REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS
(MA)

(See also General Regulations and Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula)

Any publication based on work approved for a higher degree should contain a reference to the effect that the work was submitted to the University of Hong Kong for the award of the degree.

The degree of Master of Arts (MA) is a postgraduate degree awarded for the satisfactory completion of a prescribed course of study in one of the following fields: Chinese Historical Studies; Chinese Language and Literature; English Studies; Linguistics; and Literary and Cultural Studies. These fields of study will not necessarily be offered every year.

MA 1 Admission requirements

To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Arts, candidates

(a) shall comply with the General Regulations;¹
(b) shall comply with the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula;
(c) shall hold
   (i) a Bachelor’s degree with honours of this University;
   (ii) in respect of the courses of study leading to the degree of Master of Arts in the field of Chinese Language and Literature, a Bachelor’s degree with honours with a major in Chinese or a closely related subject;
   (iii) in respect of the courses of study leading to the degree of Master of Arts in the field of English Studies, a Bachelor’s degree with honours with a major in English or a closely related subject;
   (iv) in respect of the courses of study leading to the degree of Master of Arts in the field of Linguistics, a Bachelor’s degree with honours with a major in Linguistics or a closely related subject; or
   (v) a qualification of equivalent standard from this University or another comparable institution accepted for this purpose; and
(d) shall satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination if required.

MA 2 Qualifying examination

(a) A qualifying examination may be set to test the candidates’ formal academic ability or their ability to follow the courses of study prescribed. It shall consist of one or more written papers or their equivalent and may include a project report.
(b) Candidates who are required to satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination shall not be permitted to register until they have satisfied the examiners in the examination.

¹ In addition to the admission requirement specified in General Regulation G 2, the Faculty also requires:

(a) TOEFL: a Test of Written English (TWE) score of 4 or above or a Writing score of 25 or above in the internet-based TOEFL (not applicable to the MA in Chinese Historical Studies and the MA in Chinese Language and Literature); and
(b) IELTS: a minimum overall Band of 7 with no subtest lower than 5.5.
MA 3 Award of degree

To be eligible for the award of the degree of Master of Arts, candidates

(a) shall comply with the General Regulations;
(b) shall comply with the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula; and
(c) shall complete the curriculum as prescribed in the syllabuses and satisfy the examiners in accordance with the regulations set out below.

MA 4 Period of study

(a) The curriculum shall normally extend
   (i) in the fields of Chinese Historical Studies and Chinese Language and Literature, over two academic years of part-time study, with a maximum period of registration of four academic years;
   (ii) in the field of English Studies, over one academic year of full-time study or two academic years of part-time study, with a maximum period of registration of two academic years of full-time study or three academic years of part-time study;
   (iii) in the field of Linguistics, over one academic year of full-time study, with a maximum period of registration of two academic years; and
   (iv) in the field of Literary and Cultural Studies, over one academic year of full-time study or two academic years of part-time study, with a maximum period of registration of two academic years of full-time study or three academic years of part-time study.
(b) Candidates shall not be permitted to extend their studies beyond the maximum period of registration specified in MA 4(a), unless otherwise permitted or required by the Board of the Faculty.

MA 5 Completion of curriculum

To complete the curriculum, candidates

(a) shall satisfy the requirements prescribed in TPG 6 of the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula;
(b) shall follow courses of instruction and complete satisfactorily all prescribed written work;
(c) shall complete and present a satisfactory capstone experience on a subject within their fields of study;
(d) shall satisfy the examiners in all prescribed courses and in any prescribed form of assessment as prescribed in the syllabuses; and
(e) shall satisfy the examiners in an oral examination if required.

MA 6 Capstone experience

Subject to the provisions of Regulation MA 5(c), the title of the capstone experience (dissertation, portfolio or individual project) shall be submitted for approval by a date as prescribed in the syllabuses for each field of study. Similarly, the capstone experience shall be presented by a date as prescribed in the syllabuses for each field of study. Candidates shall submit a statement that the capstone experience represents their own work (or in the case of conjoint work, a statement countersigned by their co-worker(s), which shows their share of the work) undertaken after registration as candidates for the degree.
MA 7  Assessment

(a) The assessment for each course shall be as specified in the syllabuses. Only passed courses will earn credits. Grades in all fields of study shall be awarded in accordance with TPG 9(a) of the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula.

(b) Candidates who have failed to satisfy the examiners on the first attempt in not more than two courses, excluding the capstone experience, in an academic year may be permitted to

(i) present themselves for re-examination in the failed course(s) on a specified date or re-submit their work for the failed course(s) for re-assessment within a specified period determined by the MA Board of Examiners, but no later than the end of the following semester (not including the summer semester); or

(ii) repeat the failed course(s) by undergoing instruction and satisfying the assessment requirements; or

(iii) for elective courses, take another course in lieu and satisfy the assessment requirements.

(c) Subject to the provisions of Regulation MA 5(c), candidates who have failed to present a satisfactory capstone experience may be permitted to revise and re-present the capstone experience within a specified period determined by the MA Board of Examiners.

(d) Candidates who have failed to satisfy the examiners in the final review in the field of English Studies may be permitted to present themselves for re-examination on a specified date determined by the MA Board of Examiners, but no later than the end of the following semester (not including the summer semester).

(e) There shall be no appeal against the results of examinations and all other forms of assessment.

MA 8  Discontinuation

Candidates who

(a) are not permitted to present themselves for re-examination/re-submission in any written examination or coursework assessment in which they have failed to satisfy the examiners or to repeat the failed course(s); or

(b) are not permitted to revise and re-present the capstone experience; or

(c) have failed to satisfy the examiners on second attempt in any coursework assessment, examination, or the capstone experience; or

(d) have failed more than two courses, excluding the capstone experience, on the first attempt in an academic year; or

(e) have exceeded the maximum period of registration as specified in MA 4

may be required to discontinue their studies under the provisions of General Regulation G 12.

MA 9  Assessment results

On successful completion of the curriculum, candidates who have shown exceptional merit may be awarded a mark of distinction, and this mark shall be recorded in the candidates’ degree diploma.

MA 10  Supplementary examination

Candidates who are unable because of illness to be present at the written examination of any course may apply for permission to present themselves for a supplementary examination of the same course.
Any such application shall be made on the form prescribed within two weeks of the first day of absence from any examination. The supplementary examination shall be held at a time to be determined by the MA Board of Examiners. Candidates who fail to satisfy the examiners in the supplementary examination shall be considered as failure on the first attempt.

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

CHINESE LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

PURPOSE

The curriculum aims to explore topics of interest in the field of Chinese Studies, to familiarize students with the latest trends in and the methodological approaches to the study of Chinese Language and Chinese Literature and to prepare them to engage in independent scholarly activities by honing their research and presentation skills.

CURRICULUM STRUCTURE

Students in this curriculum are required to complete 8 courses and a capstone experience (dissertation), i.e. to complete 60 credits in 4 consecutive semesters. Teaching and assessment are held from September of the first academic year until August of the second academic year. There is one session of two contact hours per week for each course.

13 courses will be selected from the following 3 categories and be taught in each cycle.

A Chinese Language

CHIN6101. Special Topics in Chinese Etymology (6 credits)

An in-depth study of the essential features of the Chinese characters, the principles underlying their constructions and the process of their evolution.
Assessment: 100% coursework

CHIN6102. Special Topics in Chinese Phonology (6 credits)

A thorough investigation into the distinctive characteristics of the history of Chinese phonology and a detailed study of “rhyme books” and “rhyme tables”.
Assessment: 100% coursework

CHIN6103. Special Topics in Chinese Textual Interpretation (6 credits)

A close scrutiny of the philological traditions in classical Chinese studies.
Assessment: 100% coursework

CHIN6104. Special Topics in Ancient Chinese (6 credits)

The distinguishing features and the development of the ancient Chinese language will be explored in terms of lexicology, semantics, grammar and rhetoric.
Assessment: 100% coursework

CHIN6105. Special Topics in Modern Chinese (6 credits)
A close examination of the unique features and the development of the modern Chinese language with reference to grammar, rhetoric and semantics.
Assessment: 100% coursework

CHIN6106. Special Topics in Modern Chinese Dialects (6 credits)
A variety of modern Chinese dialects will be examined according to their phonological, syntactic and lexical characteristics.
Assessment: 100% coursework

B Chinese Literature

CHIN6201. Special Topics in Classical Poetry (6 credits)
An in-depth study of Chinese shi poetry in its manifold styles and manifestations conducted through an investigation of specimens drawn from the works of celebrated poets in different historical periods.
Assessment: 100% coursework

CHIN6202. Special Topics in ci and qu Verse (6 credits)
An in-depth study of the ci and qu verses through a detailed analysis of specimens taken from the most representative compositions.
Assessment: 100% coursework

CHIN6203. Special Topics in Ancient Prose (6 credits)
Ancient Chinese prose in different forms and styles is examined through a thorough investigation into the distinctive characteristics of representative specimens taken from the works of critically acclaimed writers.
Assessment: 100% coursework

CHIN6205. Special Topics in Fiction (6 credits)
Occupying a pivotal position in Chinese literature, fictional works of various forms and styles are examined with reference to representative specimens drawn from the corpus of Chinese fictional writings.
Assessment: 100% coursework

CHIN6206. Special Topics in xiqu (Traditional Chinese Opera) (6 credits)
The defining characteristics of traditional Chinese opera will be highlighted through a close examination of specimen works created by distinguished “playwrights”.
Assessment: 100% coursework
CHIN6208. Special Topics in Modern and Contemporary Literature (6 credits)

Issues of interest on the modern and contemporary literary scenes and the trends of literary thought will be examined with reference to representative works.
Assessment: 100% coursework

CHIN6209. Studies in Literary Creation (6 credits)

The mechanics of literary creation will be explored in the light of modern literary theories. Works of great literary worth will be closely examined.
Assessment: 100% coursework

CHIN6210. Special Topics in Chinese Literary Criticism (6 credits)

An in-depth study of the distinctive features of different critical traditions through a detailed examination of the literary theories put forward in different periods.
Assessment: 100% coursework

CHIN7101. Literature from Hong Kong and Taiwan (6 credits)

This course will introduce and examine the 20th century Hong Kong and Taiwanese literature through representative writers and their works in various forms like novels, poetry and critical texts, with particular discussions on the social, cultural and historical issues arising from modern Hong Kong and Taiwan contexts, e.g. the quest for a Hong Kong identity, the urban imagination of Hong Kong, the handover of 1997, the major intellectual currents and literary movements/debates including realism, modernism, nativism, the debates surrounding Taiwanese identity and the periodization of Taiwanese history, and the notions of postcolonialism and postmodernism. Selected works will be analyzed and commented with reference to literary theories and background contexts, and investigated through the critical engagement of recent academic scholarship. The issues from literary communication, sinophone studies, minor literature in relation to the context of Hong Kong and Taiwanese literature will also be explored.
Assessment: 100% coursework

C Chinese Culture

CHIN6011. Education and Examination: the Chinese Experience (6 credits)

This course examines the history of the Chinese education and examination systems, surveys the changing thoughts about the relation of education, examination and talent nurturing, analyses the impacts of education and examination on politics, economics and society, and critically assesses the roles played by Western education and examination models in the modernization of China.
Assessment: 100% coursework

CHIN6301. Special Topics in Confucian Classics (6 credits)

Texts in the Confucian canon will be examined in great detail and their import highlighted.
Assessment: 100% coursework
CHIN6303. Special Topics in Chinese Thought and Chinese Literature (6 credits)

The intimate relation between Chinese thought and Chinese literature will be examined with reference
to sample literary works.
Assessment: 100% coursework

CHIN6304. Special Topics in Chinese Culture (6 credits)

Chinese culture in its myriad forms will be studied, the emphasis being placed on its unique features
and its impact on global developments.
Assessment: 100% coursework

CHIN7006. An Introduction to Documentary Sources in Chinese (6 credits)

This course will appeal not only to students majoring in Chinese history but to students looking to
incorporate Chinese sources into their research. Both academic knowledge and practical skills are
emphasized across the course curriculum. The academic knowledge imparted ranges from
explanations of the classification and circulation of traditional Chinese documents to an introduction
to the ideas of noted bibliographers, the special features of major overseas Chinese collections and the
latest research output on documentary sources in Chinese published by foreign scholars. In addition to
demonstrating how to search different kinds of documentary resources, including Internet resources,
the practical skills delivered include the ability to read primary historical documents. Students are also
presented with case studies elaborating the use of documentary sources in pursuit of historical
research.
Assessment: 100% coursework

CHIN7008. Intellectual History of Pre-Qin China (6 credits)

This course investigates the origin and development of the pre-Qin Chinese thought. With an
understanding of the contents and development of the pre-Qin Chinese thought, students can acquire a
solid background in Chinese intellectual history and thereby can decipher the intellectual and cultural
foundation behind the historical developments of China thereafter. The bulk of the course will be
about the various schools of thought of the Eastern Zhou period. The course will center upon the four
major pre-Qin schools of thought: Confucianism, Mohism, Daoism and Legalism. As a supplement,
other minor schools of thought will be also be covered.
Assessment: 100% coursework

CHIN7009. Traditional Chinese Thought and Its Modern Transformation (6 credits)

This course attempts to explore the characteristics of traditional Chinese thought, and investigate how
it underwent a modern transformation in a period of rapid change in the nineteenth century. The
course will analyze how the pre-modern Chinese mode of thinking in the political, economic, and
social aspects was dominated by Confucianism and later Neo-Confucianism, and how it eventually
transformed itself into the modern times under the challenges of Western learning in the late Qing. In
addition, the contemporary meanings of those traditional ideas nowadays shared by the Chinese will
also be discussed in the lectures.
Assessment: 100% coursework
CHIN7011. History Education: the Chinese Experience (6 credits)

This course provides a broad and systematic overview of the origins and development of history education from ancient time to the present in China. It examines in detail the changing thoughts about history education and analyses the impacts of history education on different aspects of the society. Assessment: 100% coursework

Capstone Experience

CHIN7998. Capstone Experience: Seminars and Dissertation in Chinese Language and Literature (12 credits)

Students are required to attend seminars and complete a dissertation as a capstone experience.

(a) Seminars: The dissertation writing guide including research methodology and skills will be introduced to students in their second year of study. Students will present their research plans individually for discussions and interchange of ideas and approaches with their peers and teachers.

(b) Dissertation: In the second year of study, each student will be assigned a supervisor at the beginning of the First Semester, and then has to submit a dissertation topic for approval by May 1. The dissertation, which should normally be around 20,000 characters in Chinese or 15,000 words in English, should be submitted by August 1 of the second year of study.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Medium of Instruction

Courses will be conducted in Cantonese or Putonghua.