
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