

Asian Conversations

Laurel Brook, Tomson 368

507-786-3383

brookl@stolaf.edu

wp.stolaf.edu/asian-studies/asian-conversations (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/asian-studies/asian-conversations>)

The goal of the Asian Conversations program is to provide students with an opportunity to incorporate an off-campus learning experience as well as language study into an extended discussion of the peoples and places that make up Asia. Offered as a sophomore-year sequence, Asian Conversations is open to all students interested in studying Asia and Asian languages. Students who are studying Chinese or Japanese language are invited to apply for this three-course sequence, which includes an Interim program in China and Japan.

Those accepted into the Asian Conversations program embark on a series of linked courses that explore "Journeys through Asia." Asian Conversations is a learning community that introduces students to some of the key texts of Asia as well as key historical, cultural, political, and linguistic constructs through an integrated sequence of three courses. Over that time students pursue conversations with three different faculty members about the issues that have shaped the development of Asian societies over the centuries, ending in the spring term with contemporary Asia.

For information about Chinese language courses, Japanese language courses, and Asian Studies curriculum see Asian Studies (<http://catalog.stolaf.edu/archive/2015-2016/academic-programs/asian-studies>).

Overview of the Program

Asian Conversations is an interdisciplinary program integrating study of the Chinese and Japanese languages with investigations into the culture, history, language, and societies of Asia (China, Korea, Japan, Vietnam, and more). Whether you plan to major in biology, economics, history, Asian studies, or anything else, the Asian Conversations program offers you an integrated, innovative way to complete required study in foreign language and the liberal arts.

Intended Learning Outcomes for the Program (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/curriculum-committee/asian-conversations-program-ilos>)

Course Equivalents for General Education Requirements

By successfully completing courses ASIAN 210, ASIAN 215 or ASIAN 216, and ASIAN 220, a student fulfills the following general education requirements, which are all awarded upon completion of ASIAN 220:

- Multicultural Studies - Global [one MCG]
- Artistic Studies [one ALS-A]
- Literary Studies [one ALS-L]
- Studies in Human Behavior and Society [one HBS]
- Writing [one WRI]

- Oral Communication [one ORC]

Courses

ASIAN 210: *Asian Conversations I: Mapping Journeys*

How do pilgrims, travelers and migrants make sense of their journeys in Asia? Students explore maps, histories, tales, and guides that define Asia today and in years past, including several classic Asian texts; study how cultural, linguistic, economic, religious, social, and political connections and divisions create and sustain communities in Asia; and plan related projects for their Interim course. Offered annually in the fall semester.

Prerequisite: CHIN 112 or JAPAN 112 or permission of instructor. Must be accepted into Asian Conversations program to register.

ASIAN 215: *Asian Conversations II: Encountering Asia (abroad)*

Students pursue guided fieldwork experience in the country whose language they study, either Japan or China. Activities and readings in this course build on the topics from ASIAN 210 and three semesters of language study. Students continue to explore their understanding of Asia through ethnographic observation, interviews, and site visits. Students develop projects and follow a process of inquiry that will help them understand how ordinary people construct "Asian" culture and society today. Offered during Interim.

Prerequisite: ASIAN210.

ASIAN 216: *Asian Conversations II: Encountering Asia in America*

Students pursue guided fieldwork experience in the United States. Activities and readings in this course build on the topics from ASIAN 210 and three semesters of language study. Students reflect on the experience of Asians in America through readings, site visits, and local interviews. Students develop projects and follow a process of inquiry that will help them understand how ordinary people construct "Asian" culture and society today. Offered during Interim.

Prerequisite: ASIAN 210.

ASIAN 220: *Asian Conversations III: Interpreting Journeys*

In this final semester in Asian Conversations students examine modern reinterpretations of traditional Asia focusing on major social and cultural aspects of the 19th through 21st centuries. Students engage with primary and secondary texts through written and oral presentation, including materials collected during Interim. Offered annually in the spring semester.

Prerequisite: CHIN 231 or JAPAN 231 and ASIAN 215 or ASIAN 216.

Faculty

Director, 2015-2016

Robert E. Entenmann

Professor of History and Asian Studies

Chinese and Japanese history; U.S.-East Asian relations; Vietnam; Asian-Americans

Caleb Boteilho

Instructor in Asian Studies

Japanese language and linguistics

Barbara Reed

Professor of Religion and Asian Studies

Buddhism; East Asian religions; women and religion in Asia; religious myths and rituals; Taoist literature

Hsiang-Lin Shih

Visiting Assistant Professor of Asian Studies

Chinese literature; classical and modern eras

Kendra Strand

Visiting Assistant Professor of Asian Studies
Japanese language and literature

Thomas A. Williamson

Associate Professor of Sociology/Anthropology
Southeast Asia; theory; globalization; medical anthropology