

Vassar College  
Program in Asian Studies

To Potential Majors:

Welcome to the Asian Studies Program. Vassar's growing faculty in Asian Studies, as well as the wide range of courses offered, will provide you with an excellent and exciting home base for your liberal arts studies. Vassar's faculty includes specialists on China, India, Japan, and Korea who teach courses on these areas as well as broader courses on East Asia, South Asia or Asia more generally. As a multidisciplinary program, we offer you the opportunity to develop your interpretive and analytic skills through courses on Asia in a range of disciplines and we encourage you to apply them to your growing knowledge and understanding of the diverse areas of Asia.

Attached you will find a statement of the requirements for the major and an **Application to Major in Asian Studies form**. To discuss declaring an Asian Studies major, please make an appointment with the Director of the Asian Studies Program. You may also wish to discuss your interests with Asian Studies faculty, or with the Asian Studies Intern, a senior major chosen for his or her outstanding qualifications within the major. The Asian Studies Program Administrative Assistant will provide names, phone numbers and office hours of the Director as well as of the Program Intern.

Asian Studies also offers a 6-unit Correlate Sequence. Information and application forms are available on the Asian Studies website and from the program office.

**Program in Asian Studies**

Old Laundry Building 302

Current Director: Michael Walsh x7167 - [miwalsh@vassar.edu](mailto:miwalsh@vassar.edu)

Acting-Director, Spring 2018, Fubing Su, [fusu@vassar.edu](mailto:fusu@vassar.edu)

Director-elect, Fall 2018, Christopher Bjork, [chbjork@vassar.edu](mailto:chbjork@vassar.edu)

Program Office x7500 - <[asianstudies@vassar.edu](mailto:asianstudies@vassar.edu)>

## Asian Studies Faculty

**Director:** Michael Walsh (Religion: China)  
 Christopher Bjork (Education: Japan, Indonesia)  
 Andrew Davison (Political Science: Turkey)  
 Hiromi Tsuchiya Dollase (Language and Literature: Japan)  
 Wenwei Du (Language and Literature: China)  
 Sophia Harvey (Film, Drama and Theater)  
 Hua Hsu (English)  
 E. H. Rick Jarow (Religion: South Asia)  
 Martha Kaplan (Anthropology: South Asia and the Pacific)  
 Li Linfeng, (Visiting Instructor in Chinese)  
 Haoming Liu (Language and Literature: China)  
 Long Bui (Sociology & STS: Asian American Studies)  
 Yuko Matsubara (Language and Literature: Japan)  
 Seungsook Moon (Sociology: East Asia)  
 Himadeep Muppidi (Political Science: South Asia)  
 Anne Parries (Language and Literature: China).  
 Peipei Qiu (Language and Literature: China and Japan)  
 Justin L.B. Patch (Music Department)  
 Wayne Soon (History: East Asia)  
 Fubing Su (Political Science: East Asia)  
 Jin Xu (Art: East Asia)  
 Yu Zhou (China, Technology Industry, Asian Immigrants)

## Asian Studies at Vassar

The Asian Studies Program offers a multidisciplinary approach to studies of peoples and cultures of Asia with courses and advising in anthropology, art, economics, geography, history, language and literature, philosophy, politics, religion, and sociology of Asia. While majors focus on a particular region of Asia (e.g., East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia) including language study, intermediate and advanced coursework, and a senior thesis in this area, they are also expected to be familiar with some other parts of Asia through the introductory course and some coursework outside their area of specialty. Similarly, while majors take courses on Asia offered in a wide range of disciplines, they are also expected to choose one or two disciplines in which they will develop a theoretical or methodological sophistication that they will bring to bear on their study of Asia, particularly in their thesis and senior seminar work.

A student's program of study for the major is designed in close consultation with the director and an advisor. Students should obtain an application form, which includes a statement of interest, from the program office or the Asian Studies website and make an appointment to meet with the program director. This should be done in the first semester of the sophomore year if the student plans to apply for junior year study away. The director and members of the program faculty will review the application. Any changes to a plan of study should be discussed with the advisor in advance; significant changes will be reviewed by the director.

The program also offers a 6-unit correlate sequence in Asian Studies.

**Study Abroad:** Study abroad in some region of Asia greatly enhances a student's learning experience and understanding of Asia and is highly recommended for program majors and correlates. Advice and literature on different programs are available through the Offices of the Dean of Studies (Study Away office) and Asian Studies.

**Asian Studies Courses:** Courses approved for the Asian Studies major include courses offered by the Asian Studies Program (see Sections I and II below) and Approved Courses (courses on Asia offered in other departments, see Section III below). A list of Asian Studies courses approved for majors is prepared and circulated by the Program Office at the beginning of each semester. Courses not on the list which may be appropriate to an individual student's plan of study will be considered for approval by the director and steering committee upon special petition by the student major, after consultation with the advisor.

## Requirements for the Concentration (Major) in Asian Studies

12 units of which at least 7 are normally taken at Vassar. After declaration of the major, all courses taken towards the major must be graded. Students may request, however, that up to one unit of independent study or field work be counted towards the major.

1) **Introductory-Level Study:** Two introductory level courses either offered by Asian Studies, cross-listed, or from the approved course list (excluding language courses).

2) **Language:** Competency in one Asian language of the student's concentration through the intermediate college level must be achieved and demonstrated by completion of relevant courses or special examination if the area of concentration is a country where English is not an official language. A maximum of four units of Asian language study may be counted toward the 12 units for the major. Arabic is offered through Africana Studies. Chinese and Japanese are offered by the Department of Chinese and Japanese. Hindi, Korean, and Turkish may be taken through the Self-Instructional Language Program. The language studied should be approved by the director.

3) **Intermediate-Level Study:** A minimum of 3 units of intermediate course work (200-level) of direct relevance to Asia in at least two disciplines, selected from the Lists of Program Courses, Cross-listed Courses and Approved Courses. Recommendation: At least two of these courses should be related to the student's regional focus within Asia and at least one should be outside the area of regional specialty.

4) **Advanced-Level Work:** A minimum of 3 units at the 300-level including the designated Asian Studies "Senior Seminar", 1 unit of thesis work (Asian Studies 300-301 or Asian Studies 302), and at least one additional 300-level seminar from the lists of Program Courses and Approved Courses below. The senior seminar and the thesis constitute the Senior Year Requirement.

5) **Discipline-Specific Courses:** Majors are expected to choose one or two disciplines in which they will take courses and develop a theoretical or methodological sophistication that they will bring to bear on their study of Asia, particularly in their thesis and senior seminar work. Introductory work in each discipline should be taken early to fulfill prerequisites for upper level work in the chosen discipline.

6) **Area-Specific Courses:** Majors should try to include three or four courses (not including language study) that focus on a student's geographical area of specialization within Asia; and two courses that include a geographic area other than one's region of focus.

**Requirements for the Correlate Sequence in Asian Studies**

**Correlate Sequence Requirements:** 6 units of coursework on Asia (program courses, cross-listed courses, or approved courses) including one 100-level course and at least one 300-level seminar. Courses chosen for the correlate should reflect a topical, or area, or methodological focus. Asian language study is recommended but not required. Up to two units can be taken outside the College, through JYA or other programs. Up to two units of Asian language study may be counted toward the correlate. Up to two 100-level courses may be counted (however, only one 100-level unit can be language). One course can be double-counted for a major and for the correlate sequence. After declaring a correlate sequence, no ungraded courses can be taken to fulfill the requirements. A short Declaration of Correlate proposal form is available on line at the Asian Studies Program home page, and in the Asian Studies Program Office. On the form students prepare a short, one paragraph proposal and a list of the six planned courses, after consulting the course list in the catalog and discussing the sequence with an adviser. (Any member of the Asian Studies steering committee, including the director, can be asked to serve as correlate adviser.) Declaration proposals should describe the focus of the coursework and how it complements the students' major. The proposal must be approved by the program director.

**Requirements for the Correlate Sequence in Asian American Studies:** Each 6 unit correlate sequence in Asian American Studies is designed in consultation with an advisor from the Asian Studies program and the Asian Studies director. The correlate should include (1) courses on Asian American studies (2) at least one course on global or transnational Asian studies/Asian diasporas or on diasporas and migration in general (3) at least one course on Asia (AS program courses, cross-listed courses, or approved courses), (4) other relevant courses on race and/or ethnicity in American society. The correlate will ordinarily include at least one 100-level and at least one 300-level course.

A short "Declaration of Asian American Studies Correlate" proposal form is available on line at the Asian Studies Program website, and in the Asian Studies Program office. A list of courses approved for the Asian American Correlate sequence is available from the program director.

## VASSAR COLLEGE

Application for the Major  
Program in Asian Studies

Please complete this application, the application essay, the plan of study worksheet, and a plan of study card and return them to the Director of Asian Studies, Program Office Room 302, Old Laundry Building, 3rd floor. The Director will need to sign a copy of the Registrar's Declaration of Major form (available in the Asian Studies Program Office).

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Year \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Box \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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Application Essay. Please write a 2 page essay answering the questions below.

Why are you interested in majoring in Asian Studies?

**Regional Interests.** Which areas of Asia are you most interested in studying and why?

**Disciplinary Interests.** Please discuss the one or two disciplinary approaches to Asia you will specialize in as you study Asia (for example, anthropology, art, economics, geography, history, language and literature, philosophy, politics, religion, or sociology). While you may be interested in taking courses in all these areas, it is important that in your answer you highlight one or two approaches that appeal to you the most. You will be expected to take courses and develop a theoretical or methodological sophistication in one or two disciplines, particularly for use in your senior thesis. Please explain your interest in these approaches.

Related to this section, are you considering (or doing) a correlate, or double majoring in any other discipline?

**Special Topics/Issues.** Are there particular issues or topics which interest you (broadly or specifically) that you would like to have a chance to study further in the context of your Asian Studies major (e.g. ecological issues, gender studies, globalization, media studies, war and peace studies, economic policy issues etc.)?

**Language.** What language do you intend to use to fulfill the Asian Studies Language Requirement and how do you intend to fulfill it (by course work, proficiency test, etc.)? What Asian languages are you currently proficient in (please indicate level of reading, writing and speaking skills).

**Asian Field Experience.** Briefly describe any time you have spent in Asian countries, length of stay, etc. Do you plan to go JYA or to pursue summer study or research or travel in Asia? Where do you plan to go and for how long? What do you intend to do while there? If you do not plan to study, research or travel in Asia during your undergraduate career, please explain why not.

**Senior Thesis Topic.** Briefly describe your possible senior thesis topic. Stating the topic now does not commit you to writing on this topic, but it will be useful to have a general topic in mind as you plan your courses for the major. What regional and disciplinary study background will you need, what courses will you need to take to write the thesis you propose? If your possible thesis topic changes, please make sure to discuss the change with your advisor or the director, so that we can give advice about changes in your course plan.

**Future Career Plans.** Briefly describe how you see Asian Studies as fitting into your future career plans:

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

**ASIAN STUDIES MAJOR PLANNING FORM**  
**12 Units**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class Year** \_\_\_\_\_

**Advisor:** \_\_\_\_\_ **JYA?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Two Disciplinary Focuses:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Area Focus(es):** \_\_\_\_\_

**100-Level Courses** – minimum of 2 units

**Semester/Year Taken**

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**200-Level Courses** – minimum of 3 units

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**300-Level Courses** – minimum of 3 units

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300-301, 302 – *Senior Thesis* \_\_\_\_\_

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*AS Senior Seminar* \_\_\_\_\_

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**Language** – maximum of 4 units can be counted

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