# Asian Studies

Website: Asian Studies (https://new.sewanee.edu/programs-of-study/asian-studies/)

Majors in Asian Studies 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.

## Faculty

Professor: S. Wilson

Associate Professor: Tan

Instructor: Murphy

## Major

## Requirements for the Major in Asian Studies

The major requires successful completion of the following:

| Code | Title | Semester Hours |
|---|---|---|
| **Course Requirements** | | |
| Select twelve semester hours in integrative or comparative electives with no more than two courses in a single discipline (attribute ASIC) (http://e-catalog.sewanee.edu/arts-sciences/departments-interdisciplinary-programs/asian-studies/asian_studies_integrative_or_comparative_courses/) | | 12 |
| Select 20 semester hours cultures electives (attribute ASCU) (http://e-catalog.sewanee.edu/arts-sciences/departments-interdisciplinary-programs/asian-studies/asian_cultures_courses/) | | 20 |
| CHIN 301 | Advanced Chinese [1] | 4 |
| ASIA 458 | Senior Thesis | 4 |
| **Total Semester Hours** | | **40** |

| Code | Title | Semester Hours |
|---|---|---|
| **Additional Requirements** | | |
| A comprehensive examination [2] | | |
| A study abroad program approved by the chair of the program | | |

1

At present, CHIN 301 fulfills the major requirement for one course in an Asian language at an advanced level (through the fourth semester of language study). With the approval of the Program Chair, students may substitute an advanced course in another Asian language taken on an approved study abroad program.

2

The comprehensive examination consists of two parts: a) a revision of the senior thesis paper, to be graded by two appropriate departmental readers and b) an oral presentation of the senior thesis paper at Scholarship Sewanee.

## Honors

To earn honors in the Asian Studies program, 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.

## Student Learning Outcomes

A student majoring in Asian Studies will

1. Demonstrate mastery of an Asian language so they can understand the concepts and modes of communication within a culture.
2. Demonstrate a historical knowledge of the culture's development, the culture's values, its visual culture, and ritual practices that stem from religious and philosophical traditions.
3. Recognize and appraise the patterns of social structure and economic development in Asia.
4. Examine the forces that have integrated as Asia and consider how Asian countries vary among themselves as revealed through comparative analyses.
5. Be able to communicate effectively orally and in writing their knowledge of these topics.

## Minor

## Requirements for the Minor in Asian Studies

The minor requires successful completion of the following:

| Code | Title | Semester Hours |
|---|---|---|
| **Course Requirements** | | |
| Select one approved integrative or comparative elective in Asian Studies with the ASIC attribute (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 eight semester hours in Chinese (CHIN) [1] | | 8 |
| **Total Semester Hours** | | **20** |

[1]

At present, only courses in Chinese (CHIN) satisfy the minor requirement for eight semester hours in an Asian language. With the approval of the Program Chair, students may substitute courses in another Asian language taken on an approved study abroad program.

## Courses

## Asian Studies Courses

**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 in is paid to the socio-historical contexts from which these works emerged. Taught in English.

**ASIA 213 Chinese Foodways: Culture, History, and Global Connections (4)**
This course investigates the cultural, historical, and social meanings of food in China and Chinese diaspora communities around the world. We examine how culinary practices reflect understandings of body and health, define social class, express regional differences, and link China to broader global networks. Using food as a critical lens, this course explores how Chinese identity and tradition have been constructed, contested, and reimagined across time and space. All readings are in English and all films include English subtitles. Course taught in English.

**ASIA 215 A Tale of Three Cities: Shanghai, Taipei, and Hong Kong (4)**
This course delves into the rich tapestry of literary and visual narratives from three vibrant Asian metropolises: Shanghai, Taipei, and Hong Kong. Beyond their geopolitical significance, all three cities have played pivotal roles in the evolution of modern Chinese-language literature and film. Through a careful examination of creative works from these urban centers, students will uncover the historical interconnections and cultural exchanges that characterize this dynamic region of the world. Taught in English, readings in English translations.

**ASIA 216 Intensive Study in Asia (4)**
Short-term intensive study abroad in Asia examining transnational topics from interdisciplinary perspectives such as art history, religious studies, history, and literature. *Prerequisite: Open only to students admitted to the Intensive Study in Asia program.*

**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 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 241 The Comic and Sublime: An Introduction to Chinese Theater (4)**
This course surveys the rich and varied traditions of Chinese theater from their origins in ritual and spectacle to their current formulations in traditional and modern productions. We will discuss both dramatic texts and theatrical performances. All readings will be in English. Course will be 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: Instructor 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: Instructor prerequisite override required.*