

## Asian Studies

### Asian Studies Program

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### Overview

**Why Learn about Asia?** We live in an age in which major cultures that formerly were assigned to particular geographical regions of the globe are now found globally. North America is no longer an outpost of Europe, but an invigorating composite of Asian, African, Latin, and European ingredients. Asian economies have worldwide presence, and political issues in that part of the world affect us profoundly at home. In art, theater, cinema, religion, fashion, and cuisine, Asia is here. By studying Asian civilizations and contemporary societies, we come to understand a significant part of humanity and acquire insight into ourselves.

The Asian Studies Program supports teaching, research, study abroad, and cultural events concerning Asia. The current strength of the program lies in China, Japan, and Korea, with growing capabilities in Southeast and South Asia.

Several Asian languages are taught in the Department of Linguistics. Chinese, Japanese, and Korean are each offered through the fourth-year level. Undergraduate minors may be elected in these languages. UB students may also study Arabic, Hindi/Urdu, and Sanskrit.

Students can study abroad in Asia, undertaking language study, non-language classes, and graduate research. They can spend an academic year, a semester, or a summer at fine universities in China, India, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, and Vietnam. Academic credit can be transferred to UB. For information, refer to the Study Abroad section.

### About our Degrees

#### Asian Studies Major

The interdisciplinary major permits the student to explore several regions and cultures of Asia as well as the Asian experience in America. At the same time, it requires a focus on one region or culture of Asia and a related Asian language.

#### Asian Studies Minor

As a companion to a major in an academic or professional field, the interdisciplinary minor broadens and enriches the student's academic experience. It conveys skills and concepts needed for appreciating the rich civilizations and vibrant nations of Asia and for dealing professionally with Asian peoples. The minor is a valuable credential for graduate study and an international career.

#### Acceptance Criteria - B.A., Minor

A minimum grade of "C" in any two courses is required for the major/minor.

#### Acceptance Information

Deadlines: Rolling  
Total number of majors currently enrolled: 28

#### Degree Requirements

Please see [Degrees and Policies](#).

### About our Courses

#### Suggested Introductory Courses

- [AS 101](#) Introduction to Asian Studies
- [AS 220](#) Culture and the Arts in East Asia
- [HIS 181/HIS 182](#) Asian Civilizations

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- [AS 229](#) Contemporary Asian Societies
- [AS 110](#) The Asian American Experience
- An elementary course in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Hindi/Urdu, or another Asian language

### Asian American Studies

Every semester, the Asian Studies Program and other departments offer courses exploring the history, literature, and social dynamics of peoples of Asian origin in North America.

For course descriptions, please see [Courses](#).

### About our Faculty

Over twenty Asian specialists in a variety of humanities and social sciences fields, focusing on China, Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia, and South Asia.

### Acceptance Information

The major permits the student to explore several regions and cultures of Asia as well as the Asian experience in America. At the same time, it requires a focus on one region or culture of Asia and a related Asian language. Students take a required core of four lower-division courses and four semesters of language. Upper-level electives (six courses) include both the social sciences and the humanities. The capstone experience is a senior research course. Some students who are majoring in an established discipline elect Asian studies as a double major.

### Extracurricular Activities

Students may join clubs which focus on Asian cultures. These include:

- [Chinese Student Association](#)
- [Japanese Student Association](#)
- [Korean Student Association](#)
- [Indonesian Student Association](#)
- [Thai International Club](#)
- [Indian Student Association](#)
- [Asian American Student Union](#)

Also, at UB there are sororities and fraternities that focus on Asia.

The Asian Studies Program sponsors an on-going series of brown bag lunches called Asia at Noon, hosts exhibitions and performing artists from Asia, and organizes special lectures and conferences. The Asian Studies picnic in the fall is a major social event. A periodic newsletter, *Asian Studies Notes*, and on-line announcements keep students apprised of these opportunities.

See the [UB Student Association](#).

### Practical Experience and Special Academic Opportunities

Students can study abroad in Asia, undertaking language study and non-language classes. They can spend an academic year, a semester, or a summer at fine universities in China, India, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, and Vietnam. Academic credit can be transferred to UB. For information, see [Study Abroad Programs](#).

### Career Information and Further Study

Students who concentrate in Asian Studies find job opportunities in international business, government service, non-governmental organizations, and the arts. Some go on to professional schools in such fields as management, finance, diplomacy, and law. Others pursue graduate degrees in a variety of disciplines and enter Asia-related academic careers. Students who combine the major in Asian Studies with another field through a double major are particularly well suited for jobs that require professional training coupled with Asian linguistic ability and cultural understanding.

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### Career Choices

- Banking
- Diplomacy
- International business
- International NGOs
- Law
- Public service
- Research
- Teaching
- The arts

### Degree Options

Students who wish to focus on Asia in their academic program have several options:

1. Major in Asian studies, administered by the Asian Studies Program
2. Special major in Chinese studies or Japanese studies. The undergraduate director in Asian studies will advise students who wish to design a special major.
3. Asian studies track of the international studies concentration, administered by the Social Sciences Interdisciplinary Program
4. Minor in Asian studies, administered by the Asian Studies Program
5. Minor in Chinese, administered by the Department of Linguistics
6. Minor in Japanese, administered by the Department of Linguistics
7. Minor in Korean, administered by the Department of Linguistics

**Asian-American Studies.** Every semester, the Asian Studies Program and some academic departments offer courses exploring the history, literature, and social dynamics of the Asian-American experience. One in ten undergraduates at UB is an Asian-American.

### Degrees Offered

**Undergraduate:** BA, Minor in Asian Studies

### Links to Further Information About this Program

- [Undergraduate Catalog](#)
- [Undergraduate Admissions](#)
- [Graduate Admissions](#)
- [Asian Studies Program](#)
- [College of Arts and Sciences](#)

#### **Asian Studies - B.A.**

##### **Acceptance Criteria**

Minimum grade of C in any two courses required for the major.

##### **Advising Notes**

To graduate, minimum grade of C- required in any course in the major.

##### **Required Courses**

##### **LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY**

(12-18 credit hours, or 6-8 credit hours beyond the CAS language requirement. Some second-year language courses are 4 credits, others are 3 credits per semester.)

Four semesters. (Students who are native speakers of an Asian language may test out of the language requirement and be required to offer in its place two additional, 3-hour courses in the upper elective category or two semesters of an Asian language other than their own.)

##### **CORE COURSES** (10 credit hours)

**AS 101** Introduction to Asian Studies

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[AS 110](#) The Asian American Experience  
[HIS 181](#) or [HIS 182](#) Asian Civilizations  
[AS 229](#) Contemporary Asian Societies

### UPPER LEVEL ELECTIVES (18 credit hours)

Approved, 300/400-level courses, of which 9 credit hours must relate to the culture or region of the language selected. At least 6 credit hours must be in the social sciences and at least 6 credit hours must be in the humanities. Up to 6 credit hours of language courses at the 300-level and above may be counted.

### CAPSTONE COURSE

[AS 498](#) Senior Research

### Summary

Total required credit hours for the major: 37-39

### Recommended Sequence of Program Requirements

#### FIRST YEAR

Fall [AS 101](#), first-semester language  
Spring [HIS 181](#) or [HIS 182](#), second-semester language

#### SECOND YEAR

Fall [AS 110](#), third-semester language  
Spring [AS 229](#), fourth-semester language

#### THIRD YEAR

Fall two upper-level electives  
Spring two upper-level electives

#### FOURTH YEAR

Fall two upper-level electives  
Spring [AS 498](#)

*Study abroad in Asia is strongly recommended.*

## Asian Studies - Minor

### About the Minor

As a companion to a major in an academic or professional field, the interdisciplinary minor in Asian studies broadens and enriches the academic experience. It conveys skills and concepts needed for appreciating the rich civilizations and vibrant societies Asia and for dealing professionally with Asian peoples. The minor is a valuable credential for graduate study and an international career.

### Acceptance Criteria

Minimum grade of C in any course required for the minor.

### Advising Notes

Minimum grade of C- required in any course in the minor.  
Except for the language proficiency requirement, courses applied to another minor or major may not be applied to this minor.

### Required Courses

#### LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Four courses: Intermediate proficiency in an Asian language. Students who satisfy the language requirement through a means other than coursework must take two advanced courses in addition to the three required below; only one of the two may be in the student's major department.

#### CORE COURSE

One of the following: [AS 220](#) Culture of the Arts in East Asia, [HIS 181](#) or [HIS 182](#) Asian Civilizations I and II, [AS 229](#) Contemporary Asian Societies

#### ADVANCED COURSES

Three approved Asian Studies courses at the 300/400-level. Two must be outside the major department. One 300/400-level language course

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may be counted toward the advanced course requirement.

### Summary

Total required credit hours for the minor: 24-30

### AS 101: Introduction to Asian Studies

**Credits:** 1  
**Type:** LEC

Introduces the field of Asian studies and its relationship to selected disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. Intended for students who have elected or who are considering the major in Asian Studies.

### AS 110: The Asian American Experience

**Credits:** 3  
**Type:** LEC

The Asian American experience from the beginning of Asians' and Pacific Islanders' entry into North America in the eighteenth century to the present. Investigates this phenomenon in connection with national and transnational power relations, economic structures, and political realities. Also considers the construction of American identities in the United States and their impact on Asian American communities and individuals. Goals are to develop a historical and multi-cultural perspective on the Asian American experience, to enlarge students' capacities for analytical and critical thinking, and to achieve a better understanding of the diversity within Asian American communities and of Asian Americans' social status in North America.

### AS 117: Asian American Authors

**Credits:** 3  
**Type:** LEC

Focuses on Asian American literature and the social contexts for the formation of Asian American literary traditions and genres. Introduces students to major Asian American literary texts and authors, including recurrent themes, new modes of narratives, and innovative techniques. Addresses the impact of Asian Pacific histories and cultures on specific writers, while locating Asian American literature within the historical and cultural contexts of North America, particularly the formation and effects of racial and national identities in the United States and Canada.

### AS 190: Asian American History

**Credits:** 3  
**Type:** LEC

Introduces major themes in Asian American history from the beginning of Asian immigration to the present. The course examines why Filipinos, Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, South Asians, and Vietnamese came to North America and what happened to them in the contexts of ethnic identity, gender, community, and family.

### AS 220: Culture & Arts of East Asia

**Credits:** 3  
**Type:** LEC

Introduces traditional and contemporary aesthetics, thought, literature, and theatre of East Asia. The arts of China, Japan, and Korea had fascinated observers in the West for centuries, and reveal much about the rich cultures and vibrant societies of East Asia. Guest lectures by Asian specialists in the humanities from several UB departments.

### AS 221: Romance Traditions in Asia

**Credits:** 3  
**Type:** LEC

Introduces students to narratives of romance that span a wide variety of Asian religious, literary, theatrical, and cinematic traditions. Rather than defining romance by what it contains, we will instead consider what romance as a genre does. Through this approach, it becomes possible to examine why certain narratives were compelling enough to be transmitted across and preserved within a wide range of cultures and historical periods. Texts include English translations of Sanskrit drama, Persian and Hindi Sufi mystical works, Japanese and Chinese novels depicting erotic love, recent Bollywood cinema, Korean television melodramas, and the Harlequin Romance phenomenon.

### AS 229: Contemporary Asian Societies

**Credits:** 3  
**Type:** LEC

Introduces students to major features of societies in East, Southeast, and South Asia, and may incorporate material on Central and Southwest Asia depending on the instructor. Discusses the ways in which social scientists analyze contemporary societies and survey theories developed by social scientists to explain social phenomena in contemporary Asian societies.

### AS 270: Asian American Women Writers

**Credits:** 3  
**Type:** LEC

Examines Asian American women's writings and the social, cultural, and historical contexts that shape their thematic concerns, narrative strategies, and poetic styles. Through Asian American women's prose and poetry, we seek to understand the formation of gender, racial, and sexual identities, and their effects on Asian American women's literary traditions and innovations. Examines the relations between gender and genre, between race and class, and between culture and sexuality.

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### AS 323: Gender in South Asian Literature

**Credits:** 3  
**Type:** LEC

Examines the different ways in which gender is constructed through South Asian literature, theatre and film. Introduces students to the literatures of South Asia, foregrounding the ways in which gender shapes different types, or genres, of text and how different genres of text in turn shape gender. Beginning with the premise that gender is a cultural construct, our task of this course will be to discover the cultural underpinnings of historical and contemporary conceptions of gender, sexuality and love. In as much as we play out our gender roles in our social life, this course will also serve to introduce students to the ways in which performance is embedded in the public culture of South Asia. Students will apply skills acquired through readings on theory to a broad set of materials, including authors from across the length and breadth of South Asia representing 2,000 years of history.

### AS 348: Asian Americans and the Visual Media

**Credits:** 3  
**Type:** LEC

Investigates Hollywood representations of Asians and Asian Americans and Asian Americans' self-representations. Through a comparative analysis of Hollywood films and Asian American films and videos, we seek a better understanding of the tactics and specific historical contexts for constructing identities of 'race,' gender, ethnicity, and sexuality. This understanding provides a historical and critical perspective for examining both the content and technique of Asian Americans' films and videos.

### AS 383: India in the Traveler's Eye

**Credits:** 3  
**Type:** LEC

Introduction to the motivations and experiences of travelers to India, and the forms of knowledge that are produced in the wake of such travels. Students will develop a broad familiarity with the history, literatures, religions, and geography of South Asia from reading and discussing a wide range of primary and secondary source material. The diversity of perspective in these works challenge readers to consider what it means to be an outsider looking in on a culture, and compels us to consider arguments for and against treating certain geographic and political regions and temporal periods as coherent cultural zones.

### AS 392: Asian Religions

**Credits:** 3  
**Type:** LEC

Provides an overview of the major religions of Asia (Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam) in the light of their sacred texts, and focuses on the theological underpinnings, stories, and practices of each tradition. This course fosters a better understanding of religion in general, and familiarity with the spiritual values that shape everyday lives in many different locales worldwide.

### AS 393: Topics in Asian Studies

**Credits:** 3

**Type:** LEC

Varying topics in Asian studies, chosen by the instructor.

### AS 394: Asian Religions

**Credits:** 3  
**Type:** LEC

Varying topics in Asian studies, chosen by the instructor.

### AS 395: Topics in Asian Studies

**Credits:** 3  
**Type:** LEC

Varying topics in Asian studies, chosen by the instructor.

### AS 396: Topics in Asian American Studies

**Credits:** 3  
**Type:** LEC

Varying topics in Asian American studies, chosen by the instructor.

### AS 397: Topics in Asian American Studies

**Credits:** 3  
**Type:** LEC

Varying topics in Asian American studies, chosen by the instructor.

### AS 398: Topics in Asian American Studies

**Credits:** 3  
**Type:** LEC

Varying topics in Asian American studies, chosen by the instructor.

### AS 401: Buddhism

**Credits:** 3  
**Type:**

### AS 431: Special Topics

**Credits:** 3  
**Type:** SEM

*The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.*

### AS 446: Islam and South Asian Literature

**Credits:** 3  
**Type:** SEM

Exposes students to the wide variety of poetic and prose literary forms associated with Islam in South Asia, incorporating examples in English translation from Arabic, Hindi, Pashto, Persian, Tamil, and Urdu originals. The five sections of the course include: 1. Theoretical Foundations, 2. Formal Poetry, 3. Narrative Poetic Forms, 4. Prose, and 5. Literary History. Students should demonstrate familiarity with the content of the readings and evaluate the efficacy of the various approaches through which the

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literature has been analyzed. All of the texts are in English and no background in South Asian languages or literature is expected.

### **AS 498: Senior Research in Asian Studies**

**Credits:** 3

**Type:** TUT

*The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.*

A capstone course required for all majors in Asian Studies. Research, writing, and oral presentation of project carried out under the guidance of a faculty member.

### **AS 499: Independent Study**

**Credits:** 1-6

**Type:** TUT

*The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.*