

Important document!

Keep this someplace where it's easy to refer to.

WOC207 / CHINESE408

Translation Workshop: The Reflection of Meaning

INSTRUCTOR: AUSTIN WOERNER

Course Handbook

How Class Works:

Questions and Answers

Q: You say this is a “bilingual” class. What does that mean?

It's pretty simple: On Tuesdays we will speak English; on Thursdays we will speak Chinese.

Of course, since this is a translation class, we'll be talking about texts in both languages, so I expect our English will have a lot of Chinese words and phrases in it, and vice versa. But on Tuesdays our **default** language will be English, and on Thursdays it will be Chinese.

This will hopefully remove any awkwardness about the choice of which language to speak. It will also, hopefully, guarantee that everyone spends at least half of class time speaking and listening in their “L2” (second language)—the language they're less comfortable in.

Q: Why are you teaching this class in this bilingual fashion?

Because I want us to learn to *think* about translation in both English and Chinese—to translate the ideas we're learning about back and forth between the two languages.

(And also because it's the kind of thing we can only do at a place like DKU, and I think that's pretty neat!)

Q: What kinds of things will we translate?

As many different kinds of writing as possible: literature, poetry, journalism, advertising, political speeches, art criticism... you name it. I want us to try our hands at translating many different **genres** of writing that a translator might actually be asked to translate, so as to get a taste of what it's like to think like a translator.

Q: And how will these translation assignments work?

There will be two kinds of assignments: **translation exercises** and **translation challenges**.

Translation **exercises** will be **ungraded**: as long as you do them (and take them seriously), you'll get full credit for them. I'll give translation exercises for homework almost every single day, and usually they'll be due the following class.

In addition, over the course of the session you'll do three **translation challenges**. These are longer, more substantial assignments in which you'll work with a small group with classmates to translate an interesting, challenging text, then share your translation (and what you learned from it) with the class.

The translation challenges are **graded** and it's your performance on these assignments, combined with completion of ungraded assignments, attendance, and punctuality, that will determine your final grade.

Q: How will the translation challenges be graded?

I'll distribute a handout next week describing in detail how the grading will work.

In brief, though, after each translation challenge I'll ask you to write a short **reflection paper** explaining the difficulties your text presented and what your group's translation was trying to achieve. Your grade on the challenge will be based on: **a)** how effectively I think your group translated the text; and **b)** how clearly your reflection paper articulates what you see in the text and in your group's translation.

There are **two key things** here I want to emphasize:

- The challenges are not “tests” and there is no “correct way” to translate them. What I care about is learning to think in a more mature and nuanced way about translation—not “getting the right answer.”
- Though you'll be working a lot with your classmates, your grade is **not** based solely on assignments produced as a group. All the reflection papers will be done individually, and in the final translation challenge you'll have the choice to work individually if you wish.

Q: Will I be graded on “participation”—how much I talk in class?

No! As much as possible I try to structure class so that everybody talks roughly the same amount. Just come to class, come on time, do all the work, and you're good.

Q: When are the major deadlines?

See the separate document [“WOC207 \(CHINESE408\) F22 S1 Schedule”](#) for all the major due dates you should put on your calendar.

Q: Where can I find instructions for assignments?

In most cases I will explain the homework in class. In addition, I will always post homework instructions on the course website, <https://www.awmemorypalace.com/woc207>.

Even if I've already talked about the instructions in class, please **read** the instructions online carefully. It's important that you read them because there may be details there I didn't have time to mention in class. If you don't read them, you might miss important information.

If I need to make last-minute changes or announcements, I'll do so in our **WeChat group**.

Q: How do I hand in my assignments?

Unless I say otherwise, upload your assignment to our **SharePoint folder**. (Follow the link on the course website.) All assignments in this class are meant to be shared with your classmates, so in this folder you'll be able to see everybody's writing.

Q: Ack! I uploaded the wrong document and now I can't delete it!

Don't worry! I set it up so no one can delete or edit documents once they've submitted them, so that nobody accidentally deletes or changes their classmates' work. Just upload the right document, message me on WeChat to let me know, and I'll delete the old one.

Q: What happens if I hand in an assignment late?

Handing in an assignment late won't affect your grade on the assignment itself. But if I see an **overall pattern** of late assignments from you, it may lower your final grade for the course.

Q: How should I communicate with Austin?

WeChat. I much prefer WeChat to email. You may message me any time of day and I'll respond to you as soon as I can. (*Please note the **time difference**. I'm on U.S. Eastern time.*)

If you don't hear back from me within 24 hours, message me again saying, "Just checking, did you get my message?"

Q: How do I meet with Austin outside of class?

If you would like to meet with me, all you have to do is message me on WeChat and we'll find a time! My Zoom ID is **721 869 9461**, passcode **austin**. In general I'm able to accommodate students quite quickly, usually within 48 hours of the time I get the request. So please don't be shy about making an appointment!

Q: What if I'm confused about something but I think it's a stupid question and I don't want to bother you about it?

Ask me anyway. There is **no such thing** as a stupid question! I like getting questions from students. I'd much rather you ask me directly than ask your classmates. Your classmates might not have accurate information – but I do!