**Introduction to Chinese Culture**

**Draft Course Outline for General Education Humanities course**

**(to include Cultural Diversity tag for graduation requirement)**

I. Chinese dynasties/historical periods

A. Create a timeline with the names and inclusive dates of epochs for cultural and artistic study.

B. Enter significant dates of appearance of various artistic forms and developments.

II. Chinese language

A. Trace the development of the written language.

B. Practice basic pronunciation of sounds and words.

C. Acquire a few fundamental words and phrases.

III. Chinese thought/philosophy and belief systems

A. Examine Confucianism, Daosim and Buddhism in China.

B. Study and discuss some readings from these philosophies.

C. Analyze the intertwining of these modes of thought.

**D. Discuss the importance of nature in Chinese thought and philosophical**

**beliefs.**

IV. Pre-modern art forms and embodiments of culture **and nature.**

A. Critically examine art forms and techniques, and assess whether any belief system is expressed in them.

1. Jade culture

2. Bronze

3. Calligraphy and Painting

5. Clay works (earthenware, porcelain, and including funerary statues)

6. Sculpture

7. Music, theatre and puppetry

8. Literature

a. Poetry

**b. Novel - *Journey to the West: The Legend of the Monkey King***

**1) Author: Wu Chen-en (approx. 1505-1580), during Ming Dynasty (1368-1644)**

**2) Background (including color painting of the author)**

**3) Contributions to Chinese Literature**

**a) Poetry**

**b) Prose**

**4) The Story**

**5) Main Characters**

**6) Theme(s)**

**7) Style**

**8) Additional Resources**

**a) *Daodeching* (mid-3rd century BCE)**

**b) *Book of Songs* (1000-600 BCE)**

***c) The* *Analects of Confucius* (c. 479-221 BCE)**

**d) *The Classic Chinese Novel: A Critical Introduction* by Chih-Tsing Hsia (1981)**

**e) *The Great Age of Chinese Poetry: The High T'ang*, by Stephen Owen -- esp. Li Bai, aka Li Po (1981, out of print)**

B. Appraise other aspects of traditional culture.

1. Silk

2. Tea

**C. Examine how animals, nature and ecological systems are represented and**

**expressed through art.**

V. Modern artistic developments

A. Watch and review one or more Chinese films.

B. Read and critically assess two or more contemporary short stories.

C. Examine and evaluate modern artists (such as Ai Weiwei) and the role

of the artist in modern society.

**D. Analyze the authors’ references to nature and the filmakers’ use of**

**landscape and natural systems.**