

**The Chinese Program  
at  
Blue Marble University**

Expanded Master's Degree Curriculum 1A  
For Students With a Basic Knowledge of Chinese

Curriculum Subject to Change Without Notice  
Based on Instructor Recommendations  
And Adjusted for Progress of Student

**Overview:** This Curriculum 1A assumes the student has some basic knowledge of Chinese language at the Beginner or Intermediate Beginner level. The program starts with some review of the basics and then moves on toward advanced Beginner to Intermediate work. The Master Degree portion of the program is typically 2-4 years, during which time proficiency in speaking and reading is stressed with some introduction to writing.

This is a self-learning program that comes with a Mentor (Coach) to assist, to guide, to evaluate progress, to make corrections as necessary. The more the student is able to put in to the program, the more they will get out of it.

If at any time, you feel overwhelmed, please discuss with your Mentor/Advisor about the two avenues to take in this situation: (A) Proceed more slowly and carefully, little bits at a time; or (B) request a drop down to an easier course. Don't worry, no grades are affected, nor is any specific level of proficiency required. You will know yourself if you are doing well and making progress.

Our goal is to train you to a certain level of proficiency in the Chinese language and to give you the seal of a Master's Degree for your efforts. Your Academic Record will include your Final Comprehensive Oral and Reading Exams, along with your Presentation to the Faculty (in Chinese) to best highlight your skills for a potential employer (as these will be published to your Online Portfolio. Don't worry, you will have no problems so long as you conscientiously stick to our program, which is not meant for geniuses, but rather for working adults with other responsibilities.

Our program, although designated with respect to Terms of study (3 Trimesters) is in reality a self paced program that you will proceed at your own pace. We are set up for two years, but if you need longer, that is OK. **However, it is always best to move along at decent pace and not get lost or discouraged.**

The program concludes with the student's finalization of the Online Portfolio, which may require additional independent work and development. There is no dissertation requirement, but the creation of a satisfactory online digital portfolio highlighting independent works and writings is required. The independent works and writings must be of a professional quality and creatively presented. Faculty will guide and mentor the student throughout this process

**Levels of Proficiency:** We generally follow the proficiency levels advanced by the Hutong School (Beijing) which has, rightly or wrongly, become pretty much of an international standard to measure Chinese language proficiency. <https://www.hutong-school.com/about-us>

## HSK Test Levels

Written Test	Oral Test
HSK- Level 1	HSK (Elementary)
HSK- Level 2	
HSK- Level 3	HSK (Intermediate)
HSK- Level 4	
HSK- Level 5	HSK (Advanced)
HSK- Level 6	

### HSK- Level 1

Students can recognize and use some basic characters, and can understand and say some simple spoken phrases. This level prepares students for further studies of the Chinese language.

### HSK- Level 2

Student can use the Chinese language on a basic level in day-to-day situations.

### HSK- Level 3

Students of beginner-intermediate level that can complete day-to-day tasks in life, at school or at work, and can easily communicate when travelling around China.

### HSK- Level 4

Students can speak about a broad range of topics in Chinese and can communicate with native speakers on a high level.

### HSK- Level 5

Students can read Chinese newspapers and books, watch movies, write and make long presentations using the Chinese language.

### HSK- Level 6

Students can easily understand any information in Chinese and can freely express themselves in both written and oral form.

An example of the HSK Level 2 text is [HERE](#), might be worth downloading for review against your skill level: [INSERT PDF HSK2]

You can test your Current Level Here: <https://www.hutong-school.com/hsk-levels>

We will be relying heavily on Kendra Schaefer's wonderful reading site:

<http://chinesereadingpractice.com/>

She has developed possibly the only Reading Level classification, which makes a lot of sense to us:

**Beginner** – Very very few of these texts are actually beginner tests; at least I haven't been able to find any real beginner stuff yet... This is because for any story, article or essay to really take shape, it usually must involve some intermediate grammar or intermediate vocabulary. This is why most truly beginner textbooks stick to dialogs as opposed to actual articles. In order to do any real reading, you've got to at least know the basics of sentence structure. I will classify something as beginner if at least a couple of the following criteria are met:

- The sentence structure is easy throughout
- It contains mostly simpler words that are in the dictionary

- There is no modern slang
- The subject matter is basic / or for children
- It's not too long
- It contains few or no idioms
- It contains intermediate vocabulary but the story structure is very repetitive, so you can pick up the thread more easily as you go along.

**Intermediate** – I classify something as intermediate if:

- It's a longer piece that you have to hold a narrative thread through.
- The language is intermediate or upper-intermediate.
- There are some light idioms.

**Advanced** – Most of what's out there online is advanced reading. That's why as of now, there are more advanced texts on here than anything else.

- It contains many specialized or technical words (technology, health, beauty, geography, etc.)
- It contains high-level structures, like newspaper-y or literary writing styles.
- It contains any archaic words.
- The sentence structure is very complicated.
- It contains a lot of modern slang.

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Two basic threads will become evident throughout the program:

What we will be working on:

**Recitation:** progressively increase speeds of recitation to  
**Imitation:** practice imitating authentic dialogue  
**Translation:** listen and translate to English

And for the most part, we will do a lot of:

**Listen, Imitate, Record, and Compare**

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**Materials and Resources:** As with all of our programs, we try to keep the costs of texts and materials to a minimum, and try to rely on Internet resources wherever possible. For Beginner courses, a lot of free material is available; however as we proceed in to Intermediate and Advanced, it will help to have a starting structure from which to work, and for some excellent programs such as [chinesefor.us](http://chinesefor.us) and [ChineseZeroToHero.com](http://ChineseZeroToHero.com), there will be some subscription costs required. These are nominal! For example, [ChineseFor.us](http://ChineseFor.us) charges \$19.99/month, and we estimate 4-6 months needed. [ChineseZeroToHero.com](http://ChineseZeroToHero.com) sells their videos for a very nominal amount, but the HSK texts and workbooks run about \$300 for the entire HSK 1-6 program. We consider these costs to be in the nature of Laboratory costs.

Recommended Dictionaries: There are many free online pronouncing dictionaries, you need to find one that is comfortable for you. You might look at these:

<https://www.mdbg.net/chinese/dictionary>

<http://zhongwen.com/> [also has an Extension for Google Chrome]

<https://www.pleco.com/>

Final Note: In our opinion, no one program out there is sufficient. The student needs a variety of inputs, not only to fight boredom, but also to give a better language immersion experience. We emphasize listening/viewing Chinese drama and comedy videos, actual chatting, and listening to authentic Chinese speaking. To help the student to understand what we are doing, we are at this time taking the basic program from ChineseZeroToHero.com and using it as the skeleton...the backbone of our curriculum to which we apply as an overlay, a hodgepodge of more varied and interesting material. The idea is to have a basic formal program of study running in the background upon which the student can build proficiency through use of our other more creative learning resources, Chinese dramas, listening and imitating exercises, and translations. The courses will challenge you, but if you want to move forward, there is only one way...and that is...to move forward. We hope you will enjoy our program and that it will work for you.

## Program: MS Chinese Language

### Curriculum 1A Masters Degree Program (2-4 years)

Assumes the student has some basic knowledge of Chinese language at the Beginner or Intermediate Beginner level.

#### YEAR 1-Term 1

**Chinese Lab I. Review and strengthen:** This course is intended as a warm-up course and review of tones and pronunciation. Requires sign up to ChineseFor.us about \$25/month x 4 months (ask Instructor about possible discount coupon). **6 credits**

**Sounds and Tones- Listening, reciting.** Student begins mastery of tones through the process of listening, imitating, recording, comparing. Student practices authentic speaking. Among the materials provided are the free audio stories from JustLearnChinese. **6 credits.**

**Reading Practice.** The student will begin reading a selection of materials. **6 credits.**

#### Term 2

**HSK Lab.** This course begins a series lab-based courses which proceed roughly through the HSK levels (Hutong School). Students will take the mandatory placement test offered free at: [www.hutong.school.com/hsk-levels](http://www.hutong.school.com/hsk-levels) in order for the Instructor to assign the starting point. Required sign-up at [ChineseZeroToHero.com](http://ChineseZeroToHero.com) includes text, workbook, and excellent videos. **6 credits.**

**HSK Lab II.** This course continues from above. **6 credits**

**Listening and Translation.** The student continues studies with Listening, imitating, recording, **and additionally**, translating to English. Audio stories from JustLearnChinese. **6 credits**

**Online Portfolio (1):** The student is introduced to the [wordpress.com](http://wordpress.com) platform and begins to create the student's online portfolio with staff guidance. **6 credits.**

#### Term 3

**Listening and Reciting.** More practice listening to authentic Chinese dialogue using among other resources the audio stories at JustLearnChinese. **6 credits.**

**Chatting Practice.** In this course the student is assigned one or more topics for internet "field study" in which chatting in Chinese language is practiced via WhatsApp or similar Chinese chat app actually used in China. For example the student may be assigned to find a product on Alibaba and to chat with the manufacturer about specifications sales info and the like. **6 credits.**

**Chinese Dramas and Comedies:** This course presents a variety of Chinese dramas and comedies intended for the student to imitate authentic Chinese speaking. Through imitation naturally comes grammar proficiency. The student will imitate, record and compare. Typical source material is the rakuten viki series at [www.viki.com](http://www.viki.com); [Yonku.com](http://Yonku.com), and [fudou.com](http://fudou.com). **6 credits.**

**Online Portfolio (2).** The student continues development of the digital portfolio with staff guidance, and begins posting some works in Chinese language. **6 Credits.**

#### YEAR 2- Term 1

**Refresher and review.** The student will be guided toward one or more review/refresher courses, such as provided by [www.edX.org](http://www.edX.org), university grade courses offered for free on the internet. **6 Credits**

**HSK Lab III.** This course continues our series of lab-based courses which proceed roughly through the HSK levels (Hutong School). **6 credits.**

**HSK Lab IV.** This course continues our series of lab-based courses which proceed roughly through the HSK levels (Hutong School). **6 credits.**

#### Term 2

**Chinese Dramas and Comedies (2):** This course continues the presentation and authentic speaking practice using a variety of Chinese dramas and comedies intended for the student to imitate authentic Chinese speaking. Through imitation naturally comes grammar proficiency. The student will imitate, record and compare. **6 credits.**

**Reading and Writing with computer keyboard (1).** **6 credits.**

**Reading and Writing with computer keyboard (2)** **6 credits.**

### Term 3

**Online Portfolio (3).** Finalization of student's Online Portfolio, which may require additional independent work and development. There is no dissertation requirement, but the creation of a satisfactory online digital portfolio highlighting independent works and writings is required. The independent works and writings must be of a professional quality and creatively presented. Faculty will guide and mentor the student throughout this process. **6 Credits.**

**Independent Language Studies.** Student will do a self-assessment, and will organize his/her further studies toward proficiency in weaker areas. Such independent study must include regular **Recitations** of selected texts such as: "The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine"(黄帝内经), "The Classic of Changes" (易经), Lao zi's "The Way and the Virtue" (Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching)(道德经), "The Sutra of Pure and Calm" (太上清静经), "Tractate of the Most High One on Actions and Consequences" (太上感应篇), "The Great Learning" (大学), "The Doctrine of the Mean" (中庸), "The Sutra on the Ten Wholesome Ways of Action" (十善业道经), "The Heart Sutra" (般若波罗蜜多心经), "The Sutra on Maitreya's Ascension" (弥勒上生经), "The Lotus Sutra" (妙法莲华经). Texts for recitation will be determined by the Instructor. **6 Credits.**

**Independent Language Studies Continued.** Course 2: **Translation** is from Chinese into English, text to be assigned by Instructor. **6 Credits.**

**Independent Language Studies Continued.** Course 3. Recitation of the Chinese classics, material to be selected by Instructor. **6 Credits.**

### **Comprehensive Examinations: Oral and Reading** **Student must pass comprehensive examination set:**

**1. Oral Exam:** Student must demonstrate oral fluency in a question/answer format that is delivered to the University as a video (MP4 or similar) in which the student will give an oral presentation on some topic in Chinese language and another language instructor or other audience member asks questions about the presentation which are then answered by the student, all in Chinese except for a brief introduction in English; and

**2. Reading Exam:** Student must demonstrate reading proficiency by reading a passage from a local Chinese newspaper or magazine, in which questions are asked by the listener, to which answers are given, all recorded on video to be delivered to the university along with a transcript in Chinese that can be translated and verified separately by the University.

Examination Oral Grade:

Examination Reading Grade:

### **Master's Degree Presentation to Faculty**

Similar to a Master's Degree thesis, but not a research paper, the presentation, which may be oral or written, but in Chinese language, should highlight some aspect of the student's studies, the learning experience at the University, or other topic to be determined. The presentation will be made part of the student's Official Academic Record, must be posted to the student's Online Portfolio, and should be something the student would be proud to show or present to a colleague, an employer, or educational institution.

**Credits:** The program comprises a total of 126 trimester credits, The Masters Degree is thereby equivalent to the minimum 44 trimester credits which is the minimum requirement for a Masters Degree from a USA regionally accredited college or university. Upon completion, and for a nominal fee, graduates will be able to obtain a Certificate of Equivalency (respecting their Masters Degree) from a foreign education credentials evaluation service approved by the USA Department of Education for employment purposes in the USA.