



CASE WESTERN RESERVE  
UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Modern Languages and Literatures  
Case Western Reserve University

10900 Euclid Avenue  
Cleveland, Ohio 44106-7118

Phone 216.368.3071  
Fax 216.368.2216

[www.case.edu](http://www.case.edu)

To: UCITE  
From: Peter Yang  
Re: NORD Grant Application for CHIN 399 – Independent Study in Chinese

Dear Nord Grant Committee Members:

I am seeking Nord Grant to cover expenses to be incurred on equipment and other materials to implement the project of redesigning and enhancing CHIN 399 – Independent Study in Chinese.

CHIN 399 was originally designed to meet the need of a small number of students to enhance their Chinese language skills at the advanced level. However, the gap between the growing student demand in and the lack of Chinese courses and the related teaching staff at the advanced level has made the initial design inadequate and significant changes to the original design urgently needed.

For years, CWRU has witnessed a rising student interest in taking advanced Chinese courses. In addition to a significant number of heritage Chinese students who are raised in Chinese speaking homes in the U.S. and need to continue Chinese study at the advanced level, there is also an increasing number of native Chinese speaking students who want to combine their majors in other areas such as Economics and Asian Studies with advanced Chinese studies. The enrollment of this course for Fall 2011 will be close to ten and is expected to continue growing in the near future. While the students' interest in Chinese is growing, there is a marked lack of courses and teaching staff available for advanced Chinese beyond CHIN 303 to meet this demand. Therefore, the independent study course in Chinese has become the only option for students who want to minor in Chinese or who simply want to take Chinese courses at the advanced level.

Because the independent study course does not count as the faculty's teaching load, the teaching of this growing number of independent study students has become progressively challenging. By nature of independent study, each student needs more individual attention and advising in various aspects from screening students, selecting course materials, designing and scheduling course activities, course registration, to monitoring and grading course activities, homework assignments and papers. The challenges are further compounded by the fact that each student has a completely different topic of advanced reading, learning, or research.



This project is intended to meet these challenges by pedagogically redesigning and enhancing the course in four aspects. First, it will streamline the complicated pre-registration process of student screening, course material selection, and course activity designing and scheduling by implementing an online registration system. Based on the existing course information and scheduling template, this automated processing facility will collect information from individual interested students and automatically respond to their requests with individualized information about their individual course schedule, course materials, requirements, and grading policies. This setup will significantly decrease the complexity of each student's course setup process and make the instructor's workload for this independent study course significantly less demanding.

Second, I will set up an online center of course resources of Chinese Studies to provide the enrolled students with online course materials, including my own research results, in selected major areas. This will result in substantially reducing the students' difficulties in selecting course materials for this independent study course.

Third, I will establish an initial collection of most important resources, including reference books, in print and on DVD/ CD ROM, in Chinese Literature, Chinese Art, Chinese History, Chinese Culture, Chinese Film, and Chinese Theater. This special collection will allow students to access most important materials related to Chinese Studies and enhance the independent study students' Chinese leaning environment.

Fourth, I will further develop student activities in Blackboard to facilitate interaction such as peer reviews among the students enrolled in this Chinese course. The learning environment of the course will be enhanced by enabling enrolled students to go beyond working in a complete isolation and to start enjoying virtual collaborative learning.

To facilitate these project activities, I propose the following budget in the amount of \$5500 to cover the expenses of acquisitions of hardware, software, license fees, DVDs and other reference materials, supply, and student assistance, as well as attendance of the NCOLCTL (National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages) conference. The hardware, mainly a DELL computer, software, license fees, as well as student assistance will be used to set up a server hosting the website for the online registration system to streamline the complicated pre-registration process of student screening, course material selection, and course activity designing and scheduling and depot of online course resources of Chinese Studies. Some expenses will allow the acquisition of the initial Chinese collection to enhance the student learning environment of this course. The attendance of the NCOLCTL annual conference will allow me to present a paper on my experience with the teaching and course management of CHIN 399 and exchange innovative ideas on how to more effectively teaching less commonly taught languages, where there is obvious lack of teaching staff and course arrangements.

I greatly appreciate the opportunity of receiving the Nord Grant and am convinced that this grant will provide the substantial support I need to sustain and enhance the important course of CHIN 399 – Independent Study in Chinese.

**BUDGET**

Hardware	\$1500
Software	\$600
License Fees	\$500
Print Materials and DVDs related to Chinese Studies	\$700
Student Assistance (50 hours at \$10-15/hour)	\$600
Supply	\$100
Attending the NCOLCTL (National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages) annual conference	\$1500
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Total expenses	\$5500

**Required Signatures**

*Peter Yang*  
Peter Yang

*Antonio Candau*  
Antonio Candau, Chair, DMLL