
Asian Studies at Colgate

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2017

What's happening in Asian Studies at Colgate and Beyond



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Find us at: <http://www.colgate.edu/asian-studies>

From the Director

Being the first-year director of the Asian Studies program, much like first-year students, I am still trying to figure out what the job entails, but with the help of Maxine Campbell, our wonderful program assistant and those colleagues with much experience and insights, I hope to move the program forward however slowly and incrementally it might be. But to where? In all honesty my very personal motivation for this newsletter is to find that out. By keeping track of our steps, it would, I thought, help me and maybe others contemplate proactively where the program can best lead itself. It would also give me a good excuse to reach out, talk to, and learn from you.



A little bit more background and my own thoughts. I read past annual reports of the program from the past 15 years or so (I have yet to learn the earlier history of the program; please let me know if you know of any good sources). It was a revealing exercise for me. Even in the relatively short period of time, the program went through a lot of changes. One of the very positive trends is the steady increase of Asia-related courses at Colgate. From 2008 to 2016, the number of courses that count toward the Asian Studies major/minor increased from 24 to 42 courses, and enrollments to these courses from 349 to 610, reflecting the increased number of faculty teaching Asia and students learning about Asia. There are more opportunities today for students to study in Asia, too, through our signature study group programs, extended studies, and approved programs. Perhaps more importantly than these numbers, however, are the intellectual growth and transformative effects that faculty can see in their students who studied about and in Asia. This is not to say that Asia is any more special than any other world regions, but it does provide us with unique contexts in which our knowledge, experiences, and taken-for-granted norms can be put in perspectives.

The number of Asian Studies concentrators (majors/minors) has been rather small, usually just a handful number per year (and many of them have another major), and all Asian Studies faculty members have another “home” department or program. Just as “Asia” is a socially constructed, geographic concept, the Asian Studies Program can be also seen as a socially constructed, host of connections, or a meeting place, whose existence is defined by its faculty and students’ connections to other places. At present my broad aspiration is to make the program an intellectually stimulating meeting place, and I would like to think and work with you how best to achieve it.

I hope that this newsletter provides a modest means of sharing our voices and experiences among ourselves and with a wider community. My goal is to issue this newsletter every semester during my tenure as the program director. If you would like to share any story or write anything that pertains to your work on, travel to, and thoughts on Asia, please let us know.

Daisaku Yamamoto

Why Study Asia?

Asia holds a unique and vital place within the globalizing world of the early 21st century. Home to an extraordinary range of linguistic and ethnic groups, this broad and dynamic region is rich in cultural and environmental diversity. Engaging the many changes taking place in Asian societies today requires a similarly diverse set of intellectual skills, which will prepare you to extend your career in and with one of the most dynamic world regions of our time.

Asian Studies at Colgate

The Asian Studies Program at Colgate integrates scholarly approaches spanning the arts and humanities and social sciences: from literature, art, and religion to history, politics, economics, and geography. We encourage students to undertake their own interdisciplinary explorations of this region. Asian studies offers students a flexible set of course options to explore Asia widely while focusing upon one subregion. Nine courses are required for the major, of which four courses must be at the 300 or 400 level. Any Colgate study group in Asia, plus its prerequisites; or five courses from the governed electives listed below, normally to include at least two courses at the 300 or 400 level and no more than two language courses.

For more information visit us at: <http://www.colgate.edu/asian-studies>



Professor Hirata demonstrating the way of tea during Japan Club's Tea Ceremony. Photographed by Nam Nguyen '18.



Colgate faculty immersion trip to India in attempt to broaden perspectives of teaching and research. Photographed by Prof. Yamamoto.

Asia through Students' Activities at Colgate



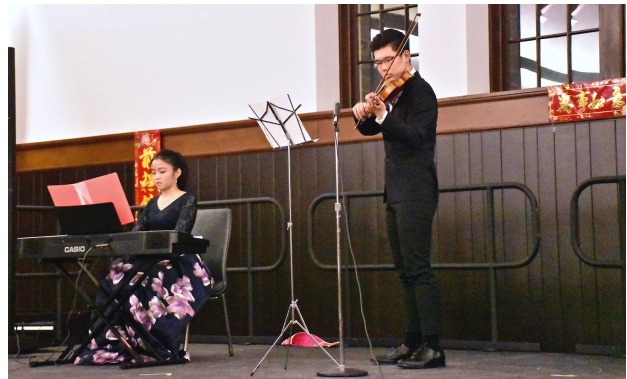
Variations

Yuri Tachibana '17 took on a project called, *Variations*, which aimed to explore the implications behind what is considered to be "beautiful." Plastic surgery is a popular phenomenon in certain regions of Asia, but the enhancements would often result in individuals appearing to be

more Caucasian. Fascinated by this notion, Tachibana would like to draw attention to how different methods of communications have subtly penetrated the mind into thinking whiteness is equal to beauty. Thus, she photoshopped 22 Colgate Asian students to make them appear Caucasian. A reception at the *Thought into Action* in the town of Hamilton was held for participants to communicate with one another while being surrounded by the white versions of themselves.

Chinese/Lunar New Year Gala

Last February, the Chinese Interest Association (CIA), a Chinese cultural group at Colgate, has once again hosted a successful Chinese New Year Gala to celebrate the festival that is widely celebrated across Asia, the Chinese New Year (Lunar New Year). Founded 10 years ago, CIA hopes to promote the Chinese's culture throughout the Colgate campus and the town of Hamilton. It aims to improve Colgate's understanding of other cultures and explore issues of diversity through semesterly campus-wide events that celebrate traditional Chinese festivals. The gala began with a game fair that introduces multiple Chinese customs, followed by a gala consisting of a variety of talented performances, and ended with a banquet of authentic Chinese food in buffet style. The gala overall had a big turnout of more than two hundred attendees. One of the co-presidents of the club, Baiyu Zhou '18, believed that the event was significant because it attracted such a large audience. She was proud that the three different parts of the event allowed CIA to show multiple facets of the Chinese culture and expressed that she was content when witnessing the diverse audience that attended. Indeed, not only did Colgate students from different backgrounds attend, Colgate staff and faculty as well as people from the village of Hamilton also attended as well. The event showed the inclusiveness and harmony of the Chinese culture that the club aspired to present.



Meet an Asian Studies Faculty

Professor Yang Song (Economics)



Professor Song joined Colgate in 2015. Song shared some of her experiences at Colgate.

Question (Yamamoto): Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?

Song: I grew up in Hunan Province, China, famous for spicy food. I studied in Beijing and Hong Kong before coming to the U.S. to do my PhD in economics at the University of Pittsburgh. I am particularly interested in the economics of education, such as how policies can mitigate educational inequality.

Question: Can you tell us about teaching at Colgate?

Song: I teach Introduction to Economics, Chinese Economy, and Seminar on Economics of Education. I enjoy teaching all of them, but enjoy the seminar the most because I enjoy helping students develop their ideas, explore datasets, and develop ways to answer questions they are interested in. In Chinese Economy, we learn issues such as the post-1949 economic reforms in China, rural-urban divides, internal migration, education, labor market, and so on. I want students to keep the unique economic and political structure changes of China in mind when looking at current events and think about what their lives would be like if they were born in different times and places.

Question: In your view why is it important for Colgate students learn about China?

Song: For one, it is clearly a major power in the world economy and politics. China's influence is spreading globally through investments in all parts of the world, for example. China also provides a unique context, due to its historical and cultural backgrounds, in which one studies how institutions and incentives affect economic development and people's lives.

Question: What are some of the challenges in teaching the Chinese economy?

Song: One is that it is simply hard for students to grasp the image of exactly how commands are given to firms and individuals, and how these things actually work on the ground. It is hard to get ideas across in just words; so I often show them pictures or videos, for examples, that capture the scenes of campaigns and slogans. Another thing is that students simply have a hard time pronouncing names of cities, individuals, and companies. Also, it is difficult for students to understand the magnitude of the gap between urban and rural China, simply because such a huge gap does not prevail in the U.S.

China Study Group

Living, Learning, and Working in Shanghai:

Patrick Chong ('18, Asian Studies and History)

In fall 2016, I and nine other Colgate student studied abroad in Shanghai where we were met with life changing experiences. We were all afforded the opportunity to interact in modern Chinese life through our Chinese roommates and the lively atmosphere of Shanghai. We also traveled to Taiwan and Hong Kong, alternative Chinese communities and cultures outside of the mainland.



In Yunnan Province. Photographed by Prof. John Crespi.

In addition to two hours of language classes per day, which offered an immersive experience and utilized the location of our study group to the fullest. For example, for some of our Shanghainese history classes, Professor Crespi would lead us on walking tours of the city which once concluded at a jazz club.

Furthermore, we had a chance to work at a Chinese retail company. Obviously we had to use the Chinese language to interact with customers and coworkers. This experience truly enhanced our practical Chinese skills, and allowed us to witness aspects of modern society in a novel way. After work, we took diligent field notes on our observations and experiences during our shifts, which culminated in a collection of papers that cover topics ranging from masculinity in the workplace to analysis of the design and economy of shoes in modern China.

Our experiences studying in Shanghai have not only improved our critical thinking and proficiency in Chinese, but have also led us all to grow personally. I can recall our initial timidness and struggles



With the Shanghai urban landscape behind. Photographed by Prof. John Crespi.

adapting to a different way of life. Nonetheless, by the end of the trip each student had found their niche in Shanghai. Classmates found lifelong Chinese friends, partook in athletic teams and even found themselves partaking in informal tea ceremonies. Ultimately, a group of diverse students hailing from different disciplines and groups at Colgate were all able to bond and leave with a greater understanding of themselves.

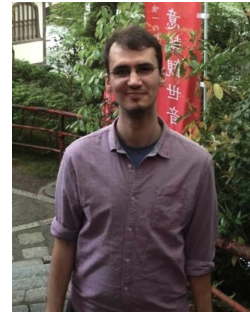
Upcoming Events

Fukushima Voluntary Evacuation: Family, Life, and Uncertainty

Alex Sklyar ('10, Humanities)

April 10 (Monday), 4:30-6:00 p.m., Persson 27 auditorium

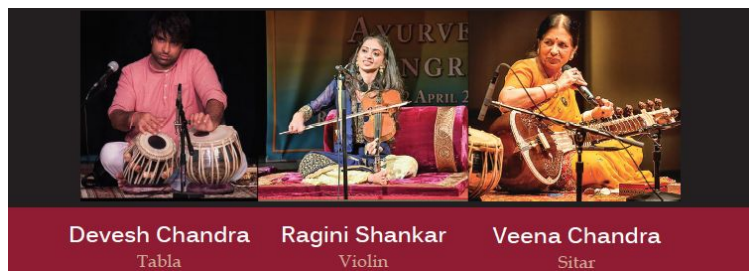
Sklyar is a PhD Candidate in Sociocultural Anthropology at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He works on food, home, material and social pollution, everyday nuclear worlds, and the permeation of the abnormal into the everyday.



Indian Classical Music Concert

April 6 (Thursday), 5:30 p.m. (Lecture demonstration), 6:00 p.m. (Concert), 300 Love Auditorium

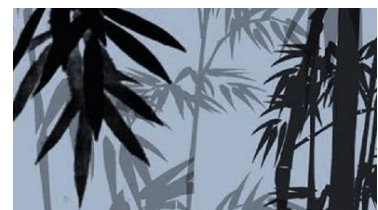
Join us for an enthralling performance of Indian Classical music by three well-renowned artists, including one of the top violinists from Mumbai, India, Ragini Shankar. Ragini will be accompanied by Devesh Chandra on the tabla and Veena Chandra on the sitar.



Asian Studies Banquet

April 15 (Saturday), Beverage & appetizers (Good Nature) at 5 p.m., Dinner (Royal India Grill) at 6 p.m. Come celebrate Asian Studies with food and drinks! Families welcome.

Please contact mcampbell@colgate.edu



Abroad and Beyond

Studying Abroad with Asian Studies

The Asian Studies Program strongly encourages majors to participate in Colgate study groups and in approved programs in India or other locations in Asia. Faculty of the program serve as directors of study-abroad programs in China, Japan, and Korea.

China Study Group spends approximately four months in Shanghai, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, in intensive language training and firsthand observation of recent cultural, political, and economic changes.

Japan Study Group, based in Kyoto, provides lodging with Japanese families; intensive language training; and instruction in Japanese politics, economics, business, religion, art, linguistics, and literature.

Korea Study Group, hosted by Yonsei University in Seoul, serves the academic needs of students interested in educational studies and Asian studies.

Scenes from Japan Study Group Spring 2017



Approved Programs

- China Shanghai CIEE Shanghai: China in a Global Context
- India Pune Alliance for Global Education: Contemporary India
- India Bodh Gaya Antioch Buddhist
- India Dharamsala Emory Tibetan Studies Program
- India New Delhi SIT India: National Identity and the Arts
- India Madurai South India Term Abroad (SITA)
- Japan Kyoto Antioch Japan and Buddhist Traditions Program
- Japan Hirakata City Kansai Gaidai
- Sri Lanka Kandy ISLE Program (Bowdoin)

A Snapshot of an Asian Studies Course

RELG 327 Tibetan Buddhism (Professor Brenton Sullivan)

At Colgate, students may explore unique classes that they might or might not have thought of taking. Upon her senior year, Jenna Lilly '17 have fulfilled her distribution, major, and minor requirements. Thus, she was able to explore a subject in a department that she was not very familiar with. Last summer, Lilly developed an interest in Buddhism after reading, *The Snow Leopard* by Peter Matthiessen. Thus, she decided to take Tibetan Buddhism as a way to learn more about the subject. Prior to taking the course, Lilly knew that Tibet is predominantly Buddhist, but she thought the country was geographically smaller than it is. Lilly stated, "I think it is great to learn about the philosophical side of Buddhism as well as the cultural and geographical side." She is interested in "the understanding of space and time in Buddhism; time is cyclical and eternal, and beings can interact with space in ways that would be considered abnormal or strange in Western thought." Also, she believed that Buddhism seems to attempt to get the heart of human experiences, which she now enjoys contemplating the teachings of the Buddha.



Photographed by Prof. Brenton Sullivan.

New Course in Fall 2017

FROM EMPERORS TO ANIME: PICTURES IN CHINA AND JAPAN

ARTS 246

Taught by P. Kaimal

MW 2:45-4 pm, 114 Little Hall

This class looks at pictures from China and Japan, from prehistoric times to the present, from painting to prints, anime, moving images, and installation art.

Learn what contemporary Asian art draws from Asia's past. Learn how to read a handscroll. Practice ink calligraphy with the real tools.



Explore Asian Studies

Courses Offered in Fall 2017

ARTS 246A	Pictures in China and Japan
ASIA 121 NY6	Elementary Hindi/Urdu I
ASIA 201 NY6	Intermediate Hindi/Urdu II
CHIN 121 A	Elementary Chinese I
CHIN 121 B	Elementary Chinese I
CHIN 201 A	Intermediate Chinese I
CHIN 303 A	Films and Broadcasts
CHIN 405 A	Reading Chinese Newspapers
CORE 166C A	India
ECON 219 A	Chinese Economy
ECON 219 B	Chinese Economy
ECON 339 A	The Japanese Economy
GEOG 315 A	Sustainable Livelihoods in Asia
JAPN 121 A	Elementary Japanese I
JAPN 121 B	Elementary Japanese I
JAPN 201 A	Intermediate Japanese I
JAPN 222 A	Japan through Literature & Film
JAPN 222L A	Required Film Screening
JAPN 301 A	Advanced Japanese I
JAPN 401 A	Readings in Japanese
MIST 304 AX	Islam and Politics
POSC 307 A	China's Foreign Relations
POSC 434 A	Sem: Politics of Migration
RELG 281 A	Experiencing Hinduism
SOCI 326 A	Nations & Nationalism
UNST 410 A	Seminar - Area/Regional/Global Study



Photographed by Nam Nguyen '18.

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Chinese

Chinese and Asian Studies

Russian and Eurasian Studies

Art and Art History

Geography, Russian and Eurasian Studies

Japanese

History, African and Latin American Studies

Sociology

Art and Art History, University Studies

Economics

History, Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies

Economics

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