“Everything here at PiB has really been fantastic. I especially like the individual sessions and Chinese table opportunities to engage our professors on a more personal level. While difficult, I have enjoyed every aspect of PiB and have greatly improved my Chinese.”

“I am really grateful for taking part in PiB this summer. I believe my Chinese improved greatly, and that I learned more in these past two months than I did in my past two years of Chinese class.”
Princeton in Beijing, a high-quality intensive program in intermediate and advanced Chinese language for the serious language student, will hold its 28th session from June 19 to August 14, 2020. The faculty from Princeton brings to this effort more than three decades of leadership in pioneering intensive “total immersion” summer Chinese language programs in the United States, as well as more than three decades of experience in producing Chinese language textbooks at Princeton University’s Chinese Linguistics Project. To this experience is added the ultimate Chinese language environment—China’s capital city of Beijing.

The Princeton Chinese Language Program has established its own distinctive pedagogy while developing a series of Chinese language textbooks based on the belief that a strong foundation with an emphasis on accurate pronunciation and grammar is absolutely necessary for language mastery. The “total immersion” approach includes: a student pledge to speak no language other than Mandarin Chinese throughout the session, individual tutorial session in the afternoons, constant contact with faculty at special Chinese table meals, weekend excursions, and in campus life, and special lectures on various occasions give students opportunities to freely practice Chinese with their teachers and to get to know them better.

LANGUAGE PLEDGE
In order to maintain the best possible language environment for every student in the program, all students are required to sign a pledge stating that they will use only Mandarin Chinese for the duration of the program. Violations will lead to expulsion from the program.

CHINESE TABLES
Another special feature of the program is Chinese Table, or 中文桌子, which is offered once a week for students to chat freely with their teacher, in groups of 2-3 people, over lunch or dinner. These occasions give students opportunities to freely practice Chinese with their teachers and to get to know them better.

Is Fluency Without Accuracy Really Fluency?
We say no. The emphasis at Princeton in Beijing is on fluency through accuracy, on building a solid foundation in pronunciation and syntax that enables students to strive for genuine fluency in the Chinese language. This stress on accuracy, integrated with the Beijing language environment, is one of the unique features of Princeton in Beijing. Because the total immersion program is located in Beijing, students are able to take advantage of two distinct language environments. The first is the natural environment of Beijing, in which students can freely practice their skills – especially speaking and listening – with and among the people of China. The second is the classroom environment, in which students are able to take full advantage of structured presentation and rigorous language training. This combination allows students to learn the language in the classroom and to master it on the streets of Beijing.

CURRICULUM
The curriculum does not offer Introductory Chinese; students in the program generally have studied at least one year of Chinese.

PLACEMENT
Oral interviews and written examinations during orientation will determine placement in one of four levels. Students should indicate on their application forms the level to which they think they are best suited. However, this information is used for planning purposes only; final placement is at the discretion of the Princeton in Beijing faculty on the basis of the placement examination and subsequent work. Enrollment in the program implies consent to abide by the judgement of the Princeton in Beijing faculty with regard to level placement.

Second Year
CHI 105C and 107C: Using the fluency-through-accuracy approach, students work on developing a strong foundation for the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing).

This level is suitable for those students who have had one year of college Chinese prior to attending, and do not speak Mandarin as a heritage language.

Third Year
CHI 305C and 304C (non-heritage speakers) or CHI 305C and 306C (heritage speakers): The Third Year curriculum is designed to further improve the four basic language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—while at the same time introduce students to the complex fabric that makes up modern China.

This level is normally suitable for students who have had two years of college Chinese prior to attending, or who have taken one year of an accelerated program meant for heritage speakers.

Fourth Year
CHI 403C and 404C (non-heritage speakers) or CHI 405C and 406C (heritage speakers): Students at the Fourth Year level take full advantage of the authentic Chinese language environment. Students study original materials available in Beijing, including newspapers, the daily news on TV, and national magazines.

This level is normally suitable for those students who have had three years of college Chinese prior to attending, or who have taken two years of an accelerated program meant for heritage speakers.

Fifth Year
CHI 451C and 452C: This course, which is designed to bring students to near-native competence in all aspects of modern Chinese, prepares students for advanced research or employment in a variety of China-related fields. Materials are drawn from modern Chinese literature, film, and intellectual history, and include readings on contemporary issues as well.

This level is normally suitable for students who have had four years of college Chinese prior to attending, or who have taken three years of an accelerated program meant for heritage speakers.

NOTE: This is an extremely rigorous and intensive program. Aside from our many pre-organized events, there is not much time during the program for sightseeing or other activities at your own pace. If you want more leisure time in Beijing or elsewhere in China, plan to arrive before the program begins or to stay afterward.