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The Asian Studies Program at Kenyon offers an interdisciplinary concentration that incorporates a variety of courses in anthropology, art history, history, language, music, philosophy, political science, religious studies, and sociology. The program also sponsors films, invites speakers to the College, and promotes other social and cultural events to stimulate campus awareness of the societies of East and Southeast Asia, India and its neighbors, and the Islamic world.

With Asia as its point of reference, the curriculum encourages students to deal with Asian peoples as actors on the scene of regional and world history, rather than as objects of non-Asian peoples' enterprises and observations. An important goal of the concentration is the development of a critical understanding of the ways in which people of the interrelated regions of Asia have historically defined and expressed themselves.

The concentration in Asian studies comprises three elements:

(1) at least one year of language study; (2) 1.5 units of coursework in selected areas of Asian culture, including an approved foundation course; and (3) a one-semester senior seminar. The concentration enables students to study formally the histories, cultures, and societies of Asia in a comparative and interdisciplinary format.

Beginning Asian Studies

First- and second-year students may begin almost anywhere. See the list of all the Asian studies courses offered in the current year.

Students hoping to spend all or part of their junior year in China or Japan should certainly begin to study the appropriate language in their first two years at Kenyon. New students interested in Asia who have not yet declared a major or a concentration are welcome to seek specific advice from any of the Asian-studies faculty members.

Concentration Requirements and Curriculum

1. Language study

One year of instruction in a relevant Asian language is required. This requirement can be met by taking two semesters of Modern Chinese (CHNS), Japanese, or Sanskrit at Kenyon, or three semesters of Classical Chinese (CHIN). The equivalent of one year of approved college-level Asian language instruction at another accredited academic institution will also meet the requirement, as will some intensive summer programs. With the prior approval of the director of the Asian Studies Program, a student may use a semester of intensive language study abroad to fulfill the language requirement. In the case of transfer students, credit will be accepted for a year of Asian language study with a grade of C+ or better pursued at another institution. If the program committee determines that a student possesses native proficiency in an Asian language, it will waive the requirement.

The program committee strongly recommends that students continue language study beyond the first year.

2. Area and disciplinary coursework

Students are required to take 2 units (four semester courses, including the senior seminar) about Asia other than language courses. These courses must be from the list of courses offered under Asian studies at Kenyon but may also include relevant courses taken in study-abroad programs. Students are strongly encouraged to build comparison into their curricular choices by taking at least one course representing a region of Asia different from that of their language study.

Courses not specifically focused on Asia will not be counted toward the concentration. Where any doubt arises, please ask a member of the Asian-studies faculty. Double-counting for the major and the concentration is permitted.

3. Senior Seminar: Asia in Comparative Perspective

This .5-unit course is required for students fulfilling the requirements for the Asian Studies Concentration and is open to other students on a permission basis. The course will be offered every spring under the direction of a selected Asian-studies faculty member and will meet in a seminar format.

Course content will be organized around a common theme that integrates the various disciplines and regions of Asia that students have been studying at Kenyon. Through readings, films, guest lectures by other Kenyon Asian-studies faculty members and outside speakers, and other activities, the course will lead students to synthesize their academic and personal (e.g., off-campus) experiences in a broader comparative perspective. Students will produce work that examines one or more topics of their own special interest within the comparative Asian framework.

Off-Campus Study

Off-campus study in Asia is not required, but it is highly recommended. Students should consult Asian-studies faculty members and the director of international education for the numerous opportunities available to Kenyon students to study in Asia for one semester or a year. Summer language-study programs are also available for students who need to prepare for off-campus study or desire to learn an Asian language not offered at Kenyon (e.g., Hindi, Urdu, Korean, Vietnamese).

First-Semester Courses

Elementary Classical Chinese

◆ CHIN 111 (.75 unit)
Finefrock

Classical Chinese is an introduction to the classical literature of China. It is not a spoken language. (See Modern Chinese [CHNS] in the Department of Modern Languages

and Literatures for spoken Chinese.) No previous language study, including Modern Chinese, is required. Students who have already studied Modern Chinese should take CHIN 211 as their first course in Classical Chinese, instead of CHIN 111.

Students learn ten characters and read ten lines of Chinese per day. The course moves at a pace that allows discussion of works read. There is a daily vocabulary quiz and in-class reading assignment. There is also a midterm and final. Students read in class from the first day, and by the end of the year (assuming they continue by taking CHIN 112) they will be able to read simple prose with the aid of a dictionary.

In CHIN 111, students learn 700 characters or grammatical particles, learn to write characters in stroke order, and learn basic pronunciation skills for Classical Chinese. Translation of Classical Chinese poetry is an important part of this course, with students compiling a book of their translations into English. The course is suitable for students seeking a reading knowledge of Chinese poetry to inform and enlarge the scope of their own creative writing in English, as well as students wishing to learn a language through translating its literature.

The course is taught in English. No prerequisites, but native speakers must take a more advanced course.

Classical Chinese Literature in English

◆ CHIN 115 (.5 unit)
Finefrock

This course is a survey of classical literature, including poetry and prose, in China. The course is taught in English using English translations and assumes no previous knowledge of Classical Chinese. No prerequisites.

Intermediate Classical Chinese

CHIN 211 (.5 unit)
Finefrock

This course comprises readings in Classical Chinese and is taught in English. No prerequisite, but CHIN 111 and 112 are advised.

Advanced Classical Chinese

CHIN 371 (.5 unit)
Finefrock

This course covers readings in Classical Chinese. It is taught in English. No prerequisite, but CHIN 211 and 212 are advised.

Second-Semester Courses

Elementary Classical Chinese

CHIN 112 (.75 unit)
Finefrock

See first-semester course description for CHIN 111. In this course, students learn 700 additional characters and are able to use a Chinese dictionary easily. As in CHIN 111, there is a midterm and final, and students compile a book of their translations.

Intermediate Classical Chinese

CHIN 212 (.5 unit)
Finefrock

This course comprises readings in Classical Chinese and is taught in English. No prerequisite, but CHIN 111 and 112 are advised.

Advanced Classical Chinese

CHIN 372 (.5 unit)
Finefrock

This course covers readings in Classical Chinese. It is taught in English. No prerequisite, but CHIN 211 and 212 are advised.

Senior Seminar: Asia in Comparative Perspective: Diasporas

ASIA 490 (.5 unit)
Singer

There are so many Tibetans in Dharamsala, India, that people called it Little Lhasa. Ramayana celebrations—based on the Hindu epic—in Southeast Asia reflect more ancient migrations of Indians, who carried their languages and cultures with them as they migrated. Chinese communities thrive throughout Asia, where Chinese traders once settled in the course of commercial enterprise.

This course will examine old and new patterns of Asian migration and the diaspora of various Asian ethnic

communities. We will use a lot of cultural artifacts and products of popular culture that reflect the transit of people from one part of Asia to another. There are also, however, some important theoretical questions we have to tackle. What is the relationship between diaspora and assimilation? What does it mean for a community to settle in a place and make it home? The converse of this question is: Who is indigenous? What effect does colonialism have on the changing meanings of migration and diaspora? The transmission of cultures and religions across Asia raises other complicated questions. For example, the "spread of Buddhism" from India eastward is usually seen through the transmission of texts and ideas. What about people? We are more apt to consider the importance of people in the spread of Islam. But surely in India, if not Malaysia, too, most Muslims within a few centuries were converts, not immigrants. So how do we separate the diaspora of people from the diaspora of ideas?

This course is the senior seminar for the Asian Studies concentration.

CHNS 323 What Makes a Chinese Hero?
 HIST 156 History of India
 HIST 160 Modern East Asia
 HIST 262 Japan to 1850
 HIST 452 Women, Gender, and State in China
 INST 131 China in Transition
 JAPN 111Y-112Y Intensive Introductory Modern Japanese
 JAPN 213Y-214Y Intermediate Modern Japanese
 JAPN 321 Advanced Japanese
 JAPN 322 Advanced Japanese: Language and Culture
 JAPN 325 Introduction to Japanese Linguistics
 MUSC 485: Asian Music Ensemble (no more than two semesters or .5 unit)
 PSCI 346 Riots, Ballots, and Rice: Comparative Asian Politics
 RLST 240 Classical Islam
 RLST 270 Chinese Religions
 RLST 360 Zen Buddhism
 RLST 443 Voices in Contemporary Islam
 RLST 471 Confucian Thought and Practice
 SOCY 249 Knowledge of the Other: Journey to the East

Courses offered in 2007-08 that meet Asian Studies Concentration requirements:

ARHS 114 Introduction to Asian Art
 ARHS 235 Art of China
 ASIA 490 Senior Seminar: Asia in Comparative Perspective
 CHIN 111, 112 Elementary Classical Chinese
 CHIN 115 Classical Chinese Literature in English
 CHIN 211, 212 Intermediate Classical Chinese
 CHIN 371, 372 Advanced Classical Chinese
 CHNS 111Y-112Y Intensive Introductory (Modern) Chinese
 CHNS 213Y-214Y Intermediate (Modern) Chinese
 CHNS 321 Advanced Chinese Language and Culture