

Chinese - Language and culture

Lecturer: Huimin Xie Ph.D.

Language

English

Course description and objectives

Chinese Language and Culture is a learner-centered course designed for students with no prior knowledge of the Chinese language. It aims to develop students' basic communicative competence and raise cultural awareness.

By the end of the semester, students are expected to pronounce Chinese accurately and confidently, master the correct stroke order for writing Chinese characters, and engage in everyday conversations with native speakers on the topics covered in class. They will also demonstrate an awareness of the social and cultural norms relevant to effective communication in Chinese-speaking contexts.

Audience

The course is open to students enrolled in Bocconi.

Prerequisites

No prior knowledge of the Chinese language is required.

Guidelines

Registration:

You can register for the course exclusively through the yoU@B student Diary, under the **"Sign-up for various activities"** section (*please note that this section will only be visible once registration is open; it will not appear beforehand*).

Cancellations must also be made via yoU@B Diary, and no later than the course registration deadline. No other cancellation methods will be accepted.

Registration will be confirmed a few days before the course begins through a message posted in the yoU@B student Diary.

Attendance:

- Attendance of **75% or more** of class hours: obtainment of the **Open Badge**
- Attendance of **less than 25%** of class hours: **Exclusion list**

Duration

30 hours

Teaching mode

This course will be delivered **exclusively in person**. Online mode will not be available.

Calendar

Lecture	Date	Time	Room
1	Mon 21/09/2026	18:15 - 19:45	4 (Sarfatti)
2	Wed 23/09/2026	18:15 - 19:45	42 (Sarfatti)
3	Mon 28/09/2026	18:15 - 19:45	4 (Sarfatti)
4	Wed 30/09/2026	18:15 - 19:45	42 (Sarfatti)
5	Mon 05/10/2026	18:15 - 19:45	4 (Sarfatti)
6	Wed 07/10/2026	18:15 - 19:45	42 (Sarfatti)
7	Mon 12/10/2026	18:15 - 19:45	4 (Sarfatti)
8	Wed 14/10/2026	18:15 - 19:45	42 (Sarfatti)
9	Mon 02/11/2026	18:15 - 19:45	4 (Sarfatti)
10	Wed 04/11/2026	18:15 - 19:45	42 (Sarfatti)
11	Mon 09/11/2026	18:15 - 19:45	4 (Sarfatti)
12	Wed 11/11/2026	18:15 - 19:45	42 (Sarfatti)
13	Mon 16/11/2026	18:15 - 19:45	4 (Sarfatti)
14	Wed 18/11/2026	18:15 - 19:45	42 (Sarfatti)
15	Mon 23/11/2026	18:15 - 19:45	4 (Sarfatti)

Syllabus

Lecture	Topics	Book Reference
1	a. Introduction: Standard Mandarin Chinese b. Pinyin and Characters c. Greetings and self-Introduction	PPT, Perfect Pitch Pinyin; Introductory Unit; Unit 1 "We are all one family" Encounter 1
2	a. Pinyin and Characters b. Leave taking and more introductions	Perfect Pitch pinyin; character tracing sheets; Unit 1 "We are all one family" Encounters 2
3	a. Pinyin and Characters b. Talk about where you come from	Perfect Pitch pinyin; character tracing sheets; Unit 1 "We are all one family" Encounters 3
4	a. Pinyin and Characters b. Asking for and giving phone numbers	Perfect Pitch pinyin; character tracing sheets; Unit 1 "We are all one family" Encounters 4
5	a. Pinyin and characters b. Expressing thanks, apologizing, and asking for clarification c. Cultural Bits: More on Introductions, greetings and good-byes; Every day variations	Perfect Pitch pinyin; character tracing sheets; Unit 1 "We are all one family" Encounters 5 & 6
6	a. Finding out someone's age and stating your own; b. Finding out someone's age and stating your own – Chinese style; c. Finding out someone's birth dates and stating your own;	Unit 2 "Friends from the start" Encounters 1, 2, 3;
7	a. Finding out someone's email and street address and stating your own; b. Identifying a third party's relationship to yourself c. Cultural bits: more on "self-introduction" and everyday variations	Unit 2 "Friends from the start" Encounters 4, 5, 6

8	a. Unit 2 Review b. Telling Time c. Division of the day and relative time	Unit 3 "Don't leave before I arrive" Encounters 1, 2
9	a. Days of the week b. More time words c. Making Appointment	Unit 3 "Don't leave before I arrive" Encounters 3, 4, 5
10	a. Review of Unit 3 b. Expressing Nationality c. Talking about your birthplace and where you have lived d. Cultural bits: "Time and Timeliness"	Unit 4 "If only we had met sooner" Encounters 1, 2
11	a. Talking about travel experience b. Talking about languages spoken c. Cultural bits: Guanxi and Renqing in Social Interactions	Unit 4 "If only we had met sooner" Encounters 3, 4, 5
12	a. Review of Unit 4 b. Talking about nuclear family members; c. Talking about immediate family members; d. Talking about birth order;	Unit Five: "Family and Friends" Encounters 1, 2, 3
13	a. Describing family members b. More family and personal relationships c. Extending the family d. Cultural notes: "Changing Families"	Unit Five: "Family and Friends" Encounters 4, 5
14	a. Review of Unit 4 b. Talking about school and grade level c. Discussing Career Choices d. Talking about Occupations of family and friends	Unit 6: "Happy at home and work" Encounters 1, 2, 3
15	Review	Units 1-6

Suggested bibliography

Assigned Textbook

Ning Y. Cynthia & John S. Montanaro. Encounters: Chinese Language and Culture. Yale University Press: New Haven and London.



<https://yalebooks.yale.edu/book/9780300161625/encounters/>

The companion website comes with a new textbook. If you have a used textbook, the access to the website can be purchased separately.

Available seats

The course will be activated subject to a minimum number of participants. Participation is limited to **110** places; therefore, registration will no longer be possible once this limit has been reached or after the registration period has closed. Registration may be cancelled exclusively through the yoU@B Diary no later than the registration deadline for the course.