**Annual Departmental Assessment Report**

**Department or Program: Asian Studies Program**

**Academic Year of Report: Dec 2018**

**Department Contact Person for Assessment: Professor Tuong Vu, Program Director**

**Undergraduate Program**

**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. As a first step in this process, we have designed 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 all (or most) of the required coursework for the Asian Studies major, 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 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 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 distributed this questionnaire to several recent graduates or near-graduates (seniors who have completed all or nearly all of the coursework) and received responses from five students. To analyze this information, we read the questionnaire responses and met to discuss them. Overall the responses were very positive, with every student responding that through completion of the major 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. The major weakness listed, however, is the lack of course offerings on parts of Asia besides China and Japan, namely the small number of courses which cover Korea, Southeast Asia, and South Asia. Finally, respondents wished they had learned more about contemporary Asia (as opposed to historical), and more about contemporary interactions between the countries of Asia (transnational dynamics). They also wished there had been more social science courses on offer.

**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 the described gaps in our course offerings for several years. The reason for 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, is 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.

Knowledge of these gaps 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 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 other Asian countries. The second, third, and to a lesser extent the 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, at the freshman level, is fairly mixed but emphasizes the modern period and introduces social science concepts.

The Asian Studies Program offers so few courses of its own because it has only one faculty member, and that is only a 0.40 appointment (Dan Buck, 0.60 in the Geography Department). The rest of the faculty are affiliates in other home departments, and most of the courses that students take to fulfill major requirements are in those departments. This is one of the strengths of the Program, and the student respondents appreciated the way it encourages interdisciplinarity and breadth, and the possibility for each student to develop their own unique focus. But it also limits our ability to create and offer more courses targeting the gaps described by the students. This year, we are adding another faculty member with a 0.50 appointment (Alisa Freedman, moving from EALL but retaining 0.50 in EALL). In the near future she will teach courses she had already been teaching in EALL (a net gain in ASIA listed courses; no net gain in the number of Asia-related courses on campus; no change in content), but in the future she will be encouraged to include broader Asia-related (not just Japan-related) content.

Other specific steps we are taking to address these concerns include the recent implementation of the ASIA 111 course last year; a partial re-design later this year 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.

**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 last year.

**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?

Next year we will attempt to survey all graduating Asian Studies majors. We will assess the same learning goal, because it is core to what defines our major. We think that a larger sample group, and redesigned questions, will help us to better understand the strengths and weaknesses with regards to our first goal.

We will continue to launch new activities and organize new classes to serve our students better. We plan to apply for a larger budget from the Dean to help us achieve this plan. Currently the Asian Studies Program receives about $7,000 in operating budget, and we hope to double it. We will meet and discuss how to approach the Provost for a new hire according to the Institutional Hiring Plan to add a social scientist to the faculty of the program. Please wish us luck!