



Asian American Studies Program

ANNUAL REPORT

Academic Year 2014



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Director's Note



“We are a program of study that draws upon the experiences of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans to explore critical questions about identity, representation, and power.”

Through a focus on Asian American communities, students learn about how racial categories are constructed, how groups are represented, and how power shapes social, political, and historical dynamics. The varied experiences of Asian Americans highlight a complex racial positioning that reflects both privilege and marginalization. As a predominantly foreign born group with members that hail from many different places, the experiences of Asian Americans also tell us much about how migration and transnationalism affect identity and belonging across diverse social, political and economic arenas.

Asian American Studies at the University of Maryland is distinct because it seeks to build strong ties to organizations and leaders in Washington, D.C. and the surrounding areas. As a scholar of Asian American politics, I believe that our proximity to the nation's political center allows for exceptional research and learning opportunities related to policy and politics. In addition, our faculty members are both excellent researchers and first-rate teachers and many have dedicated much of their professional careers to advancing Asian American Studies.

As faculty and staff, we prioritize connections with local and national organizational partners, community members, and student groups. Not only do we offer a vibrant program of study and support to University of Maryland students with our 15-credit minor and scholarship programs, we also hope to be a resource for the larger community through dissemination of faculty research, talks and symposia, and other opportunities for intellectual exchange and dialogue.

Janelle Wong, PhD
Director, Asian American Studies Program
Associate Professor, Department of American Studies

About the Asian American Studies Program

What is Asian American Studies?

The Asian American Studies Program (AAS) at the University of Maryland provides students with the opportunity to critically study the experiences of Asian Americans. Through an interdisciplinary curriculum and student-centered programming, students examine the histories, communities, and cultures of people of Asian-origin in the United States. AAS offers a 15-credit minor program for students who wish to develop a specialization in Asian American Studies alongside their degree pursuits.

Created in 2000, AAS is the result of student engagement and activism.

In 1995, UMD undergraduate students initiated a movement to create the Asian American Studies Program. Over the next three years, with the support of key staff, faculty, and community-stakeholders, students continued an active campaign for a new program through teach-ins, high school visits, media outreach, protests, sit-ins, and informational sessions at Stamp. In 1998, Provost Daniel Fallon endorsed a proposal to create an Asian American Studies Program and a steering committee to develop a curriculum and identify professors. In 2000, the University Senate approved the proposal and the AAS program was launched.

Mission

The mission of AAS is to foster excellence in research and education about Asian Americans in the United States. Asian American Studies focuses on the lives, history, and culture of Asians from a comparative point of view. Specifically, we study persons who have immigrant and ancestral ties to any region of Asia and the Pacific.

Though there is no single Asian American identity, community, or experience, we believe that Asian American Studies provides a special opportunity for inquiry based on collaboration across fields and disciplines of academic study.



AY 2014 By the Numbers

AAS Serves All Undergraduates

Asian Americans make-up a significant proportion of undergraduates and AAS attempts to engage all of these students through outreach and a relevant curriculum. At the same time, Asian American Studies has attracted a wide range of students of different racial backgrounds and majors.

- Asian Americans make-up an increasing proportion of UMD undergraduates.
 - 2011: 14.8% of students identify as Asian American
 - 2012: 14.9% of students identify as Asian American
 - 2013: 15.4% of students identify as Asian American
- More than 850 students took AAS courses in AY 2013-14.
- 50 students were enrolled as Asian American Studies Minors in Spring 2014.
- Asian American Studies Minors represent every school and college on campus in terms of major.
- 20% of AAS minors are non-Asian American.

AAS also offers robust academic and student-centered programming that highlights key themes in Asian American Studies, including literature and the arts, demographic change, race and politics, and leadership development. In Spring 2014:

- More than 50 students attended a forum on "Race in the Workplace: Asian Americans and Communication".
- More than 100 students attended an AAS sponsored event on Asian American spirituality, featuring Muslim, Hindu, Christian, Buddhist, and Catholic spiritual leaders.
- More than 75 students registered for the Spring 2014 AAS Maryland Leadership Institute.



AAS Minors Class of 2014: (left to right) back row: Christopher Kiang, Carrie Wolford, Peter Tarectecan, Andrew Aggabao, Regina Catipon, Derrick Do; front row: Rachael Lee, Leslie Pang, Christine Bustamante, Elisa Moon, Ellen Yu, Janelle Wong.



AAST furthers the strategic priorities of the University by:

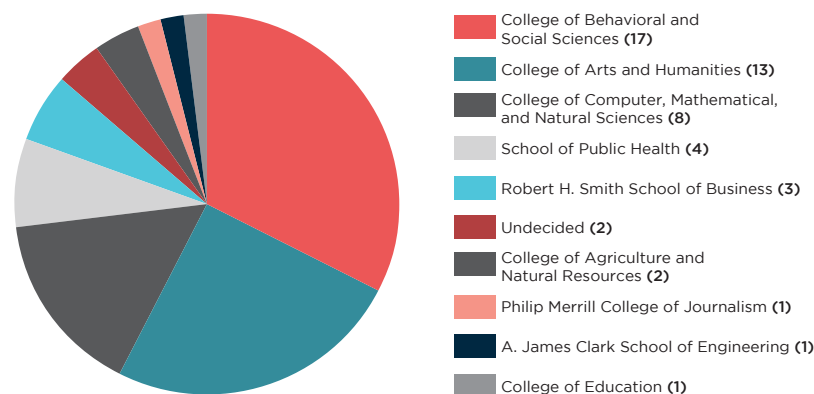
- 1) Consistently offering opportunities to students, including strong GE courses.
- 2) Offering a curriculum with global elements that emphasize the transnational and international connections between Asians in the United States and sending communities in Asia.
- 3) Strengthening connections with the larger community through joint-programs and active engagement.

For example, in Spring 2014, we partnered with the Washington, DC-based Conference on Asian Pacific American Leadership to offer the Maryland Leadership Institute to University of Maryland students. This leadership development program focused on Asian American public policy issues and brought more than 20 alumni and representatives from non-profit and government organizations to campus to inspire the next generation of UMD leaders.

A Program that Attracts Top Students

In Spring 2014, about 15% of UMD undergraduates were in the Honors College. About 18% of AAST minors that semester were working towards or had applied for the Honors citation.

College Distribution of AAST Minor Students' Majors (by number) [Total of 52, includes double-majors]



Donor Investment

AAST offers undergraduate students 4 scholarships, funded by community members, alumni and stakeholders. In FY2013, AAST named scholarships were supported by nearly \$80,000 in private donations

CONSISTENT COURSE OFFERINGS

AAST offers a wide range of classes across a range of disciplines in the field of Asian American Studies, averaging 14 courses per semester.

ROBUST ENROLLMENT

AAST was supported in part by a federal grant (AANAPSI) from the Department of Education from 2008-2013. The grant supported adjunct faculty and many course offerings. Even as the grant funding ended in September 2013, AAST enrollment remained strong.

AY 2012 (Fall 2011 – Spring 2012): 775 seats
 AY 2013 (Fall 2012 – Spring 2013): 887 seats
 AY 2014 (Fall 2013 – Spring 2014): 863 seats
 Average AAST class size: 30

OF AAST MINORS INCREASING

In the past two years, the number of AAST minors has doubled.
 AY 2012-13 – 22 Minors enrolled
 AY 2013-14 – 50 Minors enrolled (end of Spring 2014)*

OF AAST MINOR GRADUATES INCREASING

AY 2012: 15 AY 2013: 18 AY 2014: 21

Course Summary Data

Fall 2013 Course	Seats Issued	Seats offered
AAST 200/AMST 298C	33	40
AAST 201/HIST 221	77	80
AAST 233/ENGL 233	30	30
AAST 378	2	5
AAST 388	4	5
AAST 398D/AMST328J	31	35
AAST398E/AMST328V	39	40
AAST398G/AMST328L	22	30
AAST420/WMST420*	28	30
SOCY 424/AAST 424*	60	58
ENGL479P/AAST498C*	20	25
EDCP 418A/AAST 498I*	17	19
AAST498Q/AMST498P	15	30
AAST498T/AMST498J or GVPT368C	34	40
AAST498W/AMST498R*	8	30
Fall 2013 Semester Totals:	420	497



84.5%



89%

Spring 2014 Course	Seats Issued	Seats Offered
AAST 200/AMST 298C	39	40
AAST 201/HIST221	36	40
HIST 222/AAST 222*	75	80
AAST 233/ENGL 233*	21	30
AAST388	32	26
AAST 398F	8	10
AAST 398L	41	40
AAST398Q/AMST328W	29	30
SOCY 424/AAST 424*	34	29
AAST498A/EDCP498A*	13	18
AAST498B/HIST428K/PHIL428L/RELS419M	36	40
AAST498E/AMST418T/LGBT448E/WMST498C	27	30
AAST498K/AMST498A*	16	35
AAST 498M/AMST418N	20	20
AAST498N/AMST418X	16	30
Spring 2014 Semester Totals:	443	498

AY 2014 Totals: 863 Seats issued
 995 Seats offered

86.7%

Program Events



Asian Americans, Mobilization, and the Media Arts

How is political activism related to Asian American arts? Curtis Chin, a documentary filmmaker and co-founder of the Asian American Writers' Workshop and Asian Pacific Americans for Progress, and Christian Oh, the former executive

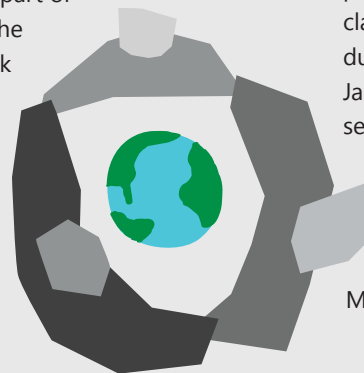
director and co-founder of Kollaboration DC, come together to share their experience in activism through media, film, and music.

Voices from the Canefields: Folksongs from Japanese Immigrant Workers in Hawai'i

Dr. Franklin Odo, author of *Voices from the Canefields: Folksongs from Japanese Immigrant Workers in Hawai'i*, discusses how Japanese workers in Hawai'i's plantations created their own folk songs—short stories from the souls of common people—in forms akin to haiku poetry. These songs describe the experiences of a migrant group caught in the global movements of capital, empire, and labor during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Asian American Music, Asian American Movement

In 1973, together with Chris Iijima and Charlie Chin, guest speaker Nobuko Miyamoto created the first album of Asian American music, "A Grain of Sand," now part of the Smithsonian Institution collection. The album has been hailed as the soundtrack of the Asian American Movement. Since 1978, Miyamoto has been Artistic Director of Great Leap, Inc., a non-profit arts organization which uses the arts to promote deeper understanding between the diverse cultures of America.



Global Families, New Identities: A Panel on Transracial & Transnational Adoption

This discussion addresses adoption in terms of international relations and our developing global society; adoption as progressive multiculturalism vs. new-age imperialism; the adoptee experience, identity crisis, and loss of culture throughout the Korean diaspora; and local community organizing and support networks for adult adoptees. Featured speakers: Catherine Ceniza Choy, Professor and Department Chair of Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Berkeley; Spencer Stevens, Secretary and Maryland Regional Director of Adoption Links DC; and Jennifer Kwon Dobbs, poet and Assistant Professor of English at St. Olaf College.

Book Celebration and Honoring Reception for Gao Xingjian

This event celebrates a collaboration between AAST affiliate faculty Dr. Jason Kuo (Department of Art History) and artist Gao Xingjian. Kuo is the author of a new catalog, "The Inner Landscape: Paintings of Gao Xingjian". Gao Xingjian is the first and only Chinese winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature, and is acclaimed as an artistic force of nature who has pushed the boundaries of traditional theater, pose, and painting with his experimental and groundbreaking work.

Piano Prestige: Race, Class, and the Japanese American Home

AAST Adjunct Professor Dr. Chrissy Lau is a historian working on Race, Domesticity, and Culture in the United States during the early 20th Century. Her research examines how American cultural standards give way to infamous elements of the "Asian" model minority family, such as the "Tiger Mother" and the dutiful daughter. Her current book project examines the rise of the Japanese American middle class from the early 1900s to the period of incarceration during World War II. In particular, she looks at how Japanese American families navigated anti-immigrant sentiment, largely based upon the American standard of living, by cultivating a middle-class culture of propriety. Lau received her PhD in History from University of California, Santa Barbara in 2013. She teaches Asian American History at the University of Maryland, College Park.

Race in the Workplace: Asian Americans & Communication

This workshop and panel presentation is a joint program between Asian American Studies and ASCEND, an Asian American interest organization in the Smith School of Business. It provides a critical perspective on Asian American identity and workplace-related issues. The event features Equal Employment Opportunity Commissioner (EEOC) Jenny Yang and other professionals in a panel discussion addressing workplace discrimination around communication issues. AAST Scholarship Committee member Tuan Nguyen will moderate the event.

Film Screening - Dalip Singh Saund: His Life, His Legacy

AAST and MICA present a film screening of *Dalip Singh Saund: His Life, His Legacy*. The film tells the inspiring story of an ethical and passionate man who rose above prejudice and racism to serve as the first Asian American, the first Indian and the first Sikh elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. The filmmaker, Samantha Cheng, will introduce the film and discuss the project's significance to the Asian American community.

Spiritual Explorations: Explore Asian American Spirituality and Religions

This student-driven event focuses on how Asian American faith traditions matter for contemporary political and social issues. The event will feature Muslim, Hindu, Christian, Buddhist, and Catholic spiritual leaders and is co-sponsored by five Asian American religious student organizations. Participants will engage in small-group discussions, facilitated by practitioners and faculty, about interfaith relationships, finding joy and happiness, religion and violence, spirituality and the environment, and other topics.



AY 2014 Program Highlights

Student-Centered Programs with Student Organization Partners

Program 1:

Race in the Workplace: Asian Americans and Communication

What: AAST partnered with ASCEND (formerly the Asian Business Student Association) of the Smith School of Business on an event aimed at providing a critical perspective on Asian American identity and workplace-related issues, speakers shared real-world communication strategies with students.

Format: Panel presentation and public speaking workshop, including Jenny Yang, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (Panelist), Xiaohui Gao, Visiting Assistant Professor, UMD Smith School of Business (Panelist), Greg Cendana, Executive Director of the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA), AFL-CIO, Institute for Asian Pacific American Leadership & Advancement, & Communications Specialist (Panelist). Moderated by Tuan Nguyen, UMD Alum (BSOS-Economics).



Student Participation and Benefit:

50 students participated, many from ASCEND, a business-oriented Asian American student organization. Many ASCEND members were previously unfamiliar with the Asian American Studies Program. Students were introduced to issues facing Asian Americans in the workplace, including stereotyping and accent discrimination. They were also offered real-world tips on effective communication strategies.

Assessment: ASCEND student leaders were uniformly positive about the event and eager to partner in the future. Non-Asian American students reported a new understanding of the commonality of experiencing workplace discrimination across groups of color.

Program 2:

Spiritual Explorations: Explore Asian American Spirituality and Religions

What: AAST partnered with five student organizations and two student affairs units (MICA's Asian Pacific American Student Outreach Coordinator and Interfaith Outreach Coordinator) to create an event around Asian American spiritualities and religions.

Format: Student leaders representing campus Catholic, Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, and Christian organizations developed a working group to design an interactive "round robin" style event that centered on 8 rotating discussion groups. Each group included students, spiritual leaders, and academics who study Asian American religions. Topics included "Asian American spirituality and the environment," "Asian American spirituality and violence" as well as philosophy and family relations.

Student Participation and Benefit: More than 100 students, staff and faculty participated in roundtable discussions that maximized student engagement and discussion between students, spiritual leaders, and academics.

Assessment: In a follow-up survey, participants remarked that they enjoyed the interactive format and appreciated a short presentation by faculty on "Why I study Asian American religions."



Maryland Leadership Institute 2014



Creating the next generation of leaders through an AAST-Student Affairs Partnership

What: A jointly led program by AAST Director, Janelle Wong, and UMD Student Affairs staff member, Jude Paul Dizon. This leadership development program engaged students interested in issues directly affecting Asian American communities provided a substantive academic introduction to immigration policy, mental health issues, and economic inequality in the Asian American community.

Maryland Leadership Institute 2014

Format: Five interactive sessions with working professionals with expertise on critical issues facing Asian Americans and the larger population.

Assessment: Students completed a survey after each session. Overwhelmingly positive survey results showed students valued the substantive overview of policy topics, speakers sharing personal stories and providing career advice, direct interaction with speakers and networking opportunities.

Student Participation and Benefit: About 40 students regularly attended each session. Student development was accomplished through 1) creation of community at regular sessions and through social media sites and 2) meaningful engagement with critical political and social issues. In addition to the student-centered goals above, the program has the potential to engage alumni and donors interested in developing meaningful relationships with the student attendees.



AAST Scholarship Program

This year, the Asian American Studies Program offered scholarships to 7 exceptional students who demonstrated a commitment to service and leadership to the Asian American community.

We are pleased to announce a new scholarship. The Guerzon Tablang-Jimenez Endowed Scholarship in Asian American Studies and Cultures is a need-based scholarship established by Dr. and Mr. Jimenez and their family.

2014-2015 Scholarship Recipients

Major General Antonio Taguba Profiles in Courage and Leadership Scholarship



This year's recipients of the General Taguba Scholarship are **Ryan Scott '15** (Kinesiology Major, Pre-Physicians Assistant Minor)

and **Mokhyun Kim '15** (Criminology Major). This scholarship recognizes undergraduates who demonstrate scholarship and outstanding leadership and undergraduates enrolled in Army or Air Force ROTC seeking a degree at the University of Maryland College Park, thereby nurturing them to consider a future in federal public services, both civilian and military.



"I am sincerely honored to receive this special award, especially from an extremely successful Asian American. By receiving this award, I will be inspired to 'reach for the stars' and know anything is possible."

-Mokhyun Kim

Timothy J Ng Scholarship in Asian American Studies



This scholarship encourages undergraduates who demonstrate strength in academics and leadership, especially where such achievement leads to improvement in the lives of Asian Americans. This year, **Joel Vazquez '16** (American Studies, Government & Politics Major, Spanish and Public Leadership Minor) and **Karie (Yee) Cheung '16** (Community Health Major, Human Development Minor) were named recipients.



Linh-Thong Huu Nguyen Memorial Scholarship



The Linh-Thong "Tone" Nguyen Memorial Scholarship was established in 2008 by Tone's brother and fellow Terp, Tuan Nguyen, to support undergraduates who are enrolled in the Asian American Studies Minor Program and demonstrate consistent academic achievement in their studies. This year's recipients are **Sharvani Naik '15** (Physiology & Neurobiology Major, Asian American Studies Minor) and **Andrew Mayton '15** (English Major, Asian American Studies Minor).



"The Asian American Studies minor has provided me with a home away from home—a tight-knit community in which to feel safe and to develop knowledge. It has afforded many friendships, mentorships, connections, and even internships in the Maryland and DC Asian American community."

-Andrew Mayton

Philip Vera Cruz Outstanding Community Service Scholarship



Michelle Nguyen '17 (Physiology & Neurobiology Major) is this year's recipient of the Philip Vera Cruz Scholarship. Vera Cruz was a Filipino American labor leader, farmworker, and leader in the Asian American civil rights movement. This scholarship was established in 2008 to support an undergraduate enrolled in Asian American Studies who personifies the vital relationship between a college education and the human condition through service to the under-served and under-represented.

Looking to the Future: What's new for 2014-15?

Asian-Latino Intersections

AAST is the recipient of a 2014-15 UMD-Smithsonian Seed Grant (\$50,000 shared between the institutions) for its curriculum development project on Asian-Latino Intersections. During the 2014-2015 academic year, the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center and University of Maryland Asian American Studies Program will work with University of Maryland students to pilot Smithsonian digital assets as innovative classroom learning tools specifically focusing on cross-cultural connections and collisions. This project will build on the Smithsonian Asian-Latino Project (SALP), an existing Smithsonian initiative that begins the necessary work of seeing cultures in complex intersection, exploring the many points of crossing, historical and contemporary, between the two fastest growing populations in the U.S., Asian Americans and Latinos. This proposed collaboration, led by AAST adjunct instructor, Dr. Lawrence-Minh Davis, will bring SALP into University of Maryland classrooms, a crucial developmental step for SALP, an important means of expanding classroom resources, teaching approaches, and student cultural competencies at the University of Maryland, and a necessary foray into truly intersectional education. Seed funding from the grant will enable the first prototype of an Asian-Latino Education Lab, a rich, portable learning experience made up of a range of digital assets and curricular materials. Smithsonian and University of Maryland researchers will collaborate to set the foundations of the Asian-Latino Education Lab, soliciting written, visual, audio, and video materials from leading artists, filmmakers, writers, and scholars, then working together to shape these materials into a cohesive and focused learning experience.

Undocumented Terp Dreamer Initiative

AAST will partner with the Office of Multicultural Involvement and Community Advocacy to create educational programming around the issue of undocumented students and their experiences. More than 100,000 Asian American young people in the United States are eligible for the Obama Administration's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) initiative for unauthorized youth who were brought to the United States as children. More generally, one out of every eight Asian immigrants in the United States is undocumented. AAST programming will be led by Asian American Studies students who are DACA beneficiaries. Students will organize events to provide information about how Asian American and other undocumented immigrant students navigate higher education. They will collaborate with staff, faculty, and other students to raise awareness of current immigration policies and the challenges undocumented immigrant youth face in terms of education.



SUPPORT



a new generation of
AAST students!

- 1** Enhance student learning experiences through the AAST distinguished lectureship series.
 - 2** Enrich student success and leadership through AAST internship and research-fellow programs.
 - 3** Support student connections with local community leaders by helping us raise funds for a Community-Leader-in-Residence program.
- 

MAKE A DONATION

to fuel the empowerment.

<http://ter.ps/give2aast>

