

Asian Studies

The Faculty Group in Asian Studies administers an interdisciplinary program leading to an M.A. degree. Utilizing the faculty and facilities of the entire university, this degree program cuts across conventional disciplinary lines and emphasizes a basic core of knowledge concerning one particular geographic area of Asia. Within this core, which requires course work in multiple departments and reading knowledge of at least one Asian language, the regionally-oriented students have the flexibility to design a cross-disciplinary individual program according to their interests and approaches. No two programs are alike, and students work closely with the Student Affairs office and with a faculty mentor in designing their customized academic plan. The group is supported in its efforts by the Institute of East Asian Studies (<http://ieas.berkeley.edu>), and Interdisciplinary Social Science Programs (ISSP), under the College of Letters and Science.

The University of California at Berkeley has long been noted for its outstanding scholarship in the area of Asian Studies. Faculty from across campus in numerous disciplines are presently engaged in teaching and research concerning Asia. Our students take classes in such disciplines as Anthropology, Buddhist Studies, Film/Media Studies, History, Journalism, Literature, Political Science, Religion, South/Southeast Asian Studies, Sociology, and other fields in the humanities and social sciences.

These resources are supplemented by extensive library facilities and by the programs of six major area centers that offer lecture series and colloquia throughout the year. The Bay Area itself, with its diverse communities, museums, performing arts, religious institutions, and thriving financial and technological sectors provides unlimited cultural opportunities for the student interested in reaching beyond the confines of the university.

Admission to the University

Minimum Requirements for Admission

The following minimum requirements apply to all graduate programs and will be verified by the Graduate Division:

1. A bachelor's degree or recognized equivalent from an accredited institution;
2. A grade point average of B or better (3.0);
3. If the applicant has completed a basic degree from a country or political entity (e.g., Quebec) where English is not the official language, adequate proficiency in English to do graduate work, as evidenced by a TOEFL score of at least 90 on the iBT test, 570 on the paper-and-pencil test, or an IELTS Band score of at least 7 on a 9-point scale (note that individual programs may set higher levels for any of these); and
4. Sufficient undergraduate training to do graduate work in the given field.

Applicants Who Already Hold a Graduate Degree

The Graduate Council views academic degrees not as vocational training certificates, but as evidence of broad training in research methods, independent study, and articulation of learning. Therefore, applicants who already have academic graduate degrees should be able to pursue new subject matter at an advanced level without the need to enroll in a related or similar graduate program.

Programs may consider students for an additional academic master's or professional master's degree only if the additional degree is in a distinctly different field.

Applicants admitted to a doctoral program that requires a master's degree to be earned at Berkeley as a prerequisite (even though the applicant already has a master's degree from another institution in the same or a closely allied field of study) will be permitted to undertake the second master's degree, despite the overlap in field.

The Graduate Division will admit students for a second doctoral degree only if they meet the following guidelines:

1. Applicants with doctoral degrees may be admitted for an additional doctoral degree only if that degree program is in a general area of knowledge distinctly different from the field in which they earned their original degree. For example, a physics PhD could be admitted to a doctoral degree program in music or history; however, a student with a doctoral degree in mathematics would not be permitted to add a PhD in statistics.
2. Applicants who hold the PhD degree may be admitted to a professional doctorate or professional master's degree program if there is no duplication of training involved.

Applicants may apply only to one single degree program or one concurrent degree program per admission cycle.

Required Documents for Applications

1. **Transcripts:** Applicants may upload *unofficial* transcripts with your application for the departmental initial review. *If the applicant is admitted*, then *official* transcripts of all college-level work will be required. Official transcripts must be in sealed envelopes as issued by the school(s) attended. If you have attended Berkeley, upload your unofficial transcript with your application for the departmental initial review. *If you are admitted*, an official transcript with evidence of degree conferral *will not* be required.
2. **Letters of recommendation:** Applicants may request online letters of recommendation through the online application system. Hard copies of recommendation letters must be sent directly to the program, not the Graduate Division.
3. **Evidence of English language proficiency:** All applicants who have completed a basic degree from a country or political entity in which the official language is not English are required to submit official evidence of English language proficiency. This applies to institutions from Bangladesh, Burma, Nepal, India, Pakistan, Latin America, the Middle East, the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia, most European countries, and Quebec (Canada). However, applicants who, at the time of application, have already completed at least one year of full-time academic course work with grades of B or better at a US university may submit an official transcript from the US university to fulfill this requirement. The following courses will not fulfill this requirement:

- courses in English as a Second Language,
- courses conducted in a language other than English,
- courses that will be completed after the application is submitted, and
- courses of a non-academic nature.

If applicants have previously been denied admission to Berkeley on the basis of their English language proficiency, they must submit new test scores that meet the current minimum from one of the standardized tests. Official TOEFL score reports must be sent directly from Educational Test Services (ETS). The institution code for Berkeley is 4833. Official IELTS score reports must be sent electronically from the testing center to University of California, Berkeley, Graduate Division, Sproul Hall, Rm 318 MC 5900, Berkeley, CA 94720. TOEFL and IELTS score reports are only valid for two years.

Where to Apply

Visit the Berkeley Graduate Division application page (<http://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/apply/>).

Admission to the Program

MA Program

- 1. **Online Application:** Fill out the graduate admissions application available on the Graduate Division website (<https://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/apply/>).
- 2. **Transcripts:** Upload unofficial transcripts with the online application for the departmental initial review. Upload a transcript from every post-secondary school you have attended, including community college. You do not need to send the department paper copies. Official transcripts of all college-level work will be required only if **admitted**. Official transcripts must be in sealed envelopes as issued by the school(s) you have attended. Request a current transcript from every post-secondary school that you have attended, including community colleges, summer sessions, and extension programs.
- 3. **Letters of Recommendation:** Send three letters of recommendation from three recommenders familiar with your work, preferably in an academic setting. We will accept online letters of recommendation only. Extra letters, CV/resumes, or photos will be discarded. Instructions on how to submit letters are included in the Graduate Admissions application.
- 4. **Academic Writing Sample:** Writing samples must be 5-7 pages in length (spacing does not matter) and in English. Examples include an essay or book review. You can upload the writing sample as part of the online application. Do not send or email writing samples to the department. Writing samples that are longer than the stated length will not be read so please modify your document accordingly.
- 5. **Statement of Purpose:** 1-2 single space pages in 12 point font. Please read about the SOP here (<https://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/apply/statement-purpose/>).
- 6. **Personal History Statement:** 1-2 single space pages in 12 point font. Your Personal History Statement gives you an opportunity to add some personal details and depth to the information provided in your Statement of Purpose. It can include information about who you are as a person, your family background, cultural background, socioeconomic status, educational advantages and/or experiences growing up. It is intended to give you the opportunity to provide a narrative about your diverse personal experiences
- 7. **GRE Test Scores:** The GRE is not currently required.
- 8. **Evidence of English language proficiency:** All applicants from countries in which English is not the official language are required to submit official evidence of English language proficiency through the TOEFL exam. If you have completed at least one year of full-time academic course work with grades of B or better in residence at a US university, you do not need to take this test. For a list of countries and minimum scores, see info on this section above. Scores must be sent

directly by ETS to UC Berkeley (institution code 4833). Do not send test scores directly to our department.

Profile of a successful applicant

The profile of a successful applicant admitted recently would include such attributes as:

- Two or more years of relevant Asian language preparation.
- An upper division grade point average (GPA) of 3.5 or higher: In evaluating grade point average, particular emphasis is placed on the applicant's last two years of undergraduate study and on his or her work in the area in which he or she intends to specialize.
- A writing sample of high caliber.
- Excellent letters of recommendation from academic sources that can comment in detail on scholarly attributes.
- A concise, mature, and directed statement of purpose that fits within the interdisciplinary Asian Studies program requirements and capabilities.
- Some experience living, studying or working in Asia.

Unit Requirements

A minimum of 20 semester units (typically five courses) in the student's area of specialization, as determined in conference with the graduate adviser. All courses must be taken for a letter grade.

- For the 20-unit minimum, at least 8 units must be in 200-series (graduate level) courses in two or more departments. The rest of the units may come from undergraduate upper division courses, or more graduate-level courses.
- No more than 14 units of the 20-unit minimum can come from a single department.
- Relevant language work beyond the three-year minimum requirement is encouraged and may be included among the program units upon approval of head graduate adviser.
- The graduate proseminar, Asian Studies 201, is required for two semesters; however, the units do not count toward the 20-unit minimum.

Foreign Language

A minimum of three years of course work in an Asian language relevant to the student's regional specialization or evidence of equivalent preparation. This includes language coursework that you have already done prior to entering the program. For students who want to apply for PhD programs, it is advantageous to take more than one East Asian language.

Capstone/Thesis (Plan I)

A Master's thesis, which will be supervised and approved by a three-member faculty committee.

Curriculum

Courses Required

| | | |
|-------------|--|---|
| ASIANST 201 | Asian Studies Proseminar (two semesters) | 1 |
| | Asian language coursework (6 semesters) | |
| | 20 units of graduate or upper division courses, as per approved study list, for one of four area concentrations: | |
| | East Asia (China) | |
| | Northeast Asia (Japan and Korea) | |

South Asia

Southeast Asia

Asian Studies

Expand all course descriptions [+]Collapse all course descriptions [-]

ASIANST 201 Asian Studies Proseminar 1 Unit

Terms offered: Fall 2022, Spring 2022, Fall 2021

This course is required of all first-year graduate students and supervised by a regular faculty member. The seminar will familiarize students with faculty, their Asian interests, research methods, and the courses they teach. It consists of presentations by faculty on their past, present, and future research.

Asian Studies Proseminar: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1.5 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Asian Studies/Graduate

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

Asian Studies Proseminar: Read Less [-]

ASIANST 298 Directed Group Study 2 - 6 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2021, Summer 2021, Spring 2018

Group study of selected topics that vary from term to term.

Directed Group Study: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 0 hours of independent study per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 1-5 hours of independent study per week

8 weeks - 1-4 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Asian Studies/Graduate

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

Directed Group Study: Read Less [-]

ASIANST 299 Independent Study 1 - 7 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2021, Spring 2016, Fall 2015

Directed reading in subject matter not covered in scheduled seminar offerings.

Independent Study: Read More [+]

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 0 hours of independent study per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 1-5 hours of independent study per week

8 weeks - 1-4 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Asian Studies/Graduate

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

Independent Study: Read Less [-]