East Asian Studies

Overview

Our program blends traditional concepts and modern ideas, much like East Asia itself. You gain a broad perspective on the nations and peoples of the region, including their language, literature, history, government and rich cultural heritage. Drawing on the College's extensive resources, you explore East Asia's economic and geopolitical realities, ethnic and cultural identities, and contemporary social issues. We regularly add new classes that build on the major's interdisciplinary approach, global viewpoint and deep interest in what's happening in East Asia today. Chinese and Japanese language students practice their skills by teaching at the Regional Multicultural Magnet School in New London.

Special Opportunities

The study of languages and cultures is, by nature, interdisciplinary. We support students who combine their interest in East Asia with a certificate from one of the College's interdisciplinary centers or a second major, such as international relations, economics, history or gender and women's studies. If you have an interest in art, you might work with our collection of Chinese paintings or Japanese prints and woodcuts, including works by Hiroshige.

International Opportunities and Study Abroad

We offer ample opportunities for study and internships abroad. You might research the place of women in corporate Japan, work in an elementary school in Yunnan Province or learn about traditional Chinese medicine in a Beijing hospital. On campus, you can explore the Pacific Rim through an Asian film series, Lunar New Year festivities, a traditional Japanese tea ceremony and taiko drumming. You can also join the department's advisory board and be active with the College's organization for Asian and Asian-American students. We encourage you to apply for international grants, such as the Freeman-ASIA Awards, Fulbright fellowships and Gilman International scholarships.

Cannea Ferguson
East Asian Studies

Q: Why did you decide to major in East Asian studies?
A: In high school, I was intrigued by the tonality of spoken Chinese along with the complex strokes of written Chinese characters. As a prospective student, I attended an intensive Chinese class at Connecticut College and was inspired to continue learning more about Chinese language and culture at the undergraduate level.

Q: What has been your most challenging or rewarding class? Why?
A: Chinese 101: Intensive Elementary Chinese. The intensive coursework pushed me to take responsibility for my language learning, and Professors Tek-wah King and Amy Dooling always encouraged me to do my best work. Over the course of a year, I developed a strong foundation in written and spoken Chinese that prepared me for study abroad.

Q: Did you study abroad? Where and why?
A: I studied abroad for six months in the Associated Colleges in China's (ACC) Intensive Language & Culture Program in Beijing. The full-time language pledge gave me the opportunity to greatly improve my linguistic and cultural proficiency in a total immersion setting.
Faculty

Amy Dooling, Associate Professor of Chinese
B.A., M.A., Ph.D., Columbia University
Modern and contemporary Chinese fiction and drama; Chinese women’s writing; history of the women’s movement and feminism in China; translation

Yibing Huang, Associate Professor of Chinese
B.A., M.A., Ph.D., Beijing University; Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles
Modern and contemporary Chinese literature, cinema, popular culture; comparative studies of modernism and postmodernism in China and the West; cultural translations between Chinese poetry and modern American poetry

Tek-wah King, Senior Lecturer in Chinese
B.A., National Taiwan University; M.A., Yale University; Ph.D. in progress, Yale University
Syntax and morphology; Chinese writing system and dialects; language pedagogy

Hisae Kobayashi, Senior Lecturer in Japanese
B.A., Tsuda College, Tokyo; M.A., The University of Evansville, Ind.
Language pedagogy; Japanese language

Associated Faculty

Lindsey B. Harlan, Professor of Religious Studies

Qiang Ning, Chu-Niklack Associate Professor in Asian Art, Curator of the Chu-Griffis Asian Art Collection

Yong Jin Park, Associate Professor of Economics

Sarah A. Queen, Professor of History

John Qunjian Tian, Associate Professor of Government and International Relations

James Dale Wilson, Associate Professor of Music, Ethnomusicologist, Jazz Composer/Arranger

Wei Zhang, Assistant Professor of Economics

Selected Courses

Beyond “The Orient”: Critical Approaches to East Asian Literature and Film; Introduction to Asian Art; Narratives of the East Asian Diaspora; The Fantastic Other: Travel, History, Utopia; Peripheries and Differences: Re-Imagining Contemporary China; Chinese Poetry and its American Legacies; Modern Chinese Women’s Writing in Translation; History of Gender and Sexuality in Japan, 1850s-1980; From Tea to Connecticut Rolls: Defining Japanese Culture Through Food.

About Connecticut College

Connecticut College educates students to put the liberal arts into action as citizens in a global society. A leader in the liberal arts since 1911, the College is home to nationally ranked programs for internships, community action, arts and technology, environmental studies and international studies. Our beautiful 750-acre arboretum campus is located in the historic New England seaport community of New London, Conn.