

Asian and Middle Eastern Studies

<i>Director, Fall 2019:</i> Yukiko Shigeto, Japanese (on Sabbatical, Spring 2020)	Daniel Kent, Religion (on Sabbatical, 2019-2020)	<i>Affiliated Faculty:</i>
<i>Director, Spring 2020:</i> Akira R. Takemoto, Japanese	Charles McKhann, Anthropology	Shampa Biswas, Politics, <i>Chair,</i>
Jakobina Arch, History	Lauren Osborne, Religion	<i>Division I</i>
Brian Dott, History (on Sabbatical, 2019- 2020)	Elyse Semerdjian, History (on Sabbatical, Fall 2019)	Gaurav Majumdar, English
Arash Davari, Politics (on Sabbatical, 2019-2020)	Jonathan S. Walters, Religion	
Tarik Elsewi, Film and Media Studies	Wencui Zhao, Chinese	
Krista Gulbransen, Art History and Visual Cultural Studies	Wenqing Zhao, Philosophy (on Sabbatical, Spring 2020)	
Donghui He, Chinese		
Hitomi Johnson, Japanese		

The Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Program (AMES) aspires to create a better understanding of Asian and Middle Eastern cultures and their place in the world through an integrated course of interdisciplinary study. The structure of requirements and electives (see below) is designed to ensure a comprehensive education, while still allowing participating students latitude to develop their own interests. Guidance will be provided by an adviser chosen from among the faculty who regularly offer Asia and Middle East-related courses.

Total credits required to complete an Asian and Middle Eastern Studies major: 53

Learning Goals: Upon graduation, a student will be able to:

- **Major-Specific Areas of Knowledge**
 - Identify and interpret important ideas, assumptions, and debates that are central to the study of Asia and the Middle East.
 - Develop an interdisciplinary approach to understanding and engaging in discussions about issues in the field of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies.
- **Accessing Academic Community/Resources**
 - Comprehend, digest, and analyze scholarly works with attention to the author's thesis, methodology, structure of argument and use of evidence.
- **Critical Thinking**
 - Develop skills of critical analysis that are broadly transferable.
 - Analyze issues with a variety of tools and approaches from a range of disciplines.
- **Research Experience**
 - Conduct a substantial academic inquiry about a focused research question, demonstrating a depth of understanding of a research area, the mastery of relevant methods, and a capacity to generate substantive results in the form of a senior thesis.

The Asian and Middle Eastern Studies major: The major consists of 53 credits divided into the following areas: language courses (16 credits), required courses (9 credits), concentration courses (usually 12 credits) and elective courses (16). Students must take classes covering at least two regions (see below), with all three regions being strongly encouraged. No more than 17 credits earned in off-campus programs or transfer credit, and no more than 4 credits in independent study may be used to fulfill major requirements.

Language Courses: AMES majors must complete two years of a language at Whitman, or the equivalent (16 credits). Students placing into second-year language classes will be exempted from eight credits from the language requirement. Students placing into third-year language classes or higher will be exempted from all 16 credits from this area. Language beyond the second year is strongly encouraged and can be used to fulfill elective credits. Taking course work in an additional language, if approved by the AMES faculty (see below), can also be used to fulfill elective credit. While students are not required to study abroad, this is highly encouraged.

Required Courses: All AMES majors must take Asian and Middle Eastern Studies 160, 490, and 492 or 498 (nine credits). In the final year students must pass a senior assessment consisting of an oral defense of their thesis.

Concentration Courses: Three courses at the 300 or 400 level from at least two disciplines (typically 12 credits) defining focus of study in a topic or region, providing context for the thesis. Two of the three courses must be taken at Whitman. Independent study and language classes cannot be used to fulfill the concentration. The proposed concentration and list of classes for the major must be submitted to the AMES faculty by the end of the week following Thanksgiving break in the fall semester of the junior year. The proposal must include a title, the names of the three proposed classes for the concentration, an explanation of how the courses fit together and complement each other, a statement about the student's methodological preparation to pursue the concentration, and a list of the rest of the classes for the major. As appropriate, the AMES faculty may require a student to take a non-AMES disciplinary introductory or methods course (this could count as elective credit towards the major).

Elective Courses: AMES majors must complete at least 16 credits of elective courses, of which at least 8 must be above the 100 level. These courses complement the concentration, such that, in combination the student has worked in three disciplines and two geographic areas.

Capstone: A senior seminar (3 credits) in the fall, in which students expand on themes and ideas about the study of Asia and the Middle East, and formulate a thesis topic based on a firm foundation of methodological and theoretical discussions; followed by completion of thesis (2 credits) in the spring. Senior assessment consists of an oral defense of the thesis.

Most of the classes which count towards the Asian and Middle Eastern Studies major are offered through other departments (see list below). These courses can be broadly divided into three geographic areas (identified after each course): 1. East Asia 2. South/Southeast Asia 3. Middle East/Islamic World

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| Anthropology 220 <i>China Now</i> (1) | Global Literatures 338 <i>Undoing the Japanese National Narrative through Literature and Film</i> (1) |
| Anthropology 257 <i>Chinese Society and Culture</i> (1) | History 109 <i>Historical Roots of East Asia</i> (1) |
| Anthropology 258 <i>Peoples of the Tibeto-Burman Highlands</i> (1) | History 110 <i>East Asian History 1600 to the Present</i> (1) |
| Anthropology 347 <i>ST: Culture, Politics, and Ecology in Southwest China</i> (1) | History 127 <i>Islamic Civilization I: The Early and Medieval Islamic World</i> (3) |
| Art History 243 <i>Buddhist Art in Asia</i> (1, 2) | History 128 <i>Islamic Civilization II: The Modern Islamic World: The Ottomans to Arafat</i> (3) |
| Art History 246 <i>The Art of India</i> (2) | History 204 <i>The Syrian War: From the Rise of Asad to the Specter of ISIS</i> (3) |
| Art History 248 <i>Ways of Seeing: Japanese Art and Aesthetics</i> (1) | History 214 <i>Sex in the Casbah: Sex, Gender & Islam</i> (3) |
| Art History 257 <i>ST: Inventing Egypt</i> (3) | History 235 <i>Arab Spring</i> (3) |
| Art History 356 <i>The Taj Mahal & Beyond: The Art & Architecture of Mughal India</i> (2) | History 241 <i>Early Japanese History</i> (1) |
| Art History 357 <i>Art of Colonial India</i> (2) | History 247 <i>Early Chinese History</i> (1) |
| Asian and Middle Eastern Studies 200 <i>Summer Seminar in Chinese Studies</i> (1) | History 248 <i>Topics in Asian History</i> (1) |
| Chinese 210 <i>Conversational Chinese II (summer)</i> (1) | History 300 <i>Gender in Chinese History</i> (1) |
| Chinese 305, 306 <i>Third-Year Chinese</i> (1) | History 344 <i>China in Revolution</i> (1) |
| Chinese 310 <i>Conversational Chinese III (summer)</i> (1) | History 346 <i>Modern Japanese History</i> (1) |
| Chinese 405, 406 <i>Fourth-Year Chinese</i> (1) | History 348 <i>Horse-riders and Samurai: Comparisons in Early Modern East Asia</i> (1) |
| Chinese 417 <i>Walking the Talk: Chinese-English Translation</i> (1) | History 349 <i>Topics in Asian History</i> (1) |
| Chinese 491, 492 <i>Independent Study in Chinese Language</i> (1) | History 490 <i>Seminar in Asian History</i> (1) |
| Film and Media Studies 307/Religion 307 <i>Mediating Religion</i> (3) | Japanese 305, 306 <i>Third-Year Japanese</i> (1) |
| Film and Media Studies 345 <i>The Middle East in Cinema & Media</i> (3) | Japanese 405, 406 <i>Fourth-Year Japanese</i> (1) |
| Global Literatures 222 <i>Introduction to Modern Japanese Literature and Culture</i> (1) | Japanese 491, 492 <i>Independent Study in Japanese Language</i> (1) |
| Global Literatures 301 <i>Chinese Literature and Film Adaptation</i> (1) | Japanese 491, 492 <i>Independent Study in Japanese Calligraphy</i> (1) |
| Global Literatures 305 <i>Youth & Revolution in Contemporary Chinese Literature & Culture</i> (1) | Japanese 491, 492 <i>Independent Study in Japanese Tea Ceremony</i> (1) |
| Global Literatures 312 <i>Solitude and Literary Imagination</i> (1) | Philosophy 110 <i>Introduction to East Asian Philosophy</i> (1) |
| Global Literatures 322 <i>Eccentric Monks and Hermits in Japan</i> (1) | Philosophy 251 <i>Chinese Philosophy and Contemporary Issues</i> (1) |
| Global Literatures 325 <i>Imagining Community Through Contemporary Japanese Fiction and Film</i> (1) | Philosophy 360 <i>Asian Philosophy of Women, Gender, and Sexuality</i> (1) |
| Global Literatures 328 <i>Haiku and Nature in Japan</i> (1) | Politics 207 <i>Islam and Politics</i> (3) |
| | Politics 208 <i>Middle Eastern Politics</i> (3) |
| | Politics 225 <i>Introduction to Indigenous Politics</i> (2) |

Politics 236 *Concepts of the Political in Southeast Asia: An Introduction* (2)

Politics 359 *Gender and International Hierarchy* (1, 2, 3)

Religion 154 *Yoga, Meditation and Mindfulness* (no specific area)

Religion 160 *Asian Religions and the Environment* (1,2)

Religion 207 *Islamic Traditions* (3)

Religion 217 *Qur'an* (3)

Religion 221 *Brahmins, Buddhists and Jains* (2)

Religion 222 *Hindu India* (2)

Religion 250 *Theravāda Buddhism* (2)

Religion 251 *Mahāyāna Buddhism* (1)

Religion 304 *Muslim Bodies* (3)

Religion 307/Film and Media Studies 307 *Mediating Religions*(3)

Religion 310 *Hearing Islam* (3)

Religion 321 *Islamic Mysticism* (3)

Religion 347 *The Buddha* (2)

160 Introduction to Asian and Middle Eastern Studies

Not offered 2019-20

4 credits

Taught once a year by a faculty member in the Asian and Middle Eastern Studies program, this course provides an introduction to different scholarly approaches to the study of Asia and the Middle East. The course examines topics such as Orientalism, colonialism and post-colonialism, gender and class, ethnography, religious and philosophical traditions, nationalism, globalization, and notions of tradition and modernity. Explorations into the nature and history of area studies will help to frame the study of various themes and debates. The course is not designed to offer an overview of all of Asia and the Middle East or any particular academic discipline within Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. Rather, this interdisciplinary class analyzes the history of how Asia and the Middle East have been defined and studied. Reflecting this interdisciplinary focus, this course engages with a mix of different types of texts and media, including literature, architecture, visual culture, film, ethnography and critical theory. Open to seniors only by consent of instructor.

200 Special Topics: Summer Seminar in Chinese Studies – History of Ethnic Interactions in Yunnan

Summer 2019

McKhann

2 credits

Course offered at the Whitman Summer Studies in China program. Taught in China over a period of six weeks by the Whitman faculty member who is resident director. The course explores selected topics in Chinese studies and incorporates classroom and field studies. *Prerequisite:* admission to the Whitman Summer Studies in China program. *Prerequisite:* Acceptance into the Crossroads WSSC Summer 2019 course. *Course fees and international airfare estimated will be announced in Fall 2018.*

201-204 Special Topics: Intermediate Level

4 credits

The course explores selected topics in Asian and Middle Eastern studies at the intermediate level. Any current offerings follow.

221 Silk Roads Field Course

Not offered 2019-20

2 credits

This course looks in depth at selected sites along the silk roads of Asia, both in the classroom and during a field trip. One hour per week throughout the semester, and a field trip to Asia over the spring break. Students will explore the past and current situations of specific sites to be visited during the field trip through pre-trip readings and research presentations, keep a detailed journal during the field trip, and give a multimedia or poster-style presentation of a researched aspect of the trip to the college community near the end of the semester. Students must apply for the course, and pay a course fee to be announced. *Corequisites:* Biology 121 and History 121.

301 Special Topics: Advanced Level

4 credits

The course explores selected topics in Asian and Middle Eastern studies at the advanced level. Any current offerings follow.

411, 412 Individual Projects

Fall, Spring

Staff

1-4 credits

Directed individual study and research. *Prerequisites:* appropriate prior coursework in Asian and Middle Eastern studies and consent of the supervising instructor.

490 Senior Seminar in Asian and Middle Eastern Studies

Fall

Staff

3 credits

Taught by an Asian and Middle Eastern Studies faculty member with guest participation by others. This class expands on themes and ideas about the study of Asia and Middle East first examined in Asian and Middle Eastern Studies 160. Like Asian and Middle Eastern Studies 160 the course is not limited to a particular part of Asia or the

Middle East nor to a particular disciplinary approach. The class also will provide seniors a structured program for helping them to formulate a thesis topic based on a firm foundation of methodological and theoretical discussions in the discipline of Asian and Middle Eastern studies. Students will conduct research related to their thesis topic resulting in a detailed research proposal. Open only to Asian and Middle Eastern Studies seniors.

492 Thesis

Fall, Spring

Staff

2 credits

Senior majors will work with an adviser to record in a thesis a substantial original research project based on the research proposal completed in Asian and Middle Eastern Studies 490. Open only to Asian and Middle Eastern studies seniors.

498 Honors Thesis

Fall, Spring

Staff

2 credits

Designed to further independent research leading to the preparation of an undergraduate honors thesis in Asian and Middle Eastern studies. Required of and limited to senior honors candidates in Asian and Middle Eastern studies.

Prerequisite: admission to honors candidacy.