EAST ASIAN STUDIES

The MacMillan Center
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M.A.

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FIELDS OF STUDY

The Master of Arts (M.A.) program in East Asian Studies is a multidisciplinary program offering a concentrated course of study designed to provide a broad understanding of the people, history, culture, contemporary society, politics, and economy of China, Japan, or a transnational region within East Asia. This program is designed for students preparing to go on to the doctorate in one of the disciplines of East Asian Studies (e.g., anthropology; economics; history; history of art; language and literature, including comparative literature, film studies, and theater studies; political science; sociology; etc.), as well as for those students seeking a terminal
M.A. degree before entering the business world, the media, government service, or a professional school.

**COURSE OF STUDY FOR THE M.A. DEGREE**

The East Asian Studies graduate program is designed to be completed in either a one-year or a two-year track. The two-year track requires the preparation of a master’s thesis and is therefore ideal for students who are keen to pursue focused, independent research under the guidance of a faculty member. It also provides students with an opportunity to pursue additional disciplinary and language training. Students who enter the two-year track with a strong command of one East Asian language will be encouraged to consider beginning a second (or third) language.

In general, students focus their coursework on the study of China, Japan, or transnational East Asia. Some students may prefer to focus their coursework on one or two disciplines, in addition to language study and courses focused on East Asia. Others may create a highly interdisciplinary program, taking courses in traditional disciplines such as history, literature, political science, art history, or anthropology, as well as in Yale’s professional schools.

Applicants to the East Asian Studies graduate program must indicate on their application whether they are applying to the one-year or the two-year track.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR THE M.A. DEGREE: ONE-YEAR TRACK**

The program of study for completion of the degree on the one-year track consists of eight term courses that must include two terms of language study at or above Yale’s third-year level (unless the language requirement has already been met through previous study or native fluency), plus six other courses selected from the University’s offerings of advanced language study and seminars related to East Asia at the graduate level. For those who meet the language requirement at matriculation, two of the required eight courses may be advanced training in a particular discipline (e.g., economics, history, political theory, statistics, etc.) with no explicit focus on East Asia, but related to the student’s professional goals. The course of study must be approved by the director of graduate studies (DGS).

**Special Requirements**

Students must earn two Honors grades (“H”) over the course of their two terms at Yale. Honors grades earned in any language course cannot be counted toward satisfying this requirement, except with the permission of the DGS.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR THE M.A. DEGREE: TWO-YEAR TRACK**

The program of study for completion of the degree on the two-year track consists of sixteen term courses that must include four terms of language study, two terms of which must be at Yale’s fourth-year level (unless the language requirement has already been met through previous study or native fluency), plus twelve other courses selected from the University’s offerings of advanced language study and seminars related to East Asia at the graduate level. Students who have achieved advanced proficiency in one East Asian language are strongly encouraged to pursue study of a second East Asian language, but for those who have met the language requirement in one language at matriculation, two of the required sixteen courses may be advanced training in a
particular discipline (e.g., economics, history, political theory, statistics, etc.) with no explicit focus on East Asia, but related to the student’s professional goals. The course of study must be approved by the director of graduate studies (DGS).

Special Requirements

Students must earn four Honors grades (“H”) over the course of their four terms at Yale. Honors grades earned in any language course cannot be counted toward satisfying this requirement, except with the permission of the DGS. A master’s thesis is also required.

Master’s Thesis

A master’s thesis is required of students enrolled in the two-year degree program. The master’s thesis is based on research in a topic approved by the DGS and advised by a faculty member with specialized competence in the chosen topic. M.A. students must register for EAST 900, which may count toward the sixteen required courses. EAST 900 may not be taken for audit. Students may register for an additional independent study to prepare topics and begin research. The master’s thesis must be prepared according to CEAS guidelines and is due in the student’s second year on a mid-December date (if completed in the fall term) or an early-May date (if completed in the spring term) as specified by CEAS.

JOINT-DEGREE PROGRAMS

The Council on East Asian Studies (CEAS) collaborates with three of Yale’s professional schools—Environment, Law, and Public Health—and has developed joint-degree programs that offer a strong connection between two demanding courses of study while also fulfilling the requirements of each separate school. Only students enrolled in the two-year track of the East Asian Studies M.A. degree program are eligible for a joint degree.

Each joint program leads to the simultaneous award of two graduate professional degrees: the M.A. in East Asian Studies from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and an M.F., M.E.M., M.E.Sc., M.F.S., J.D., or M.P.H. from the relevant professional school. Students can earn the two degrees simultaneously in less time than if they were pursued sequentially.

With the exception of the joint M.A./J.D. program, which requires four years, completion of all requirements takes three years. Typically candidates spend the first year in one program and the second year in the partner program. During the third and final year of study, students register in one program each term. Joint-degree students are guided in this process by a committee composed of the DGS and a faculty member of the relevant professional school.

Candidates must submit formal applications to both the Graduate School and the relevant professional school and be admitted separately to each school, i.e., each school makes its decision independently. It is highly recommended that students apply to and enter a joint-degree program from the outset, although it is possible to apply to the second program once matriculated at Yale.

Program materials are available upon request to the Council on East Asian Studies, Yale University, PO Box 208206, New Haven CT 06520-8206; e-mail,
EAST 504a / HSAR 785a, The Beginnings of Nagasaki (1560-1640)  Reinier Hesselink
The city of Nagasaki is well-known throughout the world for having been the second target of the atomic bomb attacks ending the Pacific War in August of 1945. In view of the city’s cosmopolitan history, this was a particularly bitter result of the vagaries of warfare. In this seminar, we go back to the city’s origins to explore its essence as a meeting point between East and West. We do so guided by readings dealing with the ephemeral, initial phase of its existence as Japan’s only Christian town, roughly between 1560 and 1640. Christianity is presented and analyzed from an anthropological/historical perspective as an ideological discourse accompanying the Iberian thrust across the Atlantic, Indian, and Pacific Oceans in the 16th and 17th centuries.

EAST 507b / HSAR 786b, The Dutch in Japan (1600-1868)  Reinier Hesselink
After the elimination of Christianity from the permitted religious options in Japan and the simultaneous expulsion of the Portuguese from the country’s trading networks, the Dutch trade with Japan was transferred from Hirado to Nagasaki in 1641. In this way, Nagasaki was allowed to keep its function as an intermediary between Japan and the Western world. In contrast to its short-lived Christian identity, Nagasaki’s exclusive relationship with the Dutch lasted for more than two centuries. In this seminar, we explore this long standing relationship from a variety of viewpoints and epistemes: patterns of exchange, negotiation and diplomacy, objects and materials, language barriers and language learning, the use of Dutch sources to write Japanese history etc.

EAST 509a / EALL 563a, Ecocritical Theory and Japanese Literature  Christine Marran
In this course students develop familiarity with key theories and discourses that enable serious consideration of the more-than-human world in literature. Students analyze how theories of the material turn, the nonhuman turn, and specific works of Japanese and Japanese-American/Canadian literature are productive and necessary to area studies and literary studies in our age of rising seas. We analyze different concepts of the material and more-than-human world through various schools of thought including new materialism, speculative realism, object-oriented ontology, obligate storytelling, and archipelagic/aquapelagic thinking. We discuss core movements in theory and treat literary forms as their own site of theoretical production. We explore how to incorporate these new materialist and speculative realist perspectives into our own literary analysis and the merits for doing so. Advanced undergraduate and graduate students from all departments are invited to take this course. Required readings will be in English or English translation. Students are asked to read approximately 200 pages per week on average. Students are encouraged to consider the relevance of these methodological approaches to their own research and primary materials. No Japanese proficiency is required for this course.
EAST 515a / ANTH 515a, Culture, History, Power, and Representation  Anne Aronsson
This seminar critically explores how anthropologists use contemporary social theories to formulate the junctures of meaning, interest, and power. It thus aims to integrate symbolic, economic, and political perspectives on culture and social process. If culture refers to the understandings and meanings by which people live, then it constitutes the conventions of social life that are themselves produced in the flux of social life, invented by human activity. Theories of culture must therefore illuminate this problematic of agency and structure. They must show how social action can both reproduce and transform the structures of meaning, the conventions of social life. Even as such a position becomes orthodox in anthropology, it raises serious questions about the possibilities for ethnographic practice and theoretical analysis. How, for example, are such conventions generated and transformed where there are wide differentials of power and unequal access to resources? What becomes of our notions of humans as active agents of culture when the possibilities for maneuver and the margin of action for many are overwhelmed by the constraints of a few? How do elites—ritual elders, Brahmanic priests, manorial lords, factory-managers—secure compliance to a normative order? How are expressions of submission and resistance woven together in a fabric of cultural understandings? How does a theory of culture enhance our analyses of the reconstitution of political authority from traditional kingship to modern nation-state, the encapsulation of pre-capitalist modes of production, and the attempts to convert “primordial sentiments” to “civic loyalties”? How do transnational fluidities and diasporic connections make instruments of nation-states contingent? These questions are some of the questions we immediately face when probing the intersections of culture, politics and representation, and they are the issues that lie behind this seminar.

EAST 575b / ANTH 575b, Hubs, Mobilities, and Global Cities  Helen Siu
Analysis of urban life in historical and contemporary societies. Topics include capitalist and postmodern transformations, class, gender, ethnicity, migration, and global landscapes of power and citizenship.

EAST 581b / EALL 552b / FILM 881b, Japanese Cinema before 1960  Aaron Gerow
The history of Japanese cinema to 1960, including the social, cultural, and industrial backgrounds to its development. Periods covered include the silent era, the coming of sound and the wartime period, the occupation era, the golden age of the 1950s, and the new modernism of the late 1950s.

EAST 594b / HSAR 594b, Chinese Paintings at the YUAG  Quincy Ngan
This seminar explores the issue of authenticity in thirteenth through twentieth century Chinese paintings at the Yale University Art Gallery. Students become familiar with the different schools of connoisseurship and the major debates surrounding authenticity in the field of Chinese painting. Students learn about the methods for authenticating an attribution, as well as the rationale behind the dating provided by the gallery. Calligraphical inscriptions and seals on the works, as well as their physical condition, related conservation reports, and provenance are consulted as well. This class makes frequent visits to the gallery. Reading ability of Chinese is not required.

EAST 640b / EALL 600b, Sinological Methods  Pauline Lin
A research course in Chinese studies, designed for students with background in modern and literary Chinese. Students explore and evaluate the wealth of primary sources and research tools available in China and in the West. For native speakers of
Chinese, introduction to the secondary literature in English and instruction in writing professionally in English on topics about China. Topics include Chinese bibliographies; bibliophiles’ notes; specialized dictionaries; maps and geographical gazetteers; textual editions, variations, and reliability of texts; genealogies and biographical sources; archaeological and visual materials; and major Chinese encyclopedias, compendia, and databases.

**EAST 889b / HIST 889b, Research in Japanese History**  Fabian Drixler and Hannah Shepherd

After a general introduction to the broad array of sources and reference materials available for conducting research related to the history of Japan since ca. 1600, students prepare original research papers on topics of their own choosing in a collaborative workshop environment. Prerequisite: reading knowledge of Japanese.

**EAST 900a or b, Master’s Thesis**  Eric Greene

Directed reading and research on a topic approved by the DGS and advised by a faculty member (by arrangement) with expertise or specialized competence in the chosen field. Readings and research are done in preparation for the required master’s thesis.

**EAST 910a or b, Independent Study**  Eric Greene

By arrangement with faculty and with approval of the DGS.