

Academy of Visual Arts
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Visual Arts Programme

VART 2126 Chinese Word as Image: Foundational Studies in Chinese Calligraphy and Seal Engraving

No. of units: 3

Pre-requisite: VART1006 Visual Arts Practice II or any GDCV courses offered by AVA or any Visual Arts courses

Duration: 52 hours

I.1. Course Description & Rationale (200–300 words):

The centrality of using Chinese words as the major element in artistic expressions is a unique and prominent phenomenon in both Chinese and global visual culture from past to present. Chinese words, as evolved from pictographic representation to non-representational character, is the fundamental medium for artistic expressions in the practices of a range of Chinese art forms including calligraphy, seal engraving and other craft arts. Whether brushed on paper or engraved in three-dimensional objects made of stone, bronze and any other penetrable material, the visual and artistic form of Chinese word interacts with the subtlety of the linguistic aspect of Chinese language to produce a richly interdisciplinary artistic experience.

This course consists of three parts:

- 1.) The study of foundational knowledge and theories pertinent to the material, tools, and the linguistic skills involved in the practices of Chinese calligraphy and seal engraving;
- 2.) The practical study of brush, engraving and carving techniques, the compositional strategies of the strokes of Chinese characters and other relevant basic skills; and
- 3.) A simple hands-on studio art project.

The class will learn the skills of adopting different material, handling of tools and other basic techniques of Chinese calligraphy and seal engraving through demonstrations and guided practice. The course culminates in a small-scale yet rewarding creative project where by students will produce one piece of artwork based on the application of their acquired concepts, tools and skills.

Students need to acquire the foundational tools and skills of this course to nurture their understanding of Chinese cultural heritage. The foundational knowledge and experience offered by this course are intended to cultivate a synergy with all other courses of Chinese and Asian art history, visual culture, Chinese calligraphy, seal engraving, Chinese painting, typography, Chinese language, and some aspects of sculpture.

I.2. Course Content:

No.		Hours	%
1.	Foundational study in knowledge and theories about the relationship between Chinese language and visual arts expressions: - Basic concepts and theories of Chinese philology, paleography and etymology; - Materials and tools involved in the practices of Chinese calligraphy and seal engraving; - The synergy between Chinese language and visual arts expressions.	16	30.5
2.	Practical study: - Script types (<i>shuti</i> 書體) and styles (<i>fengge</i> 風格); - Brush, engraving and carving techniques; - The compositional strategies of the strokes of Chinese characters; and - Other relevant basic skills.	28	54.5
3.	Hands-on studio art project with a creative output	8	15
		52	100

I.3. Intended Course Learning Outcomes (CILOs):

(Please take note of the PILOs for the overall BA programme in the Programme Document.)

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

No.	Intended Course Learning Outcomes (CILOs)
1.	Describe basic knowledge and theories pertinent to the material, tools, and the linguistic skills involved in the practices of Chinese calligraphy and seal engraving;
2.	Explain ideas about the synergy between Chinese language and visual arts expressions;
3.	Apply fundamental techniques and principles of Chinese calligraphy and seal engraving with basic experience in handling essential tools;
4.	Handle essential tools to the execution of a work of art;
5.	Communicate and present creative ideas by using both general vocabulary and any artistic expressions that involve Chinese words; and
6.	Adhere to standards of professional practice and ethos.

* More may be added.

I.4. Alignment of CILOs with PILOs:

Learning Outcomes	<i>Please indicate alignment by checking '✓' the appropriate box</i>					
	CILO1	CILO2	CILO3	CILO4	CILO5	CILO6
PILO1.1	✓	✓				
PILO1.2			✓	✓		
PILO2.1						
PILO2.2						
PILO2.3					✓	
PILO3.1						✓
PILO3.2						✓

** There may not be 6 CILOs, in which case, just leave columns empty.*

I.5. Alignment of Teaching and Learning Activities with CILOs:

No.	Teaching and Learning Activities	CILO	Hours
1.	<p>Presentations with aid of notes and audio-visual media</p> <p>The instructor will : Present basic concepts, knowledge and theories pertinent to material, tools, and the linguistic skills involved in the practices of Chinese calligraphy and seal engraving.</p>	1, 2, 6	16
2.	<p>Studio-based practical study</p> <p>The instructor will: Demonstrate relevant skills, presents relevant examples and offer guidance for student's mastering of tools and application of techniques and principles of Chinese calligraphy and seal engraving</p> <p>The students will: Practise the require skills in small assignments & conduct a small-scale creative project where by they will produce one piece of artwork based on the application of their acquired concepts, tools and skills.</p>	3, 4, 5, 6	36

**More may be added.*

I.6. Assessment:

No.	Assessment Methods/Activities	Weighting	Alignment with CILOs

1.	Student presentations followed by group discussions on the synergy between Chinese language and visual arts expressions.	10%	1, 2
2.	Assignments of practical study: 4 small assignments to develop hands-on skills and concepts of Chinese calligraphy and seal engraving.	30%	3, 4
3.	Small-scale creative project: Students will produce one piece of artwork based on the application of their acquired concepts, tools and skills.	30 %	3, 4, 5
4.	Professional Attitude: Professional Attitude does not necessarily define its own learning outcomes, but takes a look at 'how' the other, non-attitudinal outcomes are achieved. Assessment will always be based on direct personal contact with the student. Assessment methods include personal conversations – formal and informal –, class observation, individual and group-tutorials, and such like. Assessment evidence is continuously produced through attendance and participation class-records, public presentations, peer-reviews, evaluation of sketchbooks or visual diaries, personal notes of students and teachers, etc. For more information, please refer to the BA (Hons) in Visual Arts' Programme Document.	30%	6

**More may be added.*

I.7. References (up to 10 books):

Elman, Benjamin. *From Philosophy to Philology: Intellectual and Social Aspects of Change in Late Imperial China*. Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1984.

Tang Lan 唐蘭. *Zhongguo wenzixue 中國文字學 (Chinese Philology)*. Shanghai: Guji chubanshe 古籍出版社, 1979.

Fu, Shen CY. *Traces of the Brush: Studies in Chinese Calligraphy*. New Haven: Art Gallery, Yale University, 1977.

Fu, Shen CY. *Essays on the history of Chinese calligraphy: Tang through Yüan 書史與書蹟*. Taipei: Nation Museum of History, 1996.

Harrist, Robert E. and Wen C. Fong. *The Embodied Image: Chinese Calligraphy from the John B. Elliott Collection*. With contributions by Bai Qianshen et al. Art Museum, Princeton University, in association with H.N. Abrams, 1999.

Kuo, J. C. *Word As Image: The Art of Chinese Seal Engraving*. New York: China House Gallery, China Institute In America, 1992.

Lai, T. C. *Chinese Seals*. Hong Kong: Kelly & Walsh, 1976.

Luo Fuyi. 羅福頤, ed. *Hanyin wenzi zheng 漢印文字徵 (A compilation of the characters from the Han Seals)*. Beijing 北京: Wenwu chubanshe 文物出版, 1978.

Qian Juntao. 錢君匋, and Ye, L. Y. 葉澍淵. *Xiyin yuanliu 璽印源流 (The origin and development of seals)*. Beijing 北京: Beijing chubanshe 北京出版社, 1998.

I.8. Academic Integrity:

Students will endeavour to only claim work that they have actually produced themselves. Claiming the work of others is considered plagiarism, and will be dealt with under the academic policies of the university.

I.9. Health and Safety:

Every effort will be made to comply with the intent of Hong Kong's law or acts and the University's policies to maintain a safe and healthy working environment.

I.10. Final Note:

The instructor reserves the right to modify the class and the syllabus or the schedule to adjust to the dynamics of the particular group or to take advantage of opportunities that may arise.