



September 14, 2023

Dear Colleagues,

The Asian American Studies committee, with the support of the Center for Ethnic Studies, proposes the development of a Graduate Interdisciplinary Specialization (GIS) in Asian American Studies at Ohio State alongside the interdisciplinary undergraduate minor in Asian American Studies instituted in 1997.

The AAS GIS will be overseen and administered by the Center for Ethnic Studies and implemented in AU2024/SP2025; the mode of delivery will be primarily in person, with hybrid and online courses also permitted. The Center for Ethnic Studies has received letters of support for an Asian American Studies GIS from Departments of History of Art, East Asian Languages and Literature, Comparative Studies, and History.

The Center for Ethnic Studies hopes to gradually develop into an interdisciplinary, standalone department. The expansion of GIS offerings by the Center is important to this process. In addition to the Asian American Studies program, the Center for Ethnic Studies is home to the Latinx Studies program and the American Indian Studies program. Each of these programs already have established undergraduate minors and the addition of a Latinx Studies GIS in 2009 (with a revision in 2015/2016) is representative of the Center for Ethnic Studies' goal of introducing a Graduate Interdisciplinary Specialization for each Center program.

Sincerely,

Namiko Kunimoto  
Director, Center For Ethnic Studies  
Associate Professor, Department of History of Art  
The Ohio State University

## **Proposal for Developing a Graduate Interdisciplinary Specialization (GIS) in Asian American Studies**

**Title: GIS in Asian American Studies, overseen by the Center for Ethnic Studies (implementation AU2024)**

Mode of Delivery: primarily in person, with hybrid and online courses also permitted

### **What is Asian American Studies?**

Asian American Studies (AAS) is an interdisciplinary and comparative field that focuses on the *histories, experiences, cultures, and significance* of people of Asian and Pacific Islander descent living in the United States. The field was first founded in 1969 at San Francisco State College and the University of California, Berkeley, as part of an ethnic studies movement. Along with Black Studies, American Indian Studies, and Chicano Studies, AAS sought to promote recognition and understanding of the racial and cultural diversity of American society. Over the course of the last 30 years or so, AAS has emerged at leading educational institutions throughout the country (with strong programs in such Big-10 schools like the University of Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin). The field also has evolved in its methodological approach and content.

The various components of the term “Asian American Studies” offer insight into the origins and development of the field.

The term Asian refers to people who trace their ancestry to various parts of Asia, including East Asia, South Asia, and Southeast Asia, as well as the Pacific Islands. Scholars in Asian American Studies have even begun exploring how our field might include people whose cultural origins stem from West Asia (or “The Middle East”). Because of the wide range of countries and cultures encompassed within this category, one of the central issues within Asian American Studies is the concept of pan-ethnicity. In other words, on what basis should various peoples of Asian ancestry be considered as being members of the same group?

The word American literally and conceptually distinguishes Asian American Studies from Asian Studies. The founders of Asian American Studies argued that the experiences, cultures, and histories of Asians living in the United States were fundamentally distinct from Asians inhabiting their homelands. In fact, Asian Americans constituted a racialized minority, whose experiences were more comparable with African Americans, Chicanos, and American Indians. More recent scholars in AAS acknowledge the importance of racialization within the American context, but are increasingly interested in the transnational connections between people of Asian ancestry in the United States with their so-called "homelands" as well as with diasporic Asian communities globally. Furthermore, more recent scholarship in AAS complicates the notion of racialization by emphasizing comparative and intersectional analyses of a variety of categories of difference, including race, migration, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, and citizenship.

The word Studies highlights the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary nature of Asian American Studies. By taking courses in this field, students learn to document and interpret the historical and contemporary experiences, cultural constructions, and social significance of Asian/Pacific Americans from the perspectives of different disciplines representing the arts, humanities, social and behavioral sciences, education, business, law, and the health-related professions.

### Background

The faculty, staff, and graduate students of the Asian American Studies committee propose to add a Graduate Interdisciplinary Specialization (GIS) in Asian American Studies to the interdisciplinary undergraduate minor in Asian American Studies that was instituted at The Ohio State University in 1997. The proposal is supported in part by a Global Arts and Humanities Discovery Theme Grant awarded in 2023 called "Building Inclusivity Across and Beyond the Ohio State Community."

The undergraduate minor in Asian American Studies (AAS), a program that is part of an Ethnic Studies initiative in the Colleges of the Arts and Sciences, is already a well-established interdisciplinary program at Ohio State. Over the last six years, the Department of Comparative Studies, the College of Arts and Sciences and its Division of Arts and Humanities, and the College of Education at OSU have demonstrated a serious commitment to developing Asian American Studies. See [our website](#) for more.

Many undergraduate students have chosen AAS as their minor since its inception; frequently, students take some of the core requirements even if they don't declare a minor. In general, student feedback for the minor has been very positive, and based on the interest shown by graduate students on courses focused on Asian American Studies issues as part of their research program, we project that an equal, if not greater, number of graduate students would be interested in pursuing an interdisciplinary specialization in AAS as part of their graduate course work. Faculty departures over the last decade have been an obstacle in expanding AAS as of late, but considering that there will be three searches in the Arts and Sciences for new faculty who will have a 50% teaching appointment in Asian American Studies, we will now have new faculty to not only sufficiently staff undergraduate offerings but also expand into graduate curriculum and meet the interests of these students.

A GIS in Asian American Studies would reward graduate students in the field, who have been central in building the program here at Ohio State, and recognize the growth and impact of AAS itself. Along with administering the undergraduate interdisciplinary minor in Asian American Studies, scholars in this program have taken a lead role in sponsoring academic conferences, lectures, and events for OSU, as well as for local, state, and regional communities. Graduate students were key organizers and participants of many of these events. In addition, and as part of an ongoing speaker's series starting in 2004 and ongoing today, Asian American Studies has organized public lectures and classroom teach-ins from some of the most prestigious scholars in the field, including Nitasha Sharma, Anne Anlin Cheng, and community leaders from organizations such as Ohio Progressive Asian Women's Leadership (OPAWL) and Asian American Community Services. Asian American Studies at Ohio State University is visible nationwide, marking our

institution as pursuing parity with peer institutions, if not a leading site, of interdisciplinary research and teaching on race and ethnicity and on the intersections of gender, sexuality, and class in the history and cultural production of Asian American communities in the US. We believe ongoing support and growth of the program in AAS will allow us to attract even more scholars working in the field.

### Participating Graduate Programs and the Development Committee

The graduate programs involved in this specialization are essentially the same that are involved in the undergraduate minor. Specific departments, offering courses that will be included in the GIS, are listed below in the curriculum section. In addition, AAS has administrative support of Nick Spitulski (finance and curriculum), Megan Moriarty (marketing/communications), and Connor Behm (events) via the Humanities Institute as well as a Graduate Research Associate, Asia Adomanis. We are currently in talks with the administration to further grow the Center for Ethnic Studies into an interdisciplinary, standalone center.

The Asian American Studies committee includes:

- Pranav Jani, Director, Asian American Studies Program, and Associate Professor, Department of English
- Namiko Kunimoto, Director, Center for Ethnic Studies, and Associate Professor, Department of History of Art
- Amna Akbar, Associate Professor, Department of Law
- Vera Brunner-Sung, Associate Professor (Film/Video), Department of Theatre
- Jian Chen, Associate Professor, Department of Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies
- Gina Osterloh, Associate Professor, Department of Art
- Martin Joseph Ponce, Associate Professor, Department of English
- Mytheli Sreenivas, Associate Professor, Departments of History and Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies
- Binaya Subedi, Associate Professor, Department of Comparative Studies (Newark).

## Description of the Graduate Interdisciplinary Specialization in Asian American Studies and an Overview of the Field

### Rationale

The specialization provides an opportunity for interdisciplinary research to understand the rich and complex layers--political, social, cultural, and historical forces--that shape and inform Asian American peoples in the US and that they in turn shape in their political, educational, cultural, and historical struggle and participation.

The GIS would enable students to pursue an academic concentration in the rapidly growing field of Asian American Studies (AAS). Since its inception in the late 1960s, AAS has developed into a vitally important part of higher education, focusing primarily on the histories, cultures, and communities of peoples of Asian descent in the United States. Interdisciplinary by nature, AAS is conducted within and draws upon such areas of study as history, literary studies, sociology, political science, anthropology, and the arts. Students will have the unique opportunity to explore a range of questions and issues—such as immigration and racialization, ethnic and cultural identity formation, gender and sexuality, war and imperialism, transnational social linkages, and cross-cultural expressive practices—that are central to a critical understanding of our contemporary world.

Issues of multiculturalism, racial and ethnic diversity, and new social institutions continue to be at the forefront of US and global concerns/policies. A study of issues related to identity, culture, ethnicity, and community formation reveals the history, acculturation, politicization, diversity, and socioeconomic conditions of people and national and global society. The specialization in AAS represents a unique and systematic way to study the status, conditions, and opportunities of ethno-linguistic minorities and emerging populations in the US, as well as the cultural production (art, literature, music, popular culture) of these populations. Research and courses in AAS explore Asian Americans in the US and all that these communities spin out of themselves (culture, politics, for instance) in their shaping of society. AAS courses also seek to establish a hemispheric understanding of

Asian Americans and countries of ancestry, and therefore actively build curricula that promote research across borders.

### **Purposes**

The GIS in AA Studies is designed to complement a graduate student's coursework and research interests. A student who completes a GIS in AAS will have a heightened understanding of the following:

- (1) The histories and contributions of different diverse racial and cultural sub-groups of Asian Americans.
- (2) The relationships among these groups and between non-Asian American populations.
- (3) Theoretical perspectives that explain and complicate the construction and reconstruction of race, ethnicity, and other cultural identifications, particularly sexual orientation, class, and gender, over time.
- (4) Their own identities and roles in society.
- (5) Historical and contemporary research and research methodologies associated with Asian American Studies

Developing a graduate specialization will benefit the OSU intellectual community in multiple ways:

1. A specialization will prepare OSU graduate students to embark on independent research projects that incorporate Asian American subjects and/or utilize AAS methodologies.
2. A specialization will prepare OSU graduate students to teach AAS courses or to incorporate AAS topics into other courses, especially those that explore topics related to race and ethnicity.
3. The process of proposing a graduate specialization will stimulate the development of graduate courses both in AAS and in related fields at OSU.
4. The opportunity to offer coherent research and teaching training in AAS will enhance OSU's institutional standing. The university becomes a *generative* site that attracts and trains innovative scholars and teachers in AAS.

In addition, Ohio State graduates from this program will be well-positioned in a job market that is increasingly attuned to hiring BIPOC faculty.

The Asian American Studies program currently benefits from Graduate Research/Travel Awards offered by the Center to support student research and professionalization. Creating a graduate specialization will build upon this research/travel grant initiative to foster a new generation of Asian American Studies scholars among OSU graduate students.

## PROPOSED CURRICULUM

Requirements: *The AAS GIS will require 12 hours of graduate-level coursework. These hours must include at least three different courses, at least one of which must be taught by a faculty member affiliated with Asian American Studies. A GIS involves two or more graduate programs outside the student's major graduate program. At least 9 hours must be from outside the home graduate program but may include cross-listed courses. Cross-listed courses that comprise this 9 hours minimum must be outside the home department. (For example, a grad student in the Department of Comparative Studies would want to enroll in the History section of a course cross-listed between Comp Studies and History counting for GIS credit.)*

Asian American Studies and Asian Studies: *While GIS candidates may take relevant classes in Asian Studies (e.g., Chinese Studies or South Asian Studies), they are encouraged to (1) take a majority of their classes in US Ethnic or Asian American Studies and/or (2) pursue transnational projects in Asian Studies classes that include the Asian diaspora in the US.*

Approval: *When considering final approval for the GIS certificate in Asian American Studies, the Program Director of Asian American Studies (or the Director of the Center for Ethnic Studies) will look for completion of requirements and balance between Asian American and Asian Studies classes. We encourage candidates to meet with the Program Director early in the process to talk through potential classes and directions in their program of study.*



**Asian American Studies GIS Courses:**

*All courses are 3 credit hours unless noted otherwise.*

Chinese 5400 Performance Traditions of China

Chinese 5474 Chinese Opera

Chinese 6451 History of Chinese Literature I

Chinese 6452 History of Chinese Literature II

Chinese 6453 Classical Chinese Literature in Modern China

Chinese 7463 Modern Chinese Fiction

Chinese 7466 Lu Xun

Chinese 7467 Taiwan Literature

Chinese 7470 Ethnic Literature and Culture in China

Chinese 7617 Analysis of Contemporary Chinese Media

Comparative Studies 5240 Race and Public Policy in the United States

Comparative Studies 7320 Theorizing Race and Ethnicity

Comparative Studies 7360 Theorizing Culture

EALL 5383 Scripts of East Asia

EALL 5475 Women Writers, Culture and Society in East Asia

EALL 7897 Introduction to Graduate-level East Asian Studies (1 credit hour)

English 6760 Introduction to Postcolonial Studies (when taught by Pranav Jani)

English 6758 Introduction to Ethnic Studies (when taught by Pranav Jani or Joe Ponce)

English 7858 Seminar in US Ethnic Literature and Culture (when taught by Pranav Jani or Joe Ponce)

English 7864 Seminar in Postcolonial/Transnational Literatures (when taught by Pranav Jani)

History of Art 8821 Studies in Japanese Art (when taught by Namiko Kunimoto)  
(4 credit hours)

History of Art 8811 Studies in Chinese Art (4 credit hours)

History 7401 East Asia and the Modern/Contemporary World

History 7405 Introduction to Graduate-level East Asian Studies (1 credit hour)

History 7410 Studies in Pre-Modern Chinese History (1-6 credit hours)

History 7411 Studies in Modern and/or Contemporary Chinese History (1-6 credit hours)

History 7425 Studies in Japanese History

History 7600 Studies in the History of Women and Gender (1-6 credit hours)

History 8400 Seminar in East Asian History (4 credit hours)

Japanese 5400 Performance Traditions of Japan

Japanese 7453 Studies in Japanese Drama

Korean 5256 Interdisciplinary Topics in Korean Politics and Society

Korean 5400 Performance Traditions of Korea

Korean 5405 Korean Dramatic Tradition

Korean 5455 Interdisciplinary Topics in Korean Art, Music, Film, and Theatre

NESA 7501 Narratives of Origin: The Islamic Tradition

Philosophy 5440 Philosophical Perspectives on Race, Education & Citizenship

Philosophy 8192 Seminar in East Asian Philosophy (1-4 credit hours)

# Letters of Support from Department Chairs

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Monday, February 13, 2023 at 13:17:11 Eastern Standard Time

**Subject:** Re: Support for AAS GIS proposal  
**Date:** Friday, February 3, 2023 at 1:29:52 PM Eastern Standard Time  
**From:** Whittington, Karl  
**To:** Hussein, Dareen

Hi Dareen,  
Thank you for sharing the proposal for the Asian American Studies GIS. The proposal has my full support, and I am very happy for the two History of Art courses listed in the proposal to be included in the proposed curriculum. If you have any questions, or need a more formal letter of support from me, please just let me know.  
Karl

Dr. Karl Whittington (he/him)  
Associate Professor and Department Chair  
Department of History of Art  
201B Pomerene Hall  
The Ohio State University  
[whittington.78@osu.edu](mailto:whittington.78@osu.edu)  
<https://history-of-art.osu.edu/people/whittington.78>

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Monday, February 13, 2023 at 13:16:19 Eastern Standard Time

**Subject:** Re: Support for AAS GIS proposal  
**Date:** Monday, February 6, 2023 at 12:27:18 PM Eastern Standard Time  
**From:** Bender, Mark  
**To:** Hussein, Dareen

Dear Dareen, Thank you for including so many DEALL courses in the prospectus. I believe the initiative of an Asian American GIS is timely and much needed at OSU. Please let me know if there are any other ways DEALL can support the initiative.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Bender

Mark Bender  
Professor of Chinese Literature and Folklore  
Chair, Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures  
The Ohio State University  
1775 College Road S, Hagerly Hall 398  
Columbus, OH 43210  
USA  
[bender.4@osu.edu](mailto:bender.4@osu.edu)  
614-688-5737

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Monday, February 13, 2023 at 13:16:50 Eastern Standard Time

**Subject:** Re: Support for AAS GIS proposal  
**Date:** Friday, February 3, 2023 at 10:29:01 PM Eastern Standard Time  
**From:** Armstrong, Philip  
**To:** Hussein, Dareen

To whom it may concern  
Comparative Studies offers its enthusiastic support of the initiative to establish a GIS in Asian American Studies.  
Philip Armstrong  
Professor and Chair, Comparative Studies



February 7, 2023

Dear Colleagues,

It is my pleasure to endorse the addition of select History courses to the proposal for developing a Graduate Interdisciplinary Specialization in Asian American Studies.

AAS is a rapidly growing field within the College of Arts and Sciences, evidenced by the positive feedback and growing number of students taking on AAS as a minor, and the three searches for new faculty who will have a 50% teaching appointment in AAS. In our AAS themed courses, we are committed to providing graduate students with the knowledge and skills to understand the racial and cultural diversity of American society. The inclusion of our courses will actively build curricula that will promote research across borders, and will show serious commitment to continue developing Asian American Studies. Based on the well thought out and detailed proposal, there is good reason for confidence that the Asian American Studies GIS will strengthen OSU's institutional standing and reflect well on the College of Arts and Sciences.

I hope the committee can support this important GIS proposal. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Scott Levi  
Professor and Chair  
levi.18@osu.edu

# **Graduate Interdisciplinary Specialization in Asian American Studies Advising Sheet**

## PROGRAM RATIONALE

The specialization provides an opportunity for interdisciplinary research to understand the rich and complex layers – political, social, cultural, and historical forces – that shape and inform Asian American peoples in the US and that they in turn shape in their political, educational, cultural, and historical struggle and participation.

The GIS would enable students to pursue an academic concentration in the rapidly growing field of Asian American Studies (AAS). Since its inception in the late 1960s, AAS has developed into a vitally important part of higher education, focusing primarily on the histories, cultures, and communities of peoples of Asian descent in the United States. Interdisciplinary by nature, AAS is conducted within and draws upon such areas of study as history, literary studies, sociology, political science, anthropology, and the arts. Students will have the unique opportunity to explore a range of questions and issues – such as immigration and racialization, ethnic and cultural identity formation, gender and sexuality, war and imperialism, transnational social linkages, and cross-cultural expressive practices – that are central to a critical understanding of our contemporary world.

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## PURPOSES

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3. The process of proposing a graduate specialization will stimulate the development of graduate courses both in AAS and in related fields at OSU.
4. The opportunity to offer coherent research and teaching training in AAS will enhance OSU's institutional standing. The university becomes a *generative* site that attracts and trains innovative scholars and teachers in AAS.

## CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

- The AAS GIS will require 12 hours of graduate-level coursework. These hours must include at least three different courses, at least one of which must be taught by a faculty member affiliated with Asian American Studies.
- See the Advising Worksheet and list of graduate courses provided at the bottom of this document for courses that fulfill these requirements.

## SPECIALIZATION GUIDELINES

- A GIS involves two or more graduate programs outside the student's major graduate program. At least 9 hours must be from outside the home graduate program but may include cross-listed courses. Cross-listed courses that comprise this 9 hours minimum must be outside the home department. (For example, a graduate student in the Department of Comparative Studies would want to enroll in the History section of a course cross-listed between Comparative Studies and History to for the course to count for the GIS).

- While GIS candidates may take relevant classes in Asian Studies (e.g., Chinese Studies or South Asian Studies), they are encouraged to (1) take a majority of their classes in US Ethnic or Asian American Studies and/or (2) pursue transnational projects in Asian Studies classes that include the Asian diaspora in the US.
- When considering final approval for the GIS certificate in Asian American Studies, the Program Director of Asian American Studies (or the Director of the Center for Ethnic Studies) will look for completion of requirements and balance between Asian American and Asian Studies classes. We encourage candidates to meet with the Program Director early in the process to talk through potential classes and directions in their program of study.
- Apply for the Specialization through OSU Graduate School following the instructions found at this address: <https://gradsch.osu.edu/future-students/find-your-program/graduate-minors-interdisciplinary-specializations-and-graduate-0>.
- When you have completed the specialization, you must complete the GIS transcript designation form in GRADFORMS for final review. Once reviewed and approved by the GIS program and the Graduate School, the designation will be posted to the student's academic record. See the above link for more information.

## PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

**Asian American Studies program director:** Pranav Jani, Associate Professor, Department of English, 567 Denney Hall, 164 Annie & John Glenn Avenue, Columbus, OH 43210, [jani.4@osu.edu](mailto:jani.4@osu.edu)

**Center for Ethnic Studies program director:** Namiko Kunimoto, Associate Professor, Department of History of Art, 212 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Ave, Columbus, OH 43210, [kunimoto.3@osu.edu](mailto:kunimoto.3@osu.edu)

**Humanities Institute administrative support:**

- Nick Spitulski (finance and curriculum), 454 Hagerty Hall, 1775 S College Rd Columbus, OH 43210, [spitulski.1@osu.edu](mailto:spitulski.1@osu.edu)

# Graduate Interdisciplinary Specialization in Asian American Studies Advising Worksheet

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Name:</b>                     |  |
| <b>Primary graduate program:</b> |  |

| Course number and name                                   | Course listing | Semester completed |
|--|----------------|--------------------|
| Course 1 –   |                |                    |
| Course 2 –   |                |                    |
| Course 3 –   |                |                    |
| Additional coursework needed to meet credit requirements |                |                    |

Courses should be selected from the list below.  
*All courses are 3 credit hours unless noted otherwise.*

- Chinese 5400: Performance Traditions of China
- Chinese 5474: Chinese Opera
- Chinese 6451: History of Chinese Literature I
- Chinese 6452: History of Chinese Literature II
- Chinese 6453: Classical Chinese Literature in Modern China
- Chinese 7463: Modern Chinese Fiction
- Chinese 7466: Lu Xun
- Chinese 7467: Taiwan Literature
- Chinese 7470: Ethnic Literature and Culture in China
- Chinese 7617: Analysis of Contemporary Chinese Media



Comparative Studies 5240: Race and Public Policy in the United States  
Comparative Studies 7320: Theorizing Race and Ethnicity  
Comparative Studies 7360: Theorizing Culture

EALL 5383: Scripts of East Asia  
EALL 5475: Women Writers, Culture and Society in East Asia  
EALL 7897: Introduction to Graduate-level East Asian Studies (1 credit hour)

English 6760: Introduction to Postcolonial Studies (when taught by Pranav Jani)  
English 6758: Introduction to Ethnic Studies (when taught by Pranav Jani or Joe Ponce)  
English 7858: Seminar in US Ethnic Literature and Culture (when taught by Pranav Jani or Joe Ponce)  
English 7864: Seminar in Postcolonial/Transnational Literatures (when taught by Pranav Jani)

History of Art 8821: Studies in Japanese Art (when taught by Namiko Kunimoto)  
(4 credit hours)  
History of Art 8811: Studies in Chinese Art (4 credit hours)

History 7401: East Asia and the Modern/Contemporary World  
History 7405: Introduction to Graduate-level East Asian Studies (1 credit hour)  
History 7410: Studies in Pre-Modern Chinese History (1-6 credit hours)  
History 7411: Studies in Modern and/or Contemporary Chinese History (1-6 credit hours)  
History 7425: Studies in Japanese History  
History 7600: Studies in the History of Women and Gender (1-6 credit hours)  
History 8400: Seminar in East Asian History (4 credit hours)

Japanese 5400: Performance Traditions of Japan  
Japanese 7453: Studies in Japanese Drama

Korean 5256: Interdisciplinary Topics in Korean Politics and Society  
Korean 5400: Performance Traditions of Korea  
Korean 5405: Korean Dramatic Tradition  
Korean 5455: Interdisciplinary Topics in Korean Art, Music, Film, and Theatre

NESA 7501: Narratives of Origin: The Islamic Tradition

Philosophy 5440: Philosophical Perspectives on Race, Education & Citizenship  
Philosophy 8192: Seminar in East Asian Philosophy (1-4 credit hours)