

Asian Studies

Website: sewanee.edu/asianstudies/

Asian studies majors seek to acquire a deep knowledge of one or more cultures in Asia so that they can understand how people in an Asian society act and view the world. Such a goal requires a firm grasp of: an Asian language so that students can understand the concepts and modes of communication within a culture, historical knowledge of the culture's development, the culture's values and ritual practices that stem from religious and philosophical traditions, and the pattern of social structure and economic development. Asian studies majors should also examine the forces that have integrated Asia as well as how Asian countries vary among themselves, as revealed through comparative analyses.

Summer Program in China/India

Sewanee students may take advantage of summer study in China and India. The continuing issue of the program is economic development, with other subjects also included in different summers. *Note: does not fulfill the study-abroad requirement for Asian Studies.*

Faculty

Professors Brown, Goldberg, Mohiuddin, O'Connor, Peterman, Wallace, S. Wilson (Chair)

Major

Requirements for the Major in Asian Studies

The major requires successful completion of the following:

Select three or more approved integrative or comparative electives in Asian studies (from at least two departments/ programs) (http://e-catalog.sewanee.edu/arts-sciences/departments-interdisciplinary-programs/asian-studies/asian_studies_integrative_or_comparative_courses)	12
Select five or more electives in Asian cultures (http://e-catalog.sewanee.edu/arts-sciences/departments-interdisciplinary-programs/asian-studies/asian_cultures_courses)	20
Select one course is Asian languages numbered 300 or above (http://e-catalog.sewanee.edu/arts-sciences/departments-interdisciplinary-programs/asian-studies/asian_language_courses)	4
ASIA 458 Senior Thesis	4
Total Semester Hours	40

Additional Requirements

A comprehensive examination ¹

A study abroad program approved by the chair of the program

¹ The comprehensive examination is two parts: a) a written set of questions that integrate courses taken by the student; and b) a written set of questions on specific courses taken by the student.

Honors

To earn honors in Asian studies, a student must satisfy the following criteria: a) at least a 3.33 grade point average from courses in the major; b) awarding of a "B+" or better on the senior thesis; and c) awarding of "distinction" (B+ or better) on the comprehensive exam.

Minor

Requirements for the Minor in Asian Studies

The minor requires successful completion of the following:

Course Requirements

Select one approved integrative or comparative elective in Asian studies (http://e-catalog.sewanee.edu/arts-sciences/departments-interdisciplinary-programs/asian-studies/asian_studies_integrative_or_comparative_courses)	4
Select two electives in Asian cultures (http://e-catalog.sewanee.edu/arts-sciences/departments-interdisciplinary-programs/asian-studies/asian_cultures_courses)	8

Select two courses in one Asian language (http://e-catalog.sewanee.edu/arts-sciences/departments-interdisciplinary-programs/asian-studies/asian_language_courses)

Total Semester Hours

Courses

Asian Studies Courses

ASIA 100 Introduction to Asian Studies (4)

This course traces the evolution of Japanese manga (comics) and anime (animation) from World War II to the present day, focusing on works that depict female characters and works intended for female audiences. By examining a wide selection of manga and anime, students build skills in close critical analysis of popular culture and explore shifting Japanese perceptions of key social concepts such as gender, childhood, technology, nature, and Japan itself. Taught in English.

ASIA 110 Asian American Experience (4)

This course provides an overview of social-cultural experiences of Asian Americans, considering various influences that shape the identity and social position of individuals in this diverse population group. Through readings, films, guest lectures, and field experiences, students will explore the heterogeneity of Asian American experiences in the United States while integrating theoretical and methodological concerns including concepts of race, ethnicity, migration, identity, power, class, generation, gender, and community.

ASIA 202 3000 Years of East Asian Poetry (4)

From the ancient Chinese "Book of Songs," to Bashō's haiku and the creative work of young poets today writing in colloquial Mandarin, Japanese, and Korean, this course introduces students to the major forms, genres, themes, and developmental history of East Asian poetry. The course approaches poetry not only as something to be contemplated alone in a study, but also as a vital social tool, an integral part of traditional performance, and as something to be recited or sung at a party. Taught in English.

ASIA 203 Chinese Martial Arts Cinema (4)

This course examines the historical development of martial arts cinema, investigating the formation of its literary and cinematic conventions, the cultural and political transformations suggested by those developments, and the history of their productions in China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the U.S. Each week focuses on one film and several key texts that are geared toward the social, cultural and ideological logic of martial arts cinema. Taught in English.

ASIA 204 Themes in New Chinese Cinema (4)

This course surveys the development of Chinese cinemas in a global age, with focus on the transnational contexts of production, circulation and reception. The goals are to introduce a range of films from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Chinese overseas communities; to investigate the role of cinema in constructing and contesting the notion of nation-state; and to explore the shifting dynamics between cultural interflows in the context of regional geopolitics and media globalization. Taught in English.

ASIA 205 Modern China through Fiction and Film (4)

How do film and literature inform our understanding of the evolving concepts of art, ideology and material conditions in modern China? How have literary and cinematic representations changed over the last century to accommodate and facilitate social transformations? What are the characteristics of the cultural productions from mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan? This course helps students develop a critical sense and appreciation for Chinese cinema and literature. Taught in English.

ASIA 208 Modern Chinese Literature in Translation (4)

This course surveys the four major modes of Chinese literature from the early twentieth century to the present: realism, modernism, socialist realism, and postmodernism. Themes of modernity, nationalism, gender, class, and identity are explored through primary texts. The course emphasizes rhetorical, formal, and aesthetic critiques of literature. Taught in English.

ASIA 209 Japanese Literature and Culture (4)

This course introduces students to the culture and history of Japan from the pre-modern period to the present through exposure to some of the most celebrated works in Japanese literature and cinema. Beyond analysis of the texts and films themselves, particular attention is paid to the socio-historical contexts from which these works emerged. Taught in English.

ASIA 217 Modern Japanese Literature (4)

This course is a survey of Japanese literature from the late nineteenth century to the present. Through the reading of seminal works, the course explores such key issues and events in modern Japanese history as modernization, westernization, World War II, and the postwar experience, in addition to contemporary Japanese life. Not open for credit to students who have earned credit for ASIA 317. Taught in English.

ASIA 220 Japanese Folklore and Mythology (4)

Japan has a long history of folklore and mythology filled with magical creatures, witches, and sneaky animals. The study of Japanese folklore and mythology relates to topics in Japanese religion, history, and literature. This class not only explores mythological texts dating back to the sixth century, but it also considers tales and their re-tellings as situated in particular times and places. The course illustrates that much can be learned about a place and time by how stories of the oral tradition are changed and adapted to the political environment.

ASIA 230 The Land of the Rising “”•—~Sons:”•—~ The Concept of the Child and Children’“”•—~s Culture in Japan (4)

This course will draw from Japanese art, theater, literature, and cinema to construct a history of the concept of childhood in Japan. We will trace ideas about childhood and expectations of children from the Heian Period through today. The course content will intersect with various issues of modernity such as education, censorship, industrialization, gender, and nationalism. Taught in English.

ASIA 232 Father Emperor, Mother Land: Family and Nationalism in Modern Japan (4)

How are nation-states formed? Who constructs and manipulates the imagined community of diverse people who identify with each other as fellow patriots? How is the idea of the family used as a tool for constructing national identity and promoting imperialism? How does the nationalist construction of the family alter the expected roles of each individual family member? How does the modern family affect our conceptualization of gender? This course will rely on history, literature, and theories of nationalism and gender to address each of these questions in the context of Japanese nationalism and the nuclear family in the first half of the 20th century. Taught in English.

ASIA 233 The Fantastical World of Anime (4)

This course explores the many worlds portrayed in Japanese animation and draws from research in *anime* studies to trace animation history from its origin in the woodblock prints of the 1700s to the post-modern era. As Japan's largest cultural export, the art of animated films and animation has spread to all corners of the world. The course examines animated films and animation as a genre rooted in Japanese culture while considering as well the *anime* subculture that has gained popularity in America and elsewhere.

ASIA 235 Love in Modern Japan (4)

What does it mean to love someone? Despite its apparent universality, "love" is in fact a highly malleable concept whose definition can vary greatly. In Japan, the conceptualization of love transformed radically in the modern era. This course explores how literary representations of love in Japan reflect not only this transformation but also the struggles it entailed. Issues of particular interest in the course include the interconnection between assumptions about gender and the definition of love, the relationship between marriage and love, the role of sexuality in love, and the relationship between the West and Japan.

ASIA 237 Gender and Sexuality in Modern Chinese Literature and Culture (4)

This course examines Chinese literary and cultural practices related to gender and sexuality from the turn of the twentieth century to the present. Using primary texts in translation, theoretical works, films, and visual materials, students explore the personal and collective politics involved in constructions of gender, sexuality, desire, and identity. Taught in English.

ASIA 240 Introduction to Traditional Asian Drama (4)

This course introduces students to major works of pre-modern and early modern Asian dramatic literatures and some of the living performance arts associated with them. Readings include great works of Sanskrit, Chinese, and Japanese drama and dramaturgy, together with study through recordings of such performance arts as Kathakali, Kunqu, Peking Opera, and Noh. Among the topics addressed are ways in which traditional Asian philosophies as Buddhism and Daoism shaped the literary and performance aesthetics under consideration, as well as questions of theatre as ritual and theatre as imaginative space for social performance. All readings are in English translation.

ASIA 310 Japanese Aesthetics (4)

This course takes a critical look at what is meant by "Japanese Aesthetics" and how related traditions challenge people to re-think their own philosophical and aesthetic criteria. Various media such as ink painting, calligraphy, theater, music, poetry, architecture, dance, pottery, textile arts and design, and manga/anime are studied as a means of exploring some of the most important aesthetic ideas that have developed in Japan from the Classical period to the present day.

ASIA 320 Gender and Sexuality in Japanese Culture (4)

This course examines aspects of Japanese culture by devoting special attention to issues of gender and sexuality. Students read primary texts from pre-modern and modern literature, drama, and manga (graphic novel) in English translation, together with critical essays on gender theory. In-class screenings of short films, anime (animated film), and documentaries help to illustrate some concepts and practices introduced in the readings. Taught in English.

ASIA 444 Independent Study (2 or 4)

A reading and research paper on a topic agreed upon by a sponsored faculty member and the student. *Open only to students pursuing programs in Asian studies. Prerequisite: Professor consent and prerequisite override required.*

ASIA 458 Senior Thesis (4)

This course calls for students to write a senior thesis on a selected topic under supervision of a faculty advisor. May be taken either semester of the senior year. *Open only to students pursuing majors in Asian studies. Prerequisite: Professor consent and prerequisite override required.*