

Curriculum and Requirements Asian Studies

Interdisciplinary

Asian Studies at Kenyon is an interdisciplinary program that offers both a concentration and a joint major. In the major, students combine their study of Asia with major requirements in one of several departments—Art (specifically, art history), History, Modern Languages and Literatures (specifically, Chinese), or Religious Studies. In addition, students will find courses in Asian studies in anthropology, music, philosophy, political science, 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 Asia, South and Southeast Asia, and Western/Central Asia, including 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 to understand 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 curriculum 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.

Beginning Asian Studies

Students hoping to spend all or part of their junior year in China or Japan should 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.

Requirements for the Joint Major

The Asian studies major is a joint major with one of the following departments: Art (art history), History, Modern Languages and Literatures (Chinese), or Religious Studies. It provides a structured yet flexible curriculum to enable students to focus their work on Asia while acquiring a solid methodological grounding in an academic discipline. Students must fulfill all the requirements of the departmental major, in addition to the specific requirements of the Asian Studies Program as described below. The Senior Exercise will follow the requirements of the joint department and will focus on the Asian region in which the Asian studies language and study-abroad requirements were fulfilled. Double-counting of courses for the departmental major and for the Asian Studies Program is permitted.

1. Language study (1 - 2.5 units)

For Asian languages taught at Kenyon-at present Chinese, Japanese, and Arabic-two years of language study are required. Students electing a joint major with Modern Languages and Literatures (Chinese) will take more than two years of language. One semester of intensive language study in a country where the language is spoken will be considered equivalent to a full year at Kenyon. If a second year of Arabic is not available at Kenyon, one year at Kenyon plus an approved summer or semester abroad will satisfy the requirement.

For Asian languages not taught at Kenyon, one year of intensive study abroad (or an approved intensive summer program combined with a semester abroad) will fulfill the 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, both oral and written, it will waive this requirement, but only if the Senior Exercise focuses on populations that speak that language.

2. Study abroad

At least one semester or one summer (minimum six weeks) in an approved study-abroad program is required. The program must be in a country where the student's Asian language is spoken. A full year of study abroad is highly recommended.

3. Foundation courses (1 unit)

At least two courses from the following list, in *two* different areas and *two* different departments or programs. Areas are defined as East Asia (China, Japan, Korea), South/Southeast Asia (India, Vietnam, Indonesia), and Western/Central Asia (including the Islamic world). Equivalent courses taken abroad can count as foundation courses.

East Asia:

- ASIA 201: The Silk Road
- ARHS 114: Asian Art
- HIST 160: Modern East Asia
- HIST 161: East Asia to 1850
- INST 131: China in Transition
- PHIL 212: Early Chinese Philosophy
- RLST 260: Buddhist Thought and Practice
- RLST 270: Chinese Religions
- RLST 275: Japanese Religions

South/Southeast:

- ARHS 114: Asian Art
- HIST 156: History of India
- HIST 166: History of the Islamicate World (covers South Asia every other year)

- HIST 260: Medieval Islamic Empires
- RLST 250: South Asian Religions
- RLST 260: Buddhist Thought and Practice

Western/Central Asia:

- ASIA 201: The Silk Road
- HIST 166: History of the Islamic World
- HIST 171: Modern Islamic World
- HIST 260: Medieval Islamic Empires
- HIST 261: The Mongol Empire
- RLST 240: Classical Islam

4. Area courses (1.5 unit)

Students must complete *three* additional courses in *one area*. One additional foundation course in the area of the student's focus can count as an area course (i.e. the other two must be from the list below). Courses not specifically focused on Asia will not be counted toward the joint major. Language courses beyond the intermediate level that focus specifically on literature, film, or culture may count as area courses. Equivalent courses taken abroad may also count as area courses. Area courses currently offered at Kenyon include:

East Asia:

- ARHS 238: Chinese Art Since 1840
- ARHS 239: Contemporary Chinese Art
- CHNS 321, 322: Advanced Chinese Language and Culture
- CHNS 324: Modern China through Film and Fiction
- CHNS 325: Chinese Literary Tradition
- HIST 262: Japan to 1850
- HIST 263: Imperial China
- HIST 353: Tibet Between China and the West
- HIST 450: Topics in Chinese History
- HIST 452: Women, Gender, and State in China
- JAPN 322: Advanced Japanese: Language and Culture
- JAPN 323: Advanced Reading and Composition
- JAPN 325: Introductory Japanese Linguistics
- PSCI 346: Riots, Ballots, and Rice: Comparative Asian Politics
- RLST 360: Zen Buddhism
- RLST 471: Confucianism
- RLST 481: Daoism
- SOCY 221: Global Religions in Modern Society
- SOCY 249: Knowledge of the Other: Journey to the East

South/Southeast Asia:

- HIST 260: Medieval Islamic Empires
- HIST 345: History of the Indian Ocean
- HIST 356: Vietnam
- HIST 358: Imagined India: Film and Fiction
- MUSC 206: Seminar in Ethnomusicology
- MUSC 485: Asian Music Ensemble
- PSCI 346: Riots, Ballots, and Rice: Comparative Asian Politics

Western/Central Asia:

- HIST 258: Ottoman Empire
- HIST 261: The Mongol Empire in World History
- HIST 365: Middle East through Film and Fiction
- HIST 370: Women and Gender in Modern Middle East
- RLST 440: Seminar on Sufism
- RLST 443: Voices in Contemporary Islam
- RLST 447: Islam in America

5. Senior Seminar: Asia in Comparative Perspective (.5 unit)

This course is 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.

6. Senior Exercise

The Senior Exercise will follow the requirements of the joint department. It will focus in a significant way on the Asian area in which the language and study-abroad requirements were fulfilled, and will be supervised by an Asian Studies faculty member in the joint department.

Requirements for the Concentration

The concentration in Asian studies enables students to integrate their studies of the histories, cultures, and societies of Asia in a comparative and interdisciplinary format. It 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) the senior seminar.

1. Language study

For Asian languages taught at Kenyon-at present Chinese, Japanese, and Arabic-one year of instruction is required. The equivalent of one year of approved college-level Asian language instruction at another accredited academic institution will also meet the requirement, as will an approved intensive summer program.

For Asian languages not taught at Kenyon, one semester of intensive language study in a country where the language is spoken, or an approved intensive summer program, will be considered

equivalent to a full year at Kenyon. 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, both oral and written, 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/Southeast Asia or Western/Central Asia (see lists under Requirements for the Joint Major). A course that covers more than one region of Asia-e.g., Asian Art, The Silk Road, or Comparative Asian Politics-will also fulfill this requirement.

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 both the concentration and the joint major. 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 for the concentration but it is highly recommended. Students should consult with Asian Studies faculty members and the director of the Center for Global Engagement to learn about 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

Note: This page contains **all** of the regular courses taught by this department. Not all courses are offered every year. Check the [searchable schedule](#) to see which courses are being offered in the upcoming semester.

ASIA 201 The Silk Road

Credit: 0.5

"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: 0.5

This 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 interest within the

comparative Asian framework. Required for Asian Studies concentrators and joint majors.
Prerequisite: permission of the instructor. Offered every spring.

Additional courses that meet the requirements for this major/concentration

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 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 163: Modern China
HIST 166: History of the Islamic 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 391: Special Topic
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

JAPN 391: Special Topic
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 of Contemporary Islam
RLST 447: Islam in North 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