

Students begin their introduction to Mandarin Chinese by focusing on the four key areas of foreign language study: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The course represents an ideal blend of language learning pedagogy and online learning. Each unit consists of a new vocabulary theme and grammar concept, reading and listening comprehension activities, speaking and writing activities, multimedia cultural presentations, and interactive activities and practices which reinforce vocabulary and grammar. There is a strong emphasis on providing context and conversational examples for the language concepts presented in each unit. Both Chinese characters and pinyin are presented together throughout the course and specific character practices are introduced after the first quarter. Students should expect to be actively engaged in their own language learning, become familiar with common vocabulary terms and phrases, comprehend a wide range of grammar patterns, participate in simple conversations and respond appropriately to basic conversational prompts, analyze and compare cultural practices, products, and perspectives of various Chinese-speaking regions, and take frequent assessments where their language progression can be monitored. The course has been carefully aligned to national standards as set forth by ACTFL (the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages). The course content is aligned to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) standards.

Length: Two semesters

Overall Course Objectives

The MS Mandarin Chinese I course helps students:

- Master common vocabulary terms and phrases, including personal contexts such as greetings, family, school, health and fitness, and hobbies
- Comprehend grammar patterns, including question words, basic syntax, comparisons, directional words, and the past tense
- Analyze and compare cultural practices, products, and perspectives of China through such topics as food, money, family life, and literature
- Participate in simple conversations and respond appropriately to basic conversational prompts
- Generate language incorporating basic vocabulary and grammar patterns
- Read, write, speak, and listen for meaning in basic Chinese
- Regularly assess progress in proficiency through quizzes, tests, and speaking/writing submissions

Recurring Content

Vocabulary Theme

- Each unit presents a new set of vocabulary words pertaining to a particular theme. Each topic is first presented in context and then the vocabulary is further practiced through a variety of interactive activities and practices. A printable vocabulary list is also provided.

Grammar Concept

- Each unit introduces a new grammar pattern. The concept is first introduced in a contextualized situation and then presented in a multimedia grammar animation. The concept is then further practiced in several interactive activities throughout the unit. A printable explanation of the pattern is also provided.

Presentation of Culture through Culture Videos

- In each unit, students learn about various cultural or historical aspects (e.g. practices, products, and perspectives) of China through short video presentations.

“Out of Seat” Activities

- Several times during the year, students are given opportunities to use the language “outside” the course. These are specific assignments directing students to interact in a genuine way with the Chinese language or Chinese-speaking communities.

Speaking and Writing Activities

- Students complete speaking and writing activities in each unit. These activities give students a chance to become more familiar with the speaking and writing patterns of Chinese by applying them in communicative situations.

Listening and Reading Comprehension Activities

- Each unit contains both listening and reading comprehension practices. They are based on the vocabulary, grammar, or culture concepts presented that unit and challenge students to identify the main ideas and significant details of the listening/reading excerpts.

Assessments

- Listening and reading comprehension quizzes verify that students comprehend the main ideas and/or significant details of target language passages or conversations.
- Culture comprehension quizzes verify that students have understood important concepts presented in the culture presentations.
- Unit tests assess students’ mastery of the vocabulary words and grammar concepts presented that unit. Each unit test also includes reading and listening comprehension questions and an oral or written assessment.
- Midterm and Semester Exams are comprehensive in nature. Not only do they assess students’ knowledge of the language, but they also assess students’ ability to produce the language in a communicative way. Midterms and Semester Exams include both oral and written assessments.

“Life-long Learner” Assignments

- Each semester, students are required to create a plan for incorporating Chinese into their daily lives. They accomplish this by outlining the long-term benefits of learning Chinese, by making goals for what they want to accomplish with their mastery of the language, and by creating a plan for accomplishing their goals.

“Explore” Activities

- These activities help students develop a more profound understanding of China and its culture.

Discussion Board Activities

- There is one discussion board activity in each semester. These activities provide opportunities for students to interact with other students and practice their new language.

Journal

- Journal assignments allow students to make cultural comparisons, reinforce new vocabulary and grammar patterns, and practice communicating in the language.

Romanization and Characters

- The nature of the Chinese language, being a tonal language with thousands of homophones, requires that non-native students have a solid foundation with Pinyin to ensure accurate Chinese pronunciation in addition to correct tone usage. Pinyin is the Romanized text used to help non-native students understand the phonology of Chinese. Every unit requires students to use Pinyin to read and write the Chinese language. In Unit 10, students begin the transition from Pinyin into Chinese characters. After Unit 10, students are required to learn, recognize, and type 8-10 new characters each unit. There are several activities within each unit, which prepare students to learn these characters.

Pronunciation

- Pronunciation is a critical element of Chinese that is acquired through the use of Pinyin initial and final sounds. Each unit has a special lesson about one or more of the Pinyin initial sounds combined with all of the final sounds. This is accompanied by a practice activity. Every Pinyin activity also has a link to a printable PDF, which describes the rules and guidelines for proper use of Pinyin.

Tones

- Every unit contains ample practice with the four tones that are used to distinguish meaning from one homophone to another in this tonal language. Every Pinyin activity also has links to printable PDFs, which describe the rules and guidelines for proper use of tones as well as a reference chart that includes all the initial and final sound combinations of the Chinese language.

Course Scope and Sequence

Semester 1				
	Vocabulary	Grammar	Culture	Pronunciation
Unit 1	Greetings	Intro to STPVO and	Introduction to China 1	Introduction to Pinyin and Tones Final Sound /ao/
Unit 2	Numbers 1-20 Months Days of the Week	“How do you say...?” “。。。怎么说？” More on STPVO: "Time" in Chinese Sentences	The Lunar Calendar and Chinese Holidays	Final sound /iu/
Unit 3	Numbers 21-100 Age Quantity words 多, 少, 一些	Question Particle 吗 Question Word 什么? Question Word 几个? Question Word 多少?	Chinese Numbers	Final sound /i/
Unit 4	Family and Friends	Intro to Measure Words:	Family in China	Final sound /un/
Unit 5	School	Measure Words continued: (classroom items) 本, 张, 支	Chinese Philosophy	Final sound /e/
Unit 6	Animals	MW for Animals Use Possessive Particle: 的 this/that, these/those & here/there: 这/那 (个, 些, 里, 儿)	Wolong and Panda Bears	Final sound /ang/
Unit 7	Descriptions	How to Use 是 and 很 How to Use 好 like "very"	Colors in China	Final sound /ong/
Unit 8	Countries and Nationalities	Verb Duplication Questions: 有没有, 好不好, 对不对, 可不可以, 是不是 Forms of "不" Come from: 从。。。来的	Chinese Dynasties	Final sound /ou/
Unit 9 Midterm Review and Test				

Semester 1 (Continued)				
	Vocabulary	Grammar	Culture	Pronunciation
Unit 10	Introduction to Characters Review: Numbers 1-20 and Subject Pronouns	Preferences: 喜欢, 不喜欢, 最喜欢 Gradation: 不好, 不太好, 还好, 好, 太好, 最好 真+adj (真好) -好+verb (好听, 好玩, 好吃, 好看)	Beauty	Final sound /o/ & /uo/
Unit 11	Telling Time	Question Words Continued Review 谁, 什么时候, 怎么, 为, 什么 Then 然后 After 以后	Poem: Thoughts on a Quiet Night	Final sound /ian/
Unit 12	Professions	Ask about Professions: 做什么? Express thoughts and desires: 觉得, 想, 要	Chinese Calligraphy	Final sound /uan/
Unit 13	Telephone	Polite Questions and Requests: 请 The several uses of 以下	The Four Gentlemen	Final sound /ua/
Unit 14	Clothing	Measure Words: (clothing) 件, 条, 双, 套	Sichuan: The Land of Abundance	Final sound /u/
Unit 15	Food	Measure Words: (food) 个, 根, 串, 块, 片 Review words for “want”, “would like”, “feel like”	Chinese Tea Culture	Final sound /iao/
Unit 16	Prepositions	STPVO: Placement of Prepositions in a Sentence Prepositions and Directions	A Trip to Shanghai: A Dazzling City	Final sound /ai/
Unit 17	Places	STPVO: place in Chinese sentences Ask/Give Directions: 怎么走, 右/左转, 直走, 一直走, 走到 Cardinal Directions: 北, 南, 西, 东	Xi'an, Historical City	Final sound /ia/
Unit 18 Final Review and Test				