

How to Succeed in CHIN 20b: A Breakdown of How to Get the Most Out of Your Language Learning Experience.

In this Guide, I'll utilize the grading parameters in order to offer tips on how I managed to not only pass the course, but also learned and retained the course material.

Class participation: 5%

- Come prepared to answer any questions that the professor may ask. In order to prepare, I suggest looking over the characters multiple times, and if it helps, typing each one out until you can recognize it when you come back to it an hour later. If a character is a part of a multi character word, practice typing and memorize the characters as a word unit instead of breaking the word into separate characters and memorizing it that way.
- Another tip that helped me was reading over the text that the vocabulary words were pulled from. If you can read the text fluidly, that is a sign that you have successfully memorized the vocabulary list. If you can read the text and also understand it, that indicates that you have also successfully learned the grammar patterns.
- You don't have to have a perfect understanding of every little thing while previewing because it will be taught in class. Knowing the vocabulary words and a few of the grammar patterns will be enough, especially for those that don't have much time to spare.
- While previewing for class, don't do it all in one sitting because you will quickly get burnt out. Practice half of the list, come back later to check for understanding and then continue to memorize the rest of the list. After you've memorized everything, come back later to check for understanding as many times as you need.
- Before going to a review class, go over everything that was taught in the lecture class. This allows you to discover what you still need help with and can help you formulate questions that you can then ask during the drill class.
- When available, listen to the audio recordings to get a sense of what a native speaker sounds like saying these new words and phrases. This will not only help you prepare for the 听写 style quizzes, but it will also help you with your listening skills in general.

Meeting with peer tutor: 10%

- Before meeting with your tutor, review the material for the section that you'll be discussing and make a list of everything you'd either like to practice with them or you'd like them to further explain. If you have tutoring early in the week and the material your tutor is supposed to go over is something you haven't learned in class yet, let them know so that you can instead focus on the past week's material. Also, you don't have to solely discuss the material on the tutoring sheet. Feel free to use this time in whatever way you believe will best help you with your learning.

Homework: 10%

- Utilize your notes and the textbook but don't overly rely on them. The homework is an assessment that can help you discover which areas you need to work on. If you find yourself unable to answer a single question without the help of your notes or textbook, it is a sign that you should review the material. Once you review, reattempt the homework and hopefully it'll be easier. Remember that every assignment is meant to help you learn, so copying from the textbook and pasting the material onto your homework defeats the purpose of the assignment. In such an instance, it just becomes busy work.

Mini-quizzes: 15%

- Utilize the preparation tips mentioned in the class participation section because if you incorporate those, you'll be able to pass the daily mini quizzes since they are centered around the content that you were supposed to preview/review

Mid-term exam: 10%

- Study in increments. Plan ahead so that you can spend at least one day on each chapter. For each chapter, first review the vocabulary, then the grammar patterns and finally, put those two together and test your ability to read and comprehend the chapter's text. Also spend some time making your own sentences using the chapter's grammar patterns to make sure that you can generate your own sentences. If you are ever unsure of something, make sure to write it down so that you can ask your tutor or instructor for help either the next time you see them or via email. I also highly recommend going to office hours, especially if you have a long list of questions. Lastly, like mentioned before, utilize the audio recordings.

Period tests: 15%

- Follow the tips mentioned in the Midterm exam section. This is a great time to make sure you understand everything that has been taught up to this point. Utilize your tutor and instructor in order to prepare.

Oral presentations test: 15%

- If you get nervous, try to make a script and memorize it. If memorizing a script is too daunting, then write down talking points like you would for a presentation that you would do in English and then just practice speaking using your talking points as a guide. I think that using talking points is actually better than memorizing a pre-written script because it requires your mind to work a bit harder and allows for practice in sentence generation so that the grammar structures and vocabulary words and how they are used can stick with you instead of memorizing a script that you then immediately forget after the test. If you

feel that you need an audience to give the presentation to prior to the actual test, I recommend presenting to your tutor or your instructor during their office hours.

Final Exam 20%

- Follow the same tips as those mentioned in the Midterm exam section. If you don't have enough time to dedicate one day to just one chapter, consider reviewing 2 chapters per day. If you take this route, I recommend studying with a friend so that you can hold each other accountable and also bounce ideas off each other so that the review session can go by faster. Forming study groups is also a great way to master the material. If each person in the group masters a chapter or several chapters (depending on the number of people in the group and the number of chapters), they can then teach it to the rest of the group because one of the best ways to learn is to teach.

Tips for beginners (10a)

- If the material gets hard, don't give up. Give it at least a month and get all the help you can get before reconsidering.
- Form study groups (say hi to peers before or after class).
- Spend a lot of outside time (independent study time) perfecting your tone production and tone perception. It is the basis for the language.
- Make language learning fun by practicing with classmates outside of the class, listening to music in Mandarin Chinese and also watching Chinese movies/shows.
- Memorize commonly used radicals. This will help you remember the meanings of new words in the future.
- Give yourself enough time to review. The amount of time required to fully preview for a class will vary from person to person and that's okay.
- When reviewing, don't skip the audio recordings! They're another source for listening practice which is essential in the higher levels that are taught mainly in Chinese.
- Keep up even when you miss class. The day's materials will always be posted on latte. The course moves rather quickly so it's best to not lag behind or skip any classes if you can help it.
- Develop a study routine that works for you right from the start to avoid falling behind. If you don't have proper study habits/skills, reach out to your professor/lecturer, they have connections to people who can help.
- Don't focus on the grade, focus on learning and improving. When you focus on learning, your grade will naturally reflect your efforts.