Fostering Second-Culture Understanding and Personal Growth through Chinese Calligraphy: Challenges and Takeaways[*]

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Abstract
This paper explores the transformative impact of developing a Chinese calligraphy course within a language program. The course design integrates cultural elements like festivals, philosophies, and poetry to provide a holistic and interdisciplinary learning experience. Rather than a lecture-based approach, the curriculum guides learners to connect their personal experiences with Chinese writing through self-reflective practices, fostering deeper cultural understanding. Challenges include maintaining enrollment in non-Chinese-dominant contexts, balancing course complexity and simplicity, and ensuring effective calligraphy demonstrations both in and out of class. Addressing these challenges requires thoughtful course design and guidance. By offering possible solutions, this paper highlights how the course fosters learners' mindfulness, creativity, and technical skills while connecting them to Chinese traditions. Such curriculum development underscores the value of innovative pedagogy in engaging students with this exquisite art form.

Key words
Chinese Calligraphy, curriculum design, Chinese pedagogy, cultural understanding, personal growth

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1. Introduction

Chinese calligraphy plays a vital role in representing traditional Chinese culture and serves as a profound medium for understanding the heritage and values embedded within the language. For students learning Chinese, acquiring basic knowledge of calligraphy not only enhances their appreciation of the written language but also provides insights into the cultural and historical contexts that shaped it. With a history as long as China itself, Chinese calligraphy connects to other art forms and serves as the foundational element of every branch of Chinese art (Chiang, 1973). As both an artistic and cultural practice, calligraphy offers learners a unique opportunity to explore the interplay of art, cultural values, and personal growth within Chinese tradition.

This research examines the design and impact of a Chinese calligraphy course that integrates cultural immersion, interdisciplinary exploration, and self-reflective practices. The course is structured around three key objectives: (1) to provide a basic understanding of the Chinese writing system and essential calligraphy skills, (2) to explore the historical evolution and cultural significance of calligraphy, and (3) to foster understanding and discussion of fundamental Chinese cultural values. By engaging with festivals, philosophies, paintings, poetry, and idioms through the medium of calligraphy, students are encouraged to connect with core aspects of Chinese culture while reflecting on their personal growth.

The development of such a course emphasizes cultural immersion, broadens students' horizons beyond linguistic competence, and promotes personal growth through artistic expression. Moreover, by offering a culturally enriching experience, the course has the potential to positively influence enrollment in Chinese language programs, demonstrating the value of integrating cultural artifacts like calligraphy into language curricula.

Curriculum development is a complex and challenging process that requires balancing pedagogical objectives with the cultural and artistic nuances of the subject matter. This paper discusses the three major challenges that the instructor encountered during the process, along with some potential solutions. Based on that discussion, it seeks to address the question: How does a self-reflective Chinese calligraphy course impact students' cultural understanding and personal growth? In doing so, it highlights the transformative potential of calligraphy as a pedagogical tool, offering insights into how innovative course design can bridge the gap between language learning and cultural engagement.

2. Challenges in course development

2.1 Maintaining enrollment

Enrollment is crucial for the sustainability and success of any course, and a calligraphy class is no exception. The first challenge is maintaining enrollment in the calligraphy class.

At institutions where Chinese culture and language are not predominant, fewer students are likely to enroll in courses centered on Chinese traditions. The general curriculum and student interests often align more closely with dominant cultural and linguistic contexts, leaving specialized courses like calligraphy at a disadvantage. This cultural gap poses challenges in attracting a consistent and substantial number of students, as they may perceive such courses as unfamiliar or outside their comfort zones. During my time at various institutions, I received emails from students inquiring about the time commitment and level of difficulty, often due to their limited knowledge of Chinese language and culture. It is understandable that students prefer to enroll in courses they feel prepared to handle rather than choosing them arbitrarily.

Additionally, while the idea of learning Chinese calligraphy may initially spark interest, it is difficult to gauge how motivated students are to explore the subject in depth. Many express

curiosities upon hearing about the course proposal, captivated by the novelty of engaging with a unique writing style and specialized tools. However, for some, this curiosity might only be strong enough to sustain participation in a one-time workshop or event rather than a semester-long course that requires consistent dedication and effort.

Finally, even students who are genuinely passionate about calligraphy often struggle to fit the course into their schedules due to competing academic priorities. Core courses required for their majors frequently take precedence, leaving little room for elective courses, no matter how appealing. These competing demands can deter even the most enthusiastic students from committing to the class, highlighting the need for careful consideration of both student and departmental expectations.

These factors collectively make maintaining enrollment a significant and ongoing challenge, requiring thoughtful strategies to attract and retain students while ensuring the course's long-term viability.

2.2 Balancing complexity and simplicity

Calligraphy is a broad art form with a rich and intricate cultural history. Simplifying this wealth of content while retaining its essence poses a significant challenge.

Students with no prior background in Chinese learning often experience high levels of anxiety due to the perceived complexities of the subject matter. This anxiety can hinder their enjoyment and reduce their willingness to engage with the course. However, presenting overly simplistic content risks diminishing the depth and cultural richness of calligraphy, potentially making the course feel superficial and less meaningful. Striking a balance between these extremes is essential to maintaining the authenticity of the art form while ensuring accessibility for all students.

To achieve this balance, innovative pedagogical strategies must be implemented. These strategies need to enable the structured delivery of comprehensive input, allowing students to absorb and internalize the material gradually. Through this process, students can build confidence and develop a deeper appreciation for the cultural and artistic dimensions of calligraphy, resulting in a more fulfilling and meaningful learning experience.

2.3 Guidance and demonstration

Effective learning requires careful alignment between input and intake, providing comprehensive materials, guiding students step by step, and offering demonstrations without overwhelming them. A well-structured demonstration pushes students to observe before they take action. This, in turn, forms the third challenge.

Guiding students step by step is essential to helping them grasp the intricacies of the art form without feeling overwhelmed. In-class live demonstrations allow students to observe proper techniques, but satisfying everyone with a single demonstration is difficult due to varying prior knowledge and different learning styles. Additionally, it is nearly impossible for the instructor to provide individual feedback to all students during a live demonstration, as attention must be divided among the class. Without personalized attention, some students may struggle to progress at the same pace. Furthermore, in-class demonstrations are limited to the duration of the class. Students with limited Chinese learning backgrounds may find it challenging to complete homework or practice after class without the ability to review the demonstration. To ensure students have ongoing access to guidance, audio and video demonstrations should also be made available outside of class, allowing them to review and reinforce their learning at their own pace. However, preparing these resources and finding suitable materials is no small task.

In summary, maintaining enrollment, balancing the complexity and simplicity of course content, and providing effective guidance and demonstrations are key challenges in developing a Chinese calligraphy curriculum. Addressing these challenges requires thoughtful planning and the integration of alternative instructional methods. The following section will discuss potential solutions to overcome these obstacles and optimize the overall learning experience.

3. Potential solutions

3.1 Solutions for enrollment

To ensure a healthy and sustained enrollment in a course, understanding the expectations of both the institution and students is crucial. When developing a new course, it is wise to engage in discussions with department chairs and students to determine how the course aligns with the broader curriculum. For example, the calligraphy course I developed fits into two general education requirements at the institution: "International (Non-Western)" and "Arts." At other institutions, the course might fulfill cultural diversity requirements or be incorporated differently into a general education curriculum. When interacting with students, highlighting aspects of the course that resonate with their interests—such as stress relief, creativity, or cultural appreciation—can effectively capture their attention and foster enthusiasm.

Once the course proposal and syllabus are drafted, timely and strategic promotion becomes essential. Colleagues teaching similar or related courses are invaluable allies in this effort. It can be helpful to ask if they are willing to share information about the new course on their course websites or announce it verbally in their classes. For instance, I was honored to be invited by a medieval historian colleague to present my calligraphy course during his Medieval Latin Calligraphy class. A brief demonstration of tools and techniques sparked significant interest among the students. Providing handouts or digital flyers with course information and encouraging colleagues and students to share them is another effective way to recruit potential enrollees.

In addition to leveraging colleagues' support, cultural events offer a powerful platform for advertising the course and attracting students. Collaborating with cultural and language clubs to host calligraphy demonstrations or set up booths at campus festivals can be particularly impactful.

Picture 1. the Moon Festival event

Picture 2. Chun Jie (Chinese Luner New Year) event

As shown in the Pictures 1 and 2 above, the visual appeal of calligraphy layouts often draws students to stop by and experience the joy of writing with brush and ink. While engaging in these

activities, students can ask questions, express their curiosities, and hear success stories from past participants, all of which may inspire them to explore the course further and deepen their engagement with calligraphy.

Finally, designing a welcoming and well-structured orientation on the first day of the course plays a vital role in maintaining student enrollment. This session should serve as both an introduction to the course and an opportunity to build excitement and confidence. Typically, the orientation includes an overview of the semester's activities, a clear explanation of course requirements, and, most importantly, details about assessments. Providing this information helps students form a clear picture of what to expect, preparing them both mentally and physically for the challenges and joys of learning. A well-executed orientation can alleviate unnecessary anxieties, foster confidence, and set the tone for a successful semester.

3.2 Solutions for balancing complexity and simplicity

In balancing complexity and simplicity in the calligraphy course, I propose four key strategies: practical in-class support, pre-class discussions, customized weekly schedules, and interactive writing activities. These methods ensure the course remains engaging and meaningful for all students, regardless of their background.

First, in-class practice is designed to be accessible to all students. Immediate feedback during writing sessions supports those without prior Chinese experience, helping them master calligraphy through manageable steps. Many students, lacking prior learning experience and solid knowledge of the course content, may feel nervous when the instructor approaches and observes their work. Therefore, when providing feedback, it is important to first acknowledge what they have done well before pointing out mistakes or suggesting improvements. Instructors should guide students in structuring characters more aesthetically and teach the fundamental techniques of using the brush effectively. It is important to remember that the goal of the feedback is not to train professional calligraphers but to help and encourage students as long as they follow basic writing principles and put in diligent effort. Starting with simple strokes and gradually progressing to more complex characters ensures steady development of skills and confidence.

Second, pre-class discussions on an online platform ease performance pressure while encouraging engagement. Students share ideas, questions, or reflections and interact with peers before class, gaining familiarity with the material. In-class lectures are then tailored to these contributions, addressing specific concerns and fostering a dynamic and collaborative learning environment. As native speakers, we often take certain cultural practices for granted, as they are ingrained in our subconscious through lifelong exposure. Students' questions, however, can draw our attention to these practices and emphasize the need to transform what is familiar to us into new knowledge for them. For example, when discussing Chinese traditional festivals, students noted that both the Moon Festival and Chun Jie (Lunar New Year) focus on family reunions but differ significantly in their customs and cultural significance. This is an observation that Chinese native speakers seldom discuss or even think of in this way. Students' comments on this topic inspired a class discussion, where they not only practiced calligraphy but also gained a deeper understanding of cultural values.

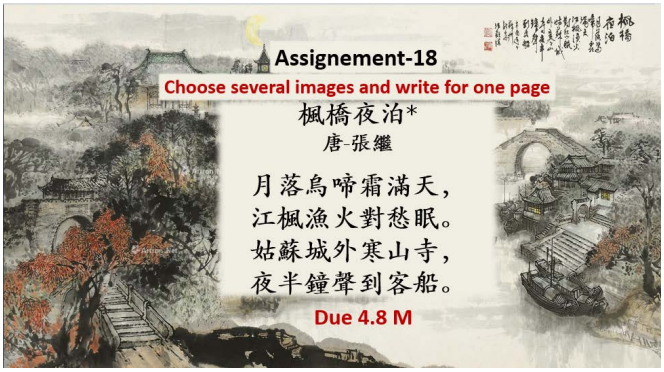
Third, a customized weekly schedule helps students monitor their progress and supports incremental development. Using visual cues, such as differentiated colors for weekly topics, highlights changes in discussion themes while maintaining clarity and continuity. Additionally, the schedule encourages students to start planning their final projects early in the course. Beginning in week four, I integrate potential final project options into weekly writing practices, ensuring they

are marked for easy identification. This structure promotes thoughtful planning and minimizes last-minute stress.[1]

Finally, interactive writing activities ensure engagement and comprehension. When discussing poems, images, and paintings in calligraphy, I used the poem 枫桥夜泊 (Fēngqiáo Yè Bó, *Mooring by Maple Bridge at Night*). Rather than explaining the poem character by character and line by line—a method impractical for in-class practice—I presented several paintings and invited students to evaluate which one best captured the poem's essence based on their preparation. The last painting featured embedded buttons labeled with English translations of images from the poem. Students were encouraged to select the image they found most appealing without needing prior knowledge of the Chinese characters (Picture 3). Once students made their choices, the button will link to slides displaying the Chinese characters along with demonstration videos (Picture 4). This visual and interactive method deepened students' understanding of the poem while allowing them to practice writing with greater interest and engagement. During class, students practiced writing the selected characters alongside the videos and images. Homework focuses on selected characters rather than entire poems, making the task approachable yet meaningful (Picture 5).

Picture 3. Images with English labels[2]

Picture 4. Demonstration video for the image "frosty sky"



Picture 5. Homework assignment for calligraphy class

By integrating these strategies, the course strikes a balance between accessibility and depth, accommodating diverse student backgrounds while preserving the cultural and artistic richness of

[1] Sample weekly schedules can be found in Appendices.
[2] Pictures 3, 4 and 5 are screenshots from the class slides, created by Yawei Li in 2024.

calligraphy. This approach creates an engaging, inclusive, and enriching learning experience for all.

3.3 Solution for effective guidance and demonstration

The solution to the teaching challenge can be approached from three interconnected aspects.

First, using pre-recorded videos instead of relying solely on live demonstrations in class ensures consistent instruction and maximizes class time. While there are various online videos available, issues with copyright and the lack of alignment with my customized curriculum prompted me to create and pre-record all demonstrations myself. These videos can be played during class, allowing me to focus on providing individualized feedback by walking around and observing students' work. This approach reduces the need for repeated live demonstrations and fosters a more personalized and engaging learning environment.

Second, scaffolding is critical to effective teaching. Students cannot be expected to write complicated characters at the beginning of their learning journey. Even for easy characters, it is essential to break them down into manageable components and provide strategic guidance with deconstructed demonstrations. This step-by-step approach helps students build confidence and competence as they progress.

Picture 6. Basic strokes practice in class

Picture 7. Deconstruction of the combined character "招財進寶" (zhāo cái jìn bǎo, meaning "bring in wealth and treasure"). The four characters are positioned as follows: 招 (zhāo, bring in) in the top-left, 財 (cái, wealth) in the top-right, 進 (jìn, to enter) in the bottom-left, and 寶(bǎo, treasures) in the bottom-right.

Picture 8. Demonstration video for the combined character "招財進寶" (zhāo cái jìn bǎo, meaning "bring in wealth and treasure")[3]

[3] Slides and demonstration video are created by Yawei Li in 2024.

As shown in Picture 6, students begin with basic stroke practice in class. When we move on to the topic of festivals, we write a combined character, creating a fun and engaging experience. Picture 7 is a screenshot of one of my class slides. After deconstructing the characters, students realize that the complex character is composed of four simpler ones. While watching the demonstration video depicted in Picture 8, they actively practice and experiment with the character during class.

Finally, I complemented the video demonstrations with audio recordings, allowing students to hear the correct pronunciation of the characters, idioms, and poems they are learning to write. These resources are particularly valuable for students with limited Chinese backgrounds, as they offer additional support for homework and practice outside of class. While preparing these materials required significant effort, their long-term benefits—including improved accessibility, enhanced learning outcomes, and greater inclusivity—make this approach highly effective in addressing diverse student needs.

Refining the course structure and instructional methods can create a learning environment that supports student engagement and skill development. The following takeaways reflect broader insights gained from the development of calligraphy course.

4. Takeaways

4.1 Deeper appreciation for this art form

At the start of the course, many students approached calligraphy with curiosity but also apprehension, often expressing sentiments like, "It's so pretty and fun, but I can't do it… you made it look so easy, but it takes me forever!" As the semester progressed, however, they began to immerse themselves in the intricacies of this revered art form, discovering its depth and artistic principles. By exploring various cultural elements in an interdisciplinary manner—such as combining history, art, and language—students gained a deeper appreciation for Chinese calligraphy. One student remarked, "One of my favorite parts was the one time we got to try running script style, as it kept the balance and shape of regular script but allowed more movement and freedom in expression." Another noted, "Chinese calligraphy makes you pull from the artistic principles; it turns you into a designer."[4]

This interdisciplinary engagement extended to contextual understanding as well, with students reflecting on how the meaning and placement of characters influenced their artistic choices. As one student observed, "Throughout calligraphy, we had to pay close attention to the context of the characters we were writing. That context would then influence the placement on the page, and if we so choose, the artwork accompanying it." Another described the experience as "an opportunity to immerse myself in the timeless beauty and elegance of this revered art form."

Through structured practice, students began to master stroke order and analyze demonstration videos more critically, refining their technique and understanding of brush strength. By the end, I could see their growing confidence and skill, reflected in their innovative final projects that showcased a true appreciation for the art form.

4.2 Personal development beyond academics

The calligraphy course offered students more than just an academic exploration of Chinese art—it fostered personal growth and self-discovery.

By engaging with the philosophical underpinnings of Chinese traditions, students found meaningful connections to their own lives. Many shared how the course taught them to embrace patience and mindfulness, an unexpected yet invaluable takeaway. One student reflected, "This

[4] Quotes are chosen from students' term papers and course evaluation.

course has taught me the essence of patience and calm. I looked forward to this class every meeting because it was such a necessary, peaceful ending to my day, whilst gaining skills and receiving credit." Another expressed the meditative quality of calligraphy, noting, "There is something inherently meditative about the rhythmic strokes and deliberate movements, allowing me to enter a state of mindfulness."

In a world that often feels overwhelming, the class became a sanctuary for many. One student described it as "a sanctuary of creativity and tranquility in an increasingly hectic world." Another remarked on how the biggest challenge wasn't the technical aspects of writing, but rather cultivating patience: "We all live such a busy, fast-paced lifestyle; the biggest challenge throughout the course wasn't even the writing. No, it was the patience."

I was thrilled to see that the students' experiences extended far beyond cultural knowledge—they found a source of balance and personal growth that will stay with them long after the course ended.

4.3 Broadened second-culture understanding

The most profound takeaway from the calligraphy course is its ability to broaden students' understanding of a second culture, fostering connections and resonations that enrich their worldview.

By exploring the values and themes embedded in Chinese culture, students found parallels with their own lives, deepening their appreciation for diverse perspectives. One student reflected, "I grew up learning through stories and legends, so hearing about this similarity in China was fascinating." Others resonated with the universal themes we discussed, such as resilience and joy amidst challenges. As one student noted, "Life is full of trials and tribulations, but being able to form connection, love, and happiness despite this is something I strongly relate to, as these seemed to be themes throughout all of the different parts of Chinese culture we talked about."

The course also encouraged personal reflection, with students finding therapeutic value in cultural practices. "The Chinese culture is filled with an abundance of quotes and sayings that correlate with different meanings of life," one student shared. "I am able to take them and use them as therapeutic practices during times that I want to isolate from social surroundings and write calligraphy." These reflections not only strengthened their understanding of Chinese traditions but also offered new perspectives on their own experiences and way of life.

By engaging with these themes, students became more positive when facing struggles, carrying forward the wisdom and resilience they discovered through the art of calligraphy.

While these takeaways highlight the course's success in nurturing cultural appreciation and personal growth, there are additional pedagogical concerns in developing and sustaining the course. The next section will touch upon three major concerns in brief.

5. Teachers' concerns

5.1 Make pre-discussion organized

As mentioned in section 3.2, pre-discussion can be utilized to ease performance pressure while encouraging engagement. Instructors may have concerns about organizing pre-discussions effectively, as a disorganized process can confuse students and increase anxiety, making them less eager to attend class.

To ensure a smooth and effective pre-discussion, students will be provided with a fair amount of reading materials that must be reviewed before class. They will then be required to post their questions, comments, or reflections online for both their peers and the teacher to read. In addition

to posting their own reflections, students must also engage meaningfully with their peers' posts by offering thoughtful responses—simply "liking" posts will not be accepted. While the teacher does not need to actively participate in the discussion board, the in-class lectures are based on the insights and questions raised in these posts. To allow enough time for the instructor to prepare the mini-lecture, students must submit their posts by the night before class at the latest. Although students may initially feel unsure about the expected length of their posts or the depth of their responses, with practice, they will become familiar with the expectations and develop a comfortable routine.

This approach ensures that students are well-prepared for class while fostering peer-to-peer interaction and active learning.

5.2 The instructor's calligraphy skills

A common concern among instructors considering teaching calligraphy is whether they need to be experts in the art form. My answer is no. The goal of a calligraphy course is not to train students to become professional calligraphers but to provide them with a unique perspective through which they can access and engage with the target culture. The emphasis is on guiding students to appreciate the cultural and artistic value of Chinese calligraphy, rather than highlighting the teacher's personal calligraphy skills or standing in the field.

The teacher's role is to guide students towards a meaningful and enjoyable learning experience, rather than focusing on demonstrating technical mastery. It is more valuable to work alongside students, helping them recognize their own progress, than to simply impress them with one's own expertise. Calligraphy should be a shared learning experience where both the teacher and students grow together.

While it is not necessary for a teacher to be an expert calligrapher, it is important to have a solid understanding of basic calligraphy principles. For example, the knowledge of brush techniques, care for the brush, and an appreciation of different writing styles, etc. Additionally, personal experience with writing calligraphy can enrich the teacher's ability to guide students effectively. These fundamental aspects of calligraphy may seem time-consuming to master, but for native Chinese speakers and professional pedagogues, they are relatively quick to acquire. Thus, instructors can take the time to familiarize themselves with the basics before launching a calligraphy course. Furthermore, as the *Book of Rites*[5] states, "教学相长" (jiào xué xiāng zhǎng, teaching and learning grow together), instructors can progress alongside their students, fostering a collaborative and dynamic learning environment.

5.3 Handling student questions and unknowns

Instructors may feel uncertain about addressing students' questions or challenges. Some students, particularly heritage learners, might share information about their relatives or previous instructors who are calligraphers, or even bring in impressive-looking calligraphy pieces for appreciation or explanation. When confronted with unfamiliar works or aspects of the art that they have not mastered, instructors may feel embarrassed or worry about their credibility in the classroom.

This concern is understandable, as the field of calligraphy is vast, and even experts continuously encounter new styles and interpretations. However, encountering something unfamiliar during a course does not diminish an instructor's qualifications; rather, it highlights the humility of a true educator and underscores the infinite nature of learning. By openly engaging

[5] The *Book of Rites* (礼记, Lǐ Jì) is a classic Confucian masterpiece that outlines traditional Chinese rituals, social norms, personal development, and ethical principles. It is a treasure of cultural heritage and preservation.

with new information or calligraphy pieces alongside students, instructors demonstrate that the learning process is ongoing and collaborative, fostering a classroom culture of mutual respect and curiosity. Moreover, it is essential for instructors to convey that the purpose of studying and presenting calligraphy is not to compare whose work is superior but to engage in a form of non-verbal communication that emphasizes mutual appreciation and cultural exchange. When students share pieces or experiences related to calligraphy, instructors can frame these moments as opportunities to deepen collective understanding and explore diverse perspectives.

Instead of positioning themselves as the sole authority, instructors can act as facilitators of dialogue and exploration. For instance, when a student presents a calligraphy piece that the instructor cannot immediately interpret, they can guide the class in analyzing the piece collectively, encouraging observations about technique, style, or historical context. Similarly, instructors can share their own learning experiences and acknowledge the diversity of interpretations within the art form.

By modeling curiosity and humility while allowing for different voices and inviting various interpretations, this approach to handling "embarrassing moments" sends a powerful message: calligraphy is not about competition or isolated mastery, but about participating in a shared cultural tradition that values respect, mutual appreciation, and open-mindedness. This approach not only alleviates pressure on the instructor but also enriches the classroom experience, creating a collective journey of discovery where every participant, including the instructor, learns and grows.

6. Conclusion and future development

This paper showcased the challenges and insights gained from developing a Chinese calligraphy course, addressing three core issues: course enrollments, balancing complexity and simplicity, and effective demonstrations. By resolving these challenges, the course not only fosters in students a deeper appreciation for Chinese calligraphy as an art form but also enriches their personal development beyond academics and broadens their horizons regarding second-culture understanding. Additionally, the project responded to key pedagogical concerns: organizing pre-class discussions, eligible teachers' calligraphy competency, and reacting to students' challenging questions despite limited knowledge of calligraphy. These considerations ensure that the course promotes both cultural appreciation and personal growth in a supportive learning environment.

Calligraphy embodies the Chinese aesthetic (Chiang, 1973) and reflects the essence of Chinese thought and expression. Its historical influence extends to Japan, Korea, and Vietnam, which initially adopted Chinese script before developing their own systems (Portal, 2004). For future development and curriculum refinement, incorporating these historical connections into the course might enhance learners' understanding of calligraphy as a cultural cornerstone and a medium for dialogue with other East Asian traditions. The course should inspire students to view calligraphy as a bridge between personal reflection and a broader cultural perspective. Beyond promoting individual growth, it supports language acquisition and equips students to engage with Chinese-speaking environments through a nuanced second-culture worldview. The central challenge lies in balancing the cultivation of personal well-being with the construction of this broader cultural perspective.

Effective communication between individuals from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds often requires co-constructing meanings and memories (Walker, 2021). Awareness of both cultural contexts lead to the Third Cultural Space (Jian, 2021), where understanding emerges through the dynamic integration of these perspectives. Thinking this way, a calligraphy course framed within this concept can support learners of Chinese language and communication

by demonstrating how cultural contexts shift based on conversational settings and participants' experiences. By integrating native perspectives with Chinese cultural experiences, students gain a deeper connection to the art and its cultural significance. Collaborative projects, such as reflecting on emotional and cultural responses to calligraphy styles, further enrich this process.

By broadening its scope, the Chinese calligraphy course can transcend its role as an art class, evolving into a holistic platform for fostering personal well-being, cultural empathy, and second-culture understanding. Continuing to develop this approach in the future not only nurtures personal introspection but also equips learners to navigate and thrive in multicultural environments, solidifying the course as a practical tool for cross-cultural communication and growth in the years to come.

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Appendix-1 Class schedule for Chun Jie (Chinese Lunar New Year) week

COURSE WEEKLY SCHEDULE

This schedule is subject to change.
All readings/videos need to be completed before class.
All practice assignments (homework) must be submitted via Moodle-Assignment with photos of your completed work before the upcoming class.
All phrases with a "" on the side can be your options for the final project.*

WEEK-6

Monday (02.12)	Wednesday (02.14)
Chinese Calligraphy and Traditional Festivals-2	Chinese Calligraphy and Traditional Festivals-3
Video-1: 3 Legends about Chinese Lunar New Year https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ARCXN6MaeU **Video-2: How to Celebrate Chinese New Year** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKoaVYALLVI **Reading-1:** **Why Chinese New Year is called Spring Festival?** https://www.chinahighlights.com/travelguide/festivals/chinese-new-year-spring-festival.htm **Reading-2 (Spring Couplets; 春聯)** https://www.chinahighlights.com/travelguide/culture/chinese-couplets.htm **Class Practice (BRING PRACTICE TOOLS)** ✓ Best wishes: 年年有餘* ✓ A fun writing of "招財進寶" **PA** ✓ 年年有餘* **Due 02.16 (W) on Moodle-Assignment 7**	**Videos (Chinese Valentine's Day; 七夕)** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WCbztd58LLE https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=659OFr6qIv8 **Class Practice (BRING PRACTICE TOOLS)** ✓ 執子之手，與子偕老。* **PA** ✓ 執子之手，與子偕老。* **Due 02.19 (M) on Moodle-Assignment 8**

Appendix-2 Class schedule for Moon Festival discussion

COURSE WEEKLY SCHEDULE

- *This schedule is subject to change.*
- *All readings need to be completed before class.*
- *All practice assignments (homework) must be submitted via Moodle-Assignment with photos.*
- *All phrases with a "*" on the side can be your options for the final project.*

WEEK-8

Monday (02.26)	Wednesday (02.28)
Chinese Calligraphy and Traditional Festivals-5	Chinese Calligraphy and Traditional Festivals-6
Readings (Mid-Autumn Day; 中秋節) https://www.chinahighlights.com/festivals/mid-autumn-festival.htm https://www.chinahighlights.com/festivals/mid-autumn-festival-story.htm https://www.chinahighlights.com/festivals/mid-autumn-festival-jade-rabbit.htm **Video** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EMMU1YJadzE&t=11s **Class Practice** (BRING PRACTICE TOOLS) ✓ 但願人長久，千里共嬋娟。* (宋•蘇軾-水調歌頭) **PA** ✓ 但願人長久，千里共嬋娟。* Due 03.1 (F) on Moodle-Assignment 11	**Readings (Moon; 月亮)** http://en.chinaculture.org/chineseway/2007-11/20/content_121946.htm **Videos** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iuzbA2I4KO8 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T01yxgM2wS8&t=142s **Class Practice** (BRING PRACTICE TOOLS) ✓ 海上生明月，天涯共此時。* (唐•張九齡-望月懷古) **PA** 海上生明月，天涯共此時。* Due 03.11 (M) on Moodle-Assignment 12

Appendix-3 Class schedule for Chinese philosophy discussion

COURSE WEEKLY SCHEDULE

- *This schedule is subject to change.*
- *All readings need to be completed before class.*
- *All practice assignments (homework) must be submitted via Moodle-Assignment with photos.*
- *All phrases with a "*" on the side can be your options for the final project.*

WEEK-11

Monday (03.18)	Wednesday (03.20)
Chinese Calligraphy and Philosophy-3	Chinese Calligraphy and Philosophy-4
Readings (Daoism 道家 1; Laozi 老子) Search and select one passage (in English translation) from *Laozi/Taotzu (Dao De Jing/Tao Te Ching)*. https://ctext.org/dao-de-jing/ens and share your thoughts on Moodle. **Class Practice (BRING PRACTICE TOOLS)** ✓ 無為* ✓ 上善若水* ✓ 知足常樂* **PA** ✓ Practice "無為", "上善若水" and "知足常樂" for 1 page. **Due 03.22 (F) on Moodle-Assignment 14**	**Readings (Taoism 道家 2; Zhuangzi 莊子)** Read the story "莊周夢蝶" and share your thoughts on Moodle. https://www.thechinastory.org/yearbooks/yearbook-2019-china-dreams/forum-illusions-and-transformations-the-many-meanings-of-meng-%E5%A4%A2/zhuangzi-and-his-butterfly-dream-the-etymology-of-meng-%E5%A4%A2/ **Class Practice (BRING PRACTICE TOOLS)** ✓ 天人合一* ✓ 子非魚，安知魚之樂？* **PA** ✓ Practice "天人合一", and "子非魚，安知魚之樂" for 1 page. **Due 03.25 (Monday) on Moodle-Assignment 15**