

# Asian Studies

## *Interdisciplinary*

The Asian Studies Concentration at Kenyon is an interdisciplinary program that integrates coursework 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.

The Asian studies curriculum encourages students to acquire the analytical and critical ability to explore the linguistic, literary, and cultural traditions of Asia and to develop the cultural sensitivity and humanistic knowledge needed in our increasingly globalized world. Students come to understand Asia as a culturally diverse region with deeply intertwined histories and Asian peoples as major actors in 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 at least two departments other than Modern Languages and Literatures and representing at least two regions of Asia; and (3) a one-semester senior seminar. The concentration enables students to integrate their studies of the histories, cultures, and societies of Asia in a comparative and interdisciplinary format, through their participation in the senior seminar.

## FACULTY

**Joseph A. Adler**, Director, Professor of Asian Studies

**Jianhua Bai**, Professor of Chinese

**Sarah Blick**, Associate Professor of Art History

**Ruth W. Dunnell**, James P. Storer Professor of Asian History

**Nurten Kilic-Schubel**, Assistant Professor of History

**Maria E. Mendonça**, Luce Assistant Professor of Asian Music and Culture

**Vernon J. Schubel**, NEH Distinguished Teaching Professor of Religious Studies

**Wendy F. Singer**, Roy T. Wortman Distinguished Professor in History

**Anna X.D. Sun**, Assistant Professor of Sociology and Asian Studies

**Chengjuan Sun**, Assistant Professor of Chinese

**Hideo Tomita**, Professor of Japanese

**Yang Xiao**, Associate Professor of Philosophy

**Yan Zhou**, Visual Resources Curator; Adjunct Assistant Professor of Art History

## BEGINNING ASIAN STUDIES

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 may enroll in any 100- or 200-level course offered by an Asian studies faculty member, or should consider taking ASIA 201, The Silk Road, which provides an introduction to the entire region.

## 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 Arabic at Kenyon. 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 Concentration, 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 1.5 units (three semester courses) 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 must take at least one course representing a region different from that of their language study. For example, students who are primarily focused on East Asia and are studying Chinese or Japanese at Kenyon (or taking Korean abroad or off-campus) must take at least one course focused on South Asia, Southeast Asia, or Islamicate Asia--i.e., History of India, History of the Islamicate World, Classical Islam, or Indonesian Music ensemble. Students who focus on South Asia, Southeast Asia, or Islamicate Asia and take Arabic at Kenyon or Hindi, Bhasa Indonesian, or another relevant language abroad should take at least one course focused on East Asia--i.e., Modern East Asia, Art of China, Japanese Religions, or Confucianism. Students focusing on either region may also fulfill this requirement by taking a course that covers more than one region of Asia--i.e., Asian Art, The Silk Road, or Comparative Asian Politics.

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 a student's 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. Topics will vary with the instructor.

## OFF-CAMPUS STUDY

Off-campus study in Asia is not required, but it is highly recommended. Students should consult with 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).

## ASIAN STUDIES COURSES

### ASIA 201 The Silk Road

*Credit: .5 unit*

"The Silk Road" is a rather misleading term coined in 1877 by Ferdinand von Richthofen. What it actually refers to is a vast network of trade routes that connected East, South, and Southeast Asia with the Mediterranean region, North Africa, and Europe. While travel and migration along these routes date back to prehistoric times and of course continue today, communication via the land routes across the Eurasian continent primarily flourished from the second century BCE through the fifteenth century CE, most notably linking China with western Asia and the Mediterranean region. And while silk was one of the major products transported from China to the West as far back as the Roman Empire, the trade, especially in such other luxury goods as spices (from India) and gemstones (from western Asia), was active in both directions. Along with the trade in material goods, the Silk Road was the medium for cultural exchange. One of the prime examples of this was the spread of Buddhism from India into Afghanistan, China, Korea, Japan, and Southeast Asia. As an extensive and many-layered system of economic and cultural exchange, the Silk Road can therefore be considered a premodern example of what today we call globalization. This course will survey the history of economic and cultural exchange along the Silk Road from prehistoric times to the present day. We will specifically examine geographic factors, the various ethnicities and empires that contributed to Silk Road history, the exchange of goods and technologies, the religions of the Silk Road, and the spread of artistic traditions across Asia. The general aims will be to enable students to think critically about Asia (or Eurasia) in a more holistic way, to understand the interconnections of our various academic disciplines, and to appreciate some of the rich cultural heritages and exchanges that have contributed to our world. No prerequisites. Offered every year.

*Instructor: Adler, Staff*

**ASIA 490 Senior Seminar: Asia in Comparative Perspective***Credit: .5 unit*

The Asian studies capstone seminar is taught by Asian Studies Program faculty in rotation, and organized around a common theme that integrates the various disciplines and regions of Asia. Through readings, films, guest lectures, 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. Open to Asian studies concentrators and other students on a space-available basis. Prerequisite: permission of the instructor. Offered every spring.

**ADDITIONAL COURSES THAT MEET THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS CONCENTRATION OR MAJOR:**

ANTH 113: Introduction to Cultural Anthropology  
 ARHS 114: Introduction to Asian Art  
 ARHS 235: Art of China  
 ARHS 238: Modern Chinese Art  
 ARHS 239: Contemporary Chinese Art  
 CHIN 111: Elementary Classical Chinese  
 CHIN 112: Elementary Classical Chinese  
 CHIN 115: Classical Chinese Literature in English  
 CHIN 211: Intermediate Classical Chinese  
 CHIN 212: Intermediate Classical Chinese  
 CHNS 111Y: Intensive Introductory Chinese  
 CHNS 112Y: Intensive Introductory Chinese  
 CHNS 213Y: Intermediate Chinese  
 CHNS 214Y: Intermediate Chinese  
 CHNS 321: Advanced Chinese Language and Culture  
 CHNS 323: Literature and Culture: Chinese Heroes  
 CHNS 324: Modern China through Film and Fiction  
 HIST 156: History of India  
 HIST 160: Modern East Asia  
 HIST 161: East Asia to 1850  
 HIST 166: History of the Islamicate World  
 HIST 258: Ottoman Empire  
 HIST 261: The Mongol Empire in World History  
 HIST 262: Japan to 1850  
 HIST 263: Imperial China  
 HIST 353: Tibet between China and the West  
 HIST 356: Vietnam  
 HIST 358: Imagined India: Film and Fiction  
 HIST 365: Middle East through Film and Fiction  
 HIST 370: Women and Gender in the Modern Middle East  
 HIST 450: Topics in Chinese History  
 HIST 452: Women, Gender, and State in China  
 INST 131: China in Transition  
 JAPN 111Y: Intensive Introductory Modern Japanese  
 JAPN 112Y: Intensive Introductory Modern Japanese  
 JAPN 213Y: Intermediate Modern Japanese  
 JAPN 214Y: Intermediate Modern Japanese  
 JAPN 321: Advanced Japanese  
 JAPN 322: Advanced Japanese: Language and Culture  
 JAPN 325: Introductory Japanese Linguistics  
 MLL 101Y: Beginning Arabic  
 MLL 102Y: Beginning Arabic  
 MLL 201: Intermediate Arabic I

MUSC 206: Seminar in Ethnomusicology  
 MUSC 485: Asian Music Ensemble  
 PHIL 212: Early Chinese Philosophy  
 PSCI 346: Riots, Ballots, and Rice: Comparative Asian Politics  
 RLST 240: Classical Islam  
 RLST 250: South Asian Religions  
 RLST 260: Buddhist Thought and Practice  
 RLST 270: Chinese Religions  
 RLST 275: Japanese Religions  
 RLST 360: Zen Buddhism  
 RLST 440: Seminar on Sufism  
 RLST 443: Voices in Contemporary Islam  
 RLST 447: Islam in America  
 RLST 471: Confucian Thought and Practice  
 RLST 472: Taoism  
 SOCY 221: Global Religions in Modern Society  
 SOCY 249: Knowledge of the Other: Journey to the East