**Annual Departmental Assessment Report**

**Department or Program: Asian Studies Program**

**Academic Year of Report: 2021**

**Department Contact Person for Assessment: Daniel Buck, Program Director**

**Section 1: Learning Objectives Assessed for this Report**

For each major in the department, list the learning objectives that were assessed during this period.

1. Exhibit broad knowledge and understanding of the Asia region, including its history, cultures, and societies.

**Section 2: Assessment Activities**

For each learning outcome, describe what information was collected, how it was analyzed and discussed, and the conclusions that were drawn from the analysis. In the narrative, reference all relevant means of collecting information about learning goals, including direct measures (e.g. assessment of student assignments), indirect measures (e.g. overall grade patterns in a particular course, student reflections on learning, SERU data), and qualitative information (e.g. faculty observations, student input). While the choice of which assessments are most meaningful is up to the department, a mix of direct and indirect measures is requested.

To assess this learning outcome, we developed a questionnaire with a short introduction and 4 questions:

The College of Arts and Sciences is asking every department and program to begin a self-assessment exercise. We are using this simple questionnaire. Please answer the following 4 questions. There are no right or wrong answers, we just hope for your thoughtful feedback to help us assess and improve the program to better serve our future students. Your identity will be kept confidential.

1.  After completing the Asian Studies major or minor, in what ways have you developed broad knowledge and understanding of the Asia region, including its history, cultures, and societies?  
2.  What are the major strengths of the Asian Studies major/minor in terms of enabling you to develop broad knowledge and understanding of the Asia region, including its history, cultures, and societies?  
3.  What are the major weaknesses of the Asian Studies major/minor in terms of enabling you to develop broad knowledge and understanding of the Asia region, including its history, cultures, and societies?

4.  What do you wish you had learned more about?

We administered this questionnaire as an extra-credit quiz to some of the students enrolled in ASIA 350: What is Asia? in spring term 2021. This is the capstone course required of all majors and minors in Asian Studies. We assigned the questionnaire only to students who are majoring or minoring in Asian Studies and who are graduating this term or who have completed most of their coursework. We received responses from 15 out of 17 students (total class size 50 students). This is a much higher response rate than we have had in past years, when we administered questionnaires by email to graduating seniors. Overall, the responses were very positive, with every student responding that through completion of the major/minor they had developed broad knowledge and understanding of the Asia region, including its history, cultures, and societies. The major strengths of the major (in terms of enabling students to develop broad knowledge and understanding of Asia) were described as its interdisciplinary nature, the wide variety of course offerings that encourage and enable each student to develop their own unique focus, and the strength of the faculty. Students identified two weaknesses in the program: limited course offerings for Korean history, and South and Southeast Asia; and the small number of courses using social science approaches to contemporary topics such as politics, economics, and development.

**Section 3: Actions Taken Based on Assessment Analysis**

For each learning goal assessed for each major, describe any actions taken as a result of assessment information, or plans to take action during the next academic year. Describe how the actions or action plans are meant to address the issues arrived at through the assessment activities in Section 2.

We have been aware of gaps in our course offerings for several years. There is a relative lack of courses on Korea, Southeast Asia, and South Asia on the one hand, and social science courses foregrounding modern Asia on the other hand, due to the UO’s small number of faculty specialized in those areas. Working with the rest of the Asian Studies community on campus, we have advocated strongly for new faculty lines in these areas for the last several years and will continue to do so. In the last ten years we have achieved a small net gain. We now have more faculty teaching courses on Korean literature and film, though we need an historian of Korea. We have a few new professors with some South and Southeast Asian focus, though so far this has translated into only a few regional courses. With the recent addition of Yeling Tan to the Department of Political Science, we now have one course on Chinese politics.

Knowledge of the contemporary/social science gap has already fundamentally shaped the design of the four courses currently offered by the Asian Studies Program, all of them created or overhauled recently (ASIA 111 Great Books on Modern Asia; 350 What is Asia?; 425 Asian Foodways; 480 The Chinese Economy). The first three courses include significant coverage of parts of Asia other than China and Japan; the fourth course includes some coverage of, and China’s relations with, other Asian countries. The second, third, and fourth courses emphasize interactions between Asian countries (and transnational dynamics). Likewise, the fourth course is 100% social science; the third course about 60% social science (and 40% humanities); the second course about 40% social science (60% humanities); and the first course, ASIA 111 at the freshman level, is mixed but emphasizes the modern period and introduces social science concepts (and three out of the four faculty on the teaching team are from social science backgrounds). Unfortunately, we offer ASIA 111 each fall term using funds generated from summer session, and it appears we have now lost the funds accumulated from previous summers and may not be able to offer it.

Other specific steps we are taking to address these concerns include the recent implementation of the ASIA 111 course; re-design of ASIA 350 to increase the contemporary and social science content; and encouraging faculty on campus to include more Asia-related units in their regular courses. In addition, we have started to develop a new lower division course at the 200-level with a transnational Asia and social science focus.

New steps we will take this year focus on the undergraduate advising process. Class lists made available to students each year/term highlight social sciences courses and when they will be offered. The Undergraduate Advisor will be made aware of recent graduates wishing, retrospectively, they had taken more social science courses. The Undergraduate Advisor will be instructed to convey this, tactfully, to students in the advising process, and to highlight available courses to students.

**Section 4: Other Efforts to Improve the Student Educational Experience**

Briefly describe other continuous improvement efforts that are not directly related to the learning goals above. In other words, what activity has the department engaged in to improve the student educational experience? This might include changes such as curriculum revisions, new advising approaches, revised or new co-curricular activities, etc. Describe the rationale for the change(s) and any outcomes resulting from the change(s).

Most of these are described above. We also continue to provide as many extra- and co-curricular activities and events as possible. One example is the Asian Foodways course, which features 7-8 optional fieldtrips. Another example is the North Korea film screening and conference held the last year before Covid-19.

Two new efforts worth noting: first, this year we created an honors thesis track for Asian Studies majors (will become effective Fall 2021). Second, the program has organized and will host the Asian Studies Research Event to be held May 25, 2021 in conjunction and co-sponsorship with the UO Undergraduate Research Symposium. We secured $500 to create new awards for students who present their research.

**Section 5: Plans for Next Year**

Briefly describe tentative assessment plans for the next academic year. Which goals will be assessed and how? What actions will be taken as a result of this years’ analysis of assessment information? What other plans does the department have to improve the student educational experience? What are the budgetary implications of any proposed actions? How will those be addressed?

The Asian Studies Advisory Committee will meet in Fall 2021 to discuss the results of recent assessments, agree on the assessment goals and methods for 2021, and design the questions (assuming a survey is to be used again). This process will be articulated with whatever process emerges regarding the formation of the new School of Global Studies and Languages.