

Higher Education Heritage Language Program Profile
Institution: University of Southern California

College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences, Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures

Address: THH 356, USC,
Los Angeles, CA 90089-0357

Contact: Tin-Yu Tseng
Chinese Instructor
Email: tinyutse@usc.edu
Telephone: 213/740-3715

Web address: <http://www.usc.edu/dept/LAS/ealc/>

Type of institution: Undergraduate research university

Languages taught: Mandarin

Program Description

Purposes and goals of the program: The heritage language course focuses on developing heritage speakers' basic reading and writing abilities in standard Chinese while enhancing listening and speaking proficiencies.

Type of program: Part of a foreign language program. This is a course for first-year students (EALC 108).

Students

- Second generation immigrants: 60%
- Third-generation immigrants: 10%
- Others: Non heritage students who have acquired basic oral proficiency skills have taken this course to enhance their reading and writing abilities.

Age of students: 18-23

Identification of heritage speakers:

- A Chinese dialect is the primary language spoken at home
- Background questionnaire
- Placement test

Percentage of students who complete the program: 80%

Continuing students take upper-level courses with foreign language students.

Possible reasons for not completing the course: Students withdraw from the course, because they often find the learning materials are too hard. Learning to read and write Chinese demands a substantial amount of time and effort.

Students' attitudes toward the language varieties they speak: Curious

Faculty

Total number of faculty teaching in the program: Usually there's one teacher teaching the cultural heritage course each semester.

Number of full-time instructors: 5

Number of part-time instructors: 2

Number of teaching assistants: 2

Languages in which faculty members are proficient: The teachers are natively proficient in Mandarin.

Credentials

MA: linguistics, Chinese literature

Doctorate: linguistics, Chinese literature

Professional development opportunities faculty have: Hosting and participating in Chinese language teaching conferences, nationally and worldwide

Professional development opportunities faculty need: We need to have more contact with and support from other Chinese language programs. Additionally, we need to be exposed to the most current teaching methodologies, research, and techniques in the field.

Instruction

Student grouping: Students are grouped according to level.

Face-to-face course title: EALC 108, beginning, 4 hours per week during 3.5 months.

Language Skills

Heritage Skills

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing

Levels of language proficiency students reach by the end of the program:
Beginning level

Culture

- History
- Festivals
- Customs
- Traditions/beliefs
- Folktales
- Songs
- Social and cultural norms
- Cultural appropriateness

Kind of student identity the program fosters: An awareness of Chinese culture and history

Special content courses offered for heritage speakers: Business Chinese

Methodologies

Methodologies and instructional strategies used in the program: Both task-based instruction and traditional classroom instruction are emphasized.

Materials

Textbook: *Integrated Chinese level 1, part 1 & 2* (Cheng & Tsui, 1997)

Other materials: Poems, songs, movies about historical stories and folklore

Technology used in the program: Students learn Chinese word processing in this course. In addition, we use PowerPoint for instruction, when necessary, and "Blackboard" as a tool for online teaching and learning.

Assessment

- Weekly quizzes
- Chapter tests
- Mid-term tests
- Final exams

Articulation

Connections

- Universities outside the United States
- Other colleges or universities

- Other heritage language programs

Opportunities heritage students have outside the college to use their heritage language or develop their cultural knowledge: Since there's a huge Chinese community in Los Angeles, students can find opportunities to use the language in many fields.

What the program has in place

Funding: Dr. Audrey Li, the program chair, solicits funds for the program.

Assistance or collaboration you would like to receive for your program from other entities: Financial support, academic collaboration, and input from other entities

Special Challenges and Comments

System for graduating students and granting credit for study in the program: The program offers majors and minors to students taking Chinese courses, if they complete a certain number of credits by the time they graduate.