

Report on Planning for Creating (East) Asian Studies Department

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submitted to Dr. John Clementson, Associate Provost

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Earlier this year, I received a directive from you to initiate the process of formulating a plan for expanding Japanese Studies Program into Asian Studies Program/Department. The process thus far has involved three formal steps: the initial meeting with the Japanese Studies committee, drafting of the (East) Asian Studies major/minor requirements, and the second meeting with the Japanese Studies committee. In this process, I have also consulted Dr. Margaret Childs, Chair of Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Kansas, and Dr. Phyllis Larson, Associate Dean and former Chair of Asian Studies Department at St. Olaf College, during their visits to Gustavus as external evaluators, respectively, for the 10-year review of MLC and Dr. Lianying Shan's Third Year Review

This report consists of the following parts: (I.) the geographical focus, (II.) the draft of the (East) Asian Studies major/minor requirements, (III.) the additional staffing required, (IV.) department vs. inter-departmental program, and (V.) the next step.

I. Focus on East Asia

There is some ambivalence among the Japanese Studies Committee as to the naming of the new department: East Asian Studies or Asian Studies. There is, however, a clear consensus on the geographical area that the new department will focus on: China and Japan as the two main countries of focus, and Korea and Taiwan as the secondary focus. In other words, the committee currently does not foresee the inclusion of South Asia or Southeast Asia. It is important, the committee feels, that Gustavus Administration and faculty recognize the vast cultural distance, for example, between India and the East Asian countries mentioned above.

II. (East) Asian Studies major/minor requirements

The following is the draft version of the major/minor requirements:

Requirements for the Major (12 courses)

1. Language Courses-- 4 options

a. JPN101, JPN102, JPN201, JPN202, JPN251, and a course beyond JPN251 taken in Japan

b. CHN101, CHN102, CHN201, CHN202, CHN251, and a course beyond CHN251 taken in China

c. JPN101, JPN102, JPN201, JPN202, CHN101, CHN102 or equivalent

d. CHN101, CHN102, CHN201, CHN202, JPN101, JPN102 or equivalent

2. Culture Courses: At least five of the following (and other approved courses): HIS-170, HIS175, HIS-278, JPN270, POL-255, REL-235, REL-355.

3. A minimum of one semester of full-time study in Japan or China

4. Senior Thesis (counts as 1 course)

Courses for the major (including any transfer courses) must be selected in consultation with the major adviser and be approved by the Department Chair. No more than two courses per semester of work done in another institution will be accepted as a part of the major, and the study-in-China/Japan coursework must be approved by the Department Chair prior to departure.

Courses must be graded C or better to fulfill the requirement for the major. This grade requirement does not include courses taken abroad.

Requirements for the Minor (8 courses)

1. Language Courses-- 2 options

a. JPN101, JPN102, JPN201, JPN202 or equivalent

b. CHN101, CHN102, CHN201, CHN202 or equivalent

2. Culture Courses: At least four of the following (or other approved courses): HIS-170, HIS175, HIS-278, JPN270, POL-255, REL-235, REL-355.

At least four of the courses presented for the minor must be taken at the College, including at least two language courses. No more than two courses per semester of work done in another institution will be accepted as a part of the minor. Courses must be graded C or better to fulfill the requirement for the minor.

III. Need for Additional Staffing

The major/minor requirements described above have two major components (excluding the study abroad requirement): language courses and “culture” courses taught in English. As to the culture courses, we are very fortunate to have several Japanese Studies faculty members--Dr. John Cha (religion), Dr. David Obermiller (history), Dr. Richard Leitch (political science), and Dr. Lianying Shan (literature)--who are already covering East Asia (Japan, China and, in some cases, Korea and Taiwan) in their courses. In addition, Dr. Florence Amamoto, who currently teaches

a Japanese-American literature course, has expressed her interest in offering an Asian-American literature course in the near future. Despite the obvious gap in two important areas, i.e., economics/management and art/art history, the “culture” component of Gustavus (East) Asian Studies Department is already looking quite respectable. Given the possibility of additional contributions from other faculty members (e.g., Dr. Soo Young Park) in the future, Gustavus is well positioned to offer an impressive variety of East Asian culture courses.

The language component of the new East Asian Studies major/minor, however, does require additional staffing. The most common configuration of staffing for the language component of East Asian Studies at liberal arts colleges comparable to Gustavus consists of two FTEs in Japanese and two FTEs in Chinese. Stronger programs may have additional staffing in these languages and/or Korean.

Gustavus currently has no faculty member trained in Chinese language pedagogy. The College has decided to start offering Chinese language courses in 2011 fall by utilizing Dr. Lianying Shan’s linguistic and academic background (i.e., a native speaker of Chinese with her training in Japanese language pedagogy). Although this approach has allowed the College to start providing Chinese language education without adding any new faculty position, it has to make an important decision to address the fundamental staffing requirement beyond 2011-12 academic year. Specifically, the basic Chinese language course sequence (one or two sections of CHN201 will need to be added in 2012 fall, and a section of CHN251 in 2013 fall) alone will require an additional FTE.

Even after the addition of a FTE in Chinese, the issue of maintaining the integrity of Dr. Shan’s position (tenure track position in Japanese literature) will remain. Earlier this year, you confirmed Provost Office’s commitment to maintaining such integrity, specifically by allowing Dr. Shan to contribute at least (1) one Japanese literature/culture course for the major/minor each year, and (2) one Japanese language course each semester. If, as we hope, Chinese language courses attract strong enrollment in the future, maintaining integrity of Dr. Shan’s position is likely to require the second FTE in Chinese language.

Given (1) the fact that an additional instructor will be needed to continue to offer Chinese language courses beyond 2011-12 and (2) our projection that eventually two FTEs will be needed to offer a respectable Chinese language/culture program and to maintain the integrity of Dr. Shan’s position, the Japanese Studies Committee identified the creation of a new tenure-track position in Chinese as *the necessary condition* for proceeding with its plan to expand the existing Japanese Studies Program into (East) Asian Studies Department.

IV. Department vs. Inter-departmental Program

The Japanese Studies Committee discussed whether (East) Asian Studies major/minor would be offered through a new department or an inter-departmental program. The general consensus among the committee members is that a department will be the appropriate structure.

I also consulted Dr. Phyllis Larson, Associate Dean and former Chair of Asian Studies Department at St. Olaf College, on this issue. Dr. Larson perceived this as a straightforward decision; a department has many advantages over an inter-departmental program. At St. Olaf, each participating faculty member has a joint appointment between Asian Studies Department and his/her “other” home department. Due to such a clear joint status, an arrangement has been made between Asian Studies Department and other departments for allowing the faculty members to fully participate in the activities of both departments (e.g., reserving a time for attending department meetings). Another significant advantage is the clearly defined, shared responsibility in hiring. For example, a history professor at St. Olaf, who had received a joint appointment retroactively, is scheduled to retire next year, and Asian Studies Department will be participating in the search for his replacement as an equal partner with History Department. Such a practice at St. Olaf presents a sharp contrast with my own experience in the Asian history search that resulted in the hiring of Dr. Obermiller; my attempt to provide an input from Japanese Studies Program was met with hostility from Chair of History Department despite the fact that no one in History Department at the time had any expertise in Asia.

Therefore, I agree with Dr. Larson’s assessment that an inter-departmental program has few, if any, advantages over a department. There are, however, many details that will need to be hammered out. For example, will all the participating faculty members be joint-appointed or will a multi-tier membership model (e.g., solely appointed members, jointly appointed members, and “affiliate” members) be more appropriate?

V. Next Step

I request that Gustavus Administration make an institutional commitment to Asian Studies by creating a new tenure-track position in Chinese. Once this critical element is in place, the Japanese Studies committee will continue to work out the details of the plan for creating Asian Studies Department in fall.