Asian and Middle Eastern Studies

Director, Brian Dott, History
Jakobina Arch, History
Arash Davari, Politics (on Sabbatical, Fall 2020)
Tarik Elseewi, Film and Media Studies
Krista Gulbransen, Art History and Visual Cultural Studies
Donghui He, Chinese
Hitomi Johnson, Japanese
Tarik Elseewi, Film and Media Studies
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Krista Gulbransen, Art History and Visual Cultural Studies
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 program offers three majors: Chinese, Japanese, and South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies.

For Chinese and Japanese majors, please refer to the Chinese and Japanese sections of this catalog.

AMES 105-106 Special Topics: Beginning Level
4 credits
The course explores selected topics in Asian and Middle Eastern studies at the beginning level. Any current offerings follow.

AMES 105,106 ST: Beginning Arabic
Fall, Spring
This course sequence offers an introduction to the Arabic language with a communicative approach that integrates the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students learn to read and write the Arabic alphabet, pronounce the sounds of the Arabic language, communicate in basic interactions, and acquire the fundamentals of Arabic grammar. Through a course emphasis on authentic materials in video, audio, and written formats, students explore cultural topics and social customs related to life in the Arabic-speaking world. While the primary focus of the course is Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), students will also be introduced to colloquial Arabic as the living language of native speakers. The primary language of instruction is Arabic, though no prior experience is assumed. Distribution area: humanities or cultural pluralism.

AMES 200 Special Topics: Summer Seminar in Chinese Studies
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. Any current offering follow.
AMES 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.

AMES 201 ST: Religion and Sacred Space in China
Summer 2021 2 credits
Yuan
This course will explore the proliferation of religious publics and sacred spaces in contemporary China. Combining lectures with student-focused discussions of readings from contemporary studies of Chinese religion, the course will examine the trajectories of diverse religious traditions in China, focusing on those most relevant and active in Yunnan Province — including Tibetan and Han Buddhism, Islam, Daoism, Christianity, and Chinese folk religion. Students will learn about the histories of these traditions and their contemporary iterations, as well as explore themes such globalization and localization, spiritual revival, and the relationship between the Chinese state and religious institutions. May be taken for credit toward the Religion major or minor. Prerequisite: Admission to Whitman Summer Studies in China Program and one academic year of coursework in Chinese. Distribution area: cultural pluralism or social sciences. Fee: to be announced in Fall 2020.

AMES 221 Silk Roads Field Course
Not offered 2020-21 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.

AMES 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.

AMES 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.

South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Major

The South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (SAME) major cultivates understanding of South Asian and Middle Eastern cultures and their place in the world through an integrated, multidisciplinary course of study. Students will attain broad familiarity with both regions and more focused understanding of one of them. The major also exposes students to a variety of disciplinary perspectives and approaches. Study abroad and/or language study is strongly encouraged when available. Guidance will be provided by an advisor chosen from among the faculty who regularly offer South Asia and Middle East-related courses.

Learning Outcomes

Students graduating with a major in South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies will demonstrate:
Major-specific areas of knowledge:
  ○ Depth of knowledge of some South Asian or Middle Eastern cultures
  ○ Knowledge of connections between regions of South Asia and the Middle East
  ○ Academic knowledge of South Asia or the Middle East that spans more than one disciplinary perspective

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 academic inquiry on a research question that demonstrates substantial knowledge of a South Asian and/or Middle Eastern area in consultation with program faculty.
  ○ Ability to orally discuss, defend, and articulate the greater significance of one’s own academic work to broader issues in relation to the regions of South Asia and the Middle East

Major Requirements:

- 36-50 credits
  ○ dependent upon use of single courses to fulfill multiple requirements
- Required Courses
  ○ SAME 492 or 498
  ○ nine credits total
- Other major requirements
  ○ At least 4 credits of Integrative Theory listed below
  ○ At least 8 credits in South Asia listed below
  ○ At least 8 credits in the Middle East listed below
  ○ At least 8 credits at the 300-level or 400-level, excluding integrative essay/honors thesis listed below
  ○ At least 12 credits in one of the following categories: Literary & Artistic Analysis, Humanistic Inquiry, and Social Inquiry; 4 credits in each of the other two categories listed below
- Other notes
  ○ No courses may be taken PDF
  ○ No more than 12 credits earned in off-campus programs or transfer credit as electives
  ○ If a student is double majoring, a maximum of 12 credits toward the South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies major may also be counted from another major programs.

Senior Requirements
- SAME 492 or 498
- Integrative Essay

Honors
- Students submit a Honors in Major Study Application to their department
- Students must submit a proposal for their thesis or project
  - Must be submitted within the first six weeks of the two-semester period in which student is eligible
- Accumulated at least 87 credits
- Completed two semesters of residency at Whitman.
- Cumulative GPA of at least 3.300 on all credits earned at Whitman College
- Major GPA of at least 3.500
- Complete a written thesis or research project prepared exclusively for the satisfaction of this program
- Earn a grade of at least A- on the honors thesis or project and the honors thesis course.
- Pass the senior assessment with distinction
- The department will submit the Honors applications to the Registrar’s Office of students pursuing Honors by the specified deadline
- The department submit “Senior Assessment/Major Study Certificate” to the Registrar’s Office no later the Reading Day
An acceptable digital copy of the Honors Thesis must be submitted to Penrose Library no later than Reading Day.

Integrative Theory:

- Art History 357 The Art of Colonial India
- English 376 Counterpoints: Edward Said's Work and Anti-Colonial Literature
- Film and Media Studies 340 Globalization, Culture, & Media
- Politics 312 Humanism between Europe and Its Others
- Politics 359 Politics of International Hierarchy
- Race and Ethnic Studies 305 Continental Philosophy, Postcolonial Theory, and the Palestinian Question
- Religion 160 Asian Religions and the Environment
- Religion 203 What Is Religion?
- Religion 330 Multireligious South Asia
- Religion/Film and Media Studies 307 Mediating Religions
- Religion 310 Hearing Islam

South Asia:

- Art History 243 Buddhist Art of Asia
- Art History 246 The Art of India
- Art History 356 The Taj Mahal and Beyond: The Art of Mughal India
- Art History 357 The Art of Colonial India
- Religion 221 Buddhists, Brahmans and Jains
- Religion 222 Hindu India
- Religion 250 Theravada Buddhism
- Religion 330 Multireligious South Asia
- Religion 347 The Buddha

Middle East:

- Film and Media Studies 345 The Middle East in Cinema & Media
- History 127 Islamic Civilizations I
- History 128 Islamic Civilizations II
- History 220 The Ottoman Empire
- History 235 The Arab Spring
- History 302 The Syrian War
- History 322 History of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict
- History 325 Sex in the Casbah: Sex, Gender, and Islam
- Politics 207 Islam and Politics
- Politics 208 Middle East Politics
- Race and Ethnic Studies 305 Continental Philosophy, Postcolonial Theory, and the Palestinian Question
- Religion 207 Islamic Traditions
- Religion 217 The Qur'an
- Religion 304 Muslim Bodies
- Religion 321 Islamic Mysticism

Literary & Artistic Analysis:

- Art History 243 Buddhist Art of Asia
- Art History 246 The Art of India
- Art History 356 *The Taj Mahal and Beyond: The Art of Mughal India*
- Art History 357 *The Art of Colonial India*
- Film and Media Studies 345 *The Middle East in Cinema & Media*
- Religion 217 *The Qur’an*
- Religion 310 *Hearing Islam*
- Religion 321 *Islamic Mysticism*
- Religion 347 *The Buddha*

**Humanistic Inquiry:**

- Race and Ethnic Studies 305 *Continental Philosophy, Postcolonial Theory, and the Palestinian Question*
- Religion 154 *Yoga, Meditation, and Mindfulness*
- Religion 160 *Asian Religions of the Environment*
- Religion 207 *Islamic Traditions*
- Religion 221 *Buddhists, Brahmins and Jains*
- Religion 222 *Hindu India*
- Religion 250 *Theravada Buddhism*
- Religion 304 *Muslim Bodies*
- Religion 307 *Mediating Religions*

**Social Inquiry:**

- History 127 *Islamic Civilizations I*
- History 128 *Islamic Civilizations II*
- History 220 *The Ottoman Empire*
- History 235 *The Arab Spring*
- History 302 *The Syrian War*
- History 322 *History of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict*
- History 325 *Sex in the Casbah: Sex, Gender, and Islam*
- Politics 207 *Islam and Politics*
- Politics 208 *Middle East Politics*

**SAME 492 Senior Integrative Essay**

*Fall, Spring*  
Staff  
2 credits

Senior majors will work with an advisor to complete an integrative essay in the area of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. Open only to senior majors in South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies.

**SAME 498 Senior Project, Honors**

*Fall, Spring*  
Staff  
2 credits

Completion of a senior honors thesis in South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. Students register for Asian and Middle Eastern Studies 492. The registration will be changed from Asian and Middle Eastern Studies 492 to 498 for those students who attain honors in South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. Open only to senior South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies majors.