ASIAN STUDIES

Faculty: Wen (Chinese Studies), Chair; Kong (Korean Studies); Lyons (Japanese Studies); Munson (Asian Studies); Paris (Japanese Studies).

Asia plays an increasingly central role in shaping the global landscape—politically, economically, and culturally. An Asian Studies major offers students the tools to engage meaningfully with this vital region through an interdisciplinary curriculum spanning language, popular culture, religion, art, society, and history, among others. Graduates pursue careers in journalism, public policy, education, government, international business, and beyond. The program is further enriched by study-abroad opportunities, including January term travel courses, exchange partnerships with institutions such as Kansai Gaidai in Japan, and participation in ISEP programs around the world.

- Asian Studies Major (https://catalog.rmc.edu/programs/asian-studies/asian-studies-major/)
- Asian Studies Minor (https://catalog.rmc.edu/programs/asian-studies/asian-studies-minor/)

Courses in Asian Studies

ASTU 181 - Special Topics in Asian Studies (3 Hours)
These courses focus on areas of Asian Studies not specifically covered in the general curriculum. The topics considered will change with each offering. Offered as needed.

ASTU 270 - East Asian Visual Culture (3 Hours)
This course introduces East Asian visual culture from premodern times to contemporary periods. Students will learn the art history and visual discourses in China, Taiwan, Japan, and Korea through the following topics: ancient aesthetics, modern fashions, popular visual media, war and propaganda, sports, and avant-garde movements. All lectures, discussions, and assignments will be in English.
Curriculum: AE,HU,NW

ASTU 281 - Special Topics in Asian Studies (3 Hours)
These courses focus on areas of Asian Studies not specifically covered in the general curriculum. The topics considered will change with each offering. Offered as needed.

ASTU 290 - Introduction to Asian Studies (3 Hours)
The course is a basic introduction to the cultures of China, Japan, and to a limited extent, Korea. We will discuss the histories of these civilizations from their beginnings to the present, touching briefly upon the major cultural, political, and social developments of each region. Evaluation will be determined on the basis of short quizzes, exams, and a research project.
Curriculum: GE,HU,NW

ASTU 291 - Contemporary East Asia (3 Hours)
An examination of major issues facing contemporary East Asian politics, society, and culture. Through news articles and analysis, audio and video documentaries, blogs, and other diverse media, students will explore such topics as China's economic rise, the influence of Japanese popular culture on Asia and the world, freedom of speech and internet censorship, the future of Tibet and Taiwan, and the success and failures of the "Asian educational model." By the end of the course, students should be versant in the fundamental issues facing the East Asian region, and able to articulate well-informed responses to these questions both orally and in writing. ASTU 290 is recommended but not required.
Curriculum: GE,NW,SS

ASTU 401 - Capstone Experience (1 Hour)
A culminating research project completed in conjunction with a regularly scheduled major course, as a special topics project, or as a significant research project outside of a class. Offered yearly.
Prerequisite(s): senior status

Curriculum: CS,EL

ASTU 450 - Internship in Asian Studies(Unpaid) (3 Hours)
Qualified students may combine their classroom knowledge with practical experience in internship placements; placements in Asia will be considered. Students will complete a project mutually agreed on by the student, the supervisor, and the instructor. Open to juniors and seniors with the permission of the Asian Studies program. Application required; see Internship Program. A special fee ($200) is charged for this course.
Curriculum: EL

Courses In Chinese Studies

CHIN 111 - Elementary Chinese I (3 Hours)
Introduction to modern spoken Chinese (Mandarin). The course will provide students ample opportunity to practice speaking, listening, reading, and writing Chinese in everyday circumstances. Principle thematic areas include: greetings, family, time and date, and social interactions.
Curriculum: FL

CHIN 112 - Elementary Chinese II (3 Hours)
A continuation of CHIN 111. Principle thematic areas include: time and date, hobbies, and interaction strategies.
Prerequisite(s): CHIN 111

Curriculum: FL

CHIN 181 - Special Topics in Chinese Studies (3 Hours)
These courses focus on areas of Chinese Studies not specifically covered in the general curriculum and are designed to meet the needs of students.

CHIN 182 - Special Topics in Chinese Studies (3 Hours)
These courses focus on areas of Chinese Studies not specifically covered in the general curriculum and are designed to meet the needs of students.

CHIN 183 - Special Topics in Chinese Studies (3 Hours)
These courses focus on areas of Chinese Studies not specifically covered in the general curriculum and are designed to meet the needs of students.

CHIN 211 - Intermediate Chinese I (3 Hours)
Further study of Chinese in everyday circumstances. Principle thematic areas include: travel, study abroad, and business occasions.
Prerequisite(s): CHIN 112

Curriculum: FL

CHIN 212 - Intermediate Chinese II (3 Hours)
A continuation of CHIN 211. Principle thematic areas include: shopping, transportation, and social etiquette.
Prerequisite(s): CHIN 211

Curriculum: FL

CHIN 221 - Chinese History and Culture (3 Hours)
This is a travel course designed to explore Chinese history, customs, and values. First-hand experience helps students gain insight into the continuities between China's present and past, and that is key to understanding Chinese life, thought, and behavior. No Chinese language skills are required.
Curriculum: EL

CHIN 234 - Chinese Cinema (3 Hours)
This course introduces a selection of internationally acclaimed Chinese-language cinema, ranging from popular melodrama to independent film, from mainland Chinese masterpieces to internationally collaborated cinematic productions. The goal of this course is not only to illustrate the aesthetics of Chinese-language cinema, but also to examine Chinese history, politics, and cultural identities through the film lens. No Chinese language skills are required. All lectures, discussions, and assignments will be in English.
Curriculum: AE,HU,NW

CHIN 235 - Chinese Theatre (3 Hours)
This course is an introduction to the Chinese theatre. We will learn classical aesthetics and modern adaptations in Chinese performance art through a variety of theatrical genres, such as puppet theatre, Peking opera, spoken drama, and the experimental stage. We will also discuss recurrent themes in Chinese plays, such as love and redemption, ghosts and immortals, loyalty and sacrifice, and identity and politics. Besides learning to identify major trends and styles in Chinese theatre, we will also observe how the art of the Chinese stage is refashioned in global popular culture. No Chinese language skills are required. All lectures, discussions, and assignments will be in English.
Curriculum: AE,HU,NW

CHIN 236 - Chinese Popular Culture (3 Hours)
This course is an introduction to Chinese popular culture. It explores popular culture from the late 19th century to the present, from mainland China to other Chinese communities such as Hong Kong, Taiwan, and beyond. We will discuss Chinese culture, identity politics, and globalization through popular literature, film, television, sports, the Internet, and other forms of mass entertainment. No Chinese language skills are required. All lectures, discussions, and assignments will be in English.
Curriculum: CL,HU,NW

CHIN 237 - Chinese Tales and Legends (3 Hours)
This course critically explores premodern Chinese literature from ancient times to the seventeenth century. Through a close reading of the text in English translation, we will come to understand significant histories, styles, and perspectives in Chinese literature and how these aspects shape Chinese cultural traditions. Topics will include but not be limited to ancient tales, poetry, drama, and schools of thought such as Confucianism, Daoism, and Chinese Buddhism. No Chinese language skills are required. All lectures, discussions, and assignments will be in English.
Cross-list: FLET 237

Curriculum: AE,HU,NW

CHIN 238 - Modern Chinese Literature (3 Hours)
This course critically explores Chinese literature from the eighteenth-century to the contemporary period. Through a close reading of the text in English translation, we will come to understand significant literary styles, themes, and histories of modern Chinese fiction, prose, and poetry. No Chinese language skills are required. All lectures, discussions, and assignments will be in English. This course fulfills the AOK requirement in Literature and the CAR in Non-Western Culture.
Cross-list: FLET 238

Curriculum: AE,HU,NW,WA

CHIN 281 - Special Topics in Chinese Studies (3 Hours)
These courses focus on areas of Chinese Studies not specifically covered in the general curriculum and are designed to meet the needs of students.

CHIN 311 - Advanced Chinese (3 Hours)
A third-year language course designed to consolidate skills acquired and to extend the student's mastery of the language. The course emphasis is on strengthening the student's grammatical skills through application to reading and writing. The lessons on calligraphy necessarily include fundamental concepts of Chinese culture. Offered as needed.
Prerequisite(s): CHIN 212

CHIN 312 - Advanced Chinese II (3 Hours)
A continuation of CHIN 311. Offered as needed.
Prerequisite(s): CHIN 311

CHIN 381 - Special Topics in Chinese (3 Hours)

Courses in Japanese Studies

JAPN 111 - Elementary Japanese I (3 Hours)
Introduction to modern spoken Japanese with an emphasis on speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Upon successful completion of JAPN 111, students should be able to comprehend and produce Japanese in a range of real-world activities, and to write and recognize both the hiragana and katakana syllabaries.
Curriculum: FL

JAPN 112 - Elementary Japanese II (3 Hours)
A continuation of JAPN 111, with an increased focus on kanji characters.
Prerequisite(s): JAPN 111 or permission of instructor

Curriculum: FL

JAPN 181 - T:Special Topics (3 Hours)
These courses focus on areas of Japanese studies not specifically covered in the general curriculum and are designed to meet the needs of students.

JAPN 220 - Culture of Japan (3 Hours)
This course is a broad survey introduction to the popular and mass culture of modern Japan through works of literature, film, animation, art, and media. Students will consider questions of what makes something part of popular or mass culture; how historical, economic, political, and/or societal concerns shape popular tastes, what is represented, and what is considered permissible to represent; and how Japanese culture circulates beyond Japan and East Asia, and how this relates to questions of political power and influence. No Japanese language skills required.
Curriculum: NW

JAPN 221 - Japan Past and Present (3 Hours)
A January travel course designed to explore the history and culture of Japan. Destinations in Japan may vary but will include Tokyo and/or Kyoto. Two weeks of instruction in Ashland and two weeks in Japan. No Japanese language skills are required.
Prerequisite(s): permission of instructor

Curriculum: EL

JAPN 232 - Japanese Literature in Translation (3 Hours)
This course will explore the literature of modern Japan in English translation. Topics to be discussed include the relationship between the individual and society; Japan's international relations; WWII and the occupation of postwar Japan; and the modern Japanese family, among others. No Japanese language skills are required.
Cross-list: FLET 232

Curriculum: AE,HU,NW

JAPN 239 - Traditional Japanese Literature (3 Hours)
This course explores the literature and cultural production of premodern Japan, covering from approximately the 8th century to mid-19th century. In particular, this course will examine the relationship between literary writings and the religious, spiritual, and political life of premodern Japan.
Cross-list: FLET 239

Curriculum: AE,HU,NW

JAPN 251 - Advanced Intermediate Japanese I (4 Hours)
JAPN 251 is an accelerated intermediate course in the Japanese language, with increased emphasis on speaking, listening, reading, and writing in Japanese, and a continued focus on kanji characters (125 total).
Prerequisite(s): JAPN 112

JAPN 252 - Advanced Intermediate Japanese II (4 Hours)
JAPN 252 is an accelerated intermediate course in the Japanese language, with increased emphasis on speaking, listening, reading, and writing in Japanese, and a continued focus on kanji characters (300 total).
Prerequisite(s): JAPN 251

JAPN 260 - Contemporary Japan (3 Hours)
This course is an in-depth exploration of modern Japanese culture and society; no previous knowledge of Japan or Japanese is necessary. Topics covered include education, crime, sexuality, international relations, popular culture, the environment, the 2020 Olympics, and Japan’s imperial family, among others. By the conclusion of the course, students should have a comprehensive understanding of contemporary Japanese society. Evaluation will be determined on the basis of discussion, in-class writing assignments, and a final project.
Curriculum: CL,HU,NW

JAPN 270 - Weird Japan (3 Hours)
Monsters, magic, and horror have long haunted Japanese popular culture and can tell us much about Japanese society. Starting with Shinto creation myths and traditional ghost tales, this course is an overview of Japanese conceptions of the strange and supernatural, particularly with reference to key points in Japan's history. Through fiction, film, and art, this class will explore the ‘weird side' of the Japanese experience. No Japanese language skills required.
Curriculum: HC,HU,NW

JAPN 280 - T:Special Topics (3 Hours)
These courses focus on areas of Japanese studies not specifically covered in the general curriculum and are designed to meet the needs of advanced students.

JAPN 281 - T:Special Topics (3 Hours)
These courses focus on areas of Japanese studies not specifically covered in the general curriculum and are designed to meet the needs of advanced students.

JAPN 292 - Japanese Film as History:The Works of Kurosawa Akira (3 Hours)
This course serves as a general introduction to postwar Japanese film through close examination of several films of Kurosawa Akira, one of the most celebrated directors in the history of the medium. Classic samurai drama such as "Rashomon," "The Seven Samurai," and other period films will be the focus of the course. Students will be introduced to basic theories and concepts in film studies, as well as topics in Japanese history relevant to both the settings and production of the films. Close attention will also be paid to issues of nationalism, gender, war, and cross-cultural adaptation. Japanese language skills are not required. Offered infrequently.
Cross-list: FILM 292

Curriculum: GE,HU,NW

JAPN 294 - Traditional Japanese Civilization (3 Hours)
This course is a survey of Japanese culture and society, from the earliest beginnings to the 19th century. We will focus on topics such as the influence of Chinese civilization, the origins of Shinto and Japanese Buddhism, the development of art and literature, and the rise of the samurai class. No Japanese language skills required. Offered alternate years.
Curriculum: GE,HU,NW

JAPN 295 - Modern Japan (3 Hours)
This course is a survey of Japanese culture and society from the 19th century to the present. At the completion of the course, students should be versant in the basic themes of modern Japan, including international relations, societal trends, arts and literature, and the globalization of Japanese popular culture. No Japanese language skills are required. Offered alternate years.
Curriculum: GE,HU,NW

JAPN 311 - Advanced Japanese (3 Hours)
This third-year language course is designed to introduce a range of advanced grammar patterns, with a special focus on reading native Japanese literature. Offered as needed.
Prerequisite(s): JAPN 252

JAPN 381 - Special Topics in Japanese (3 Hours)
These courses focus on topics in Japanese not specifically covered in the general curriculum and are designed to meet the needs of advanced students.

JAPN 382 - Special Topics in Japanese (3 Hours)
These courses focus on topics in Japanese not specifically covered in the general curriculum and are designed to meet the needs of advanced students.

JAPN 491 - Independent Study (3 Hours)
An independent study under the guidance of a member of the department. At least a 3.25 cumulative GPA and approval by the curriculum committee are required.