

**Major in Asian Studies
Bachelor of Arts**

**School of Languages, Cultures
and World Affairs**

P. George Benson, President

Date

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I. New Program Proposal: Major in Asian Studies. Bachelor of Arts

This is a four year undergraduate program. It is not eligible for STEM funding.

II. Proposed Date of Implementation: Fall 2012

III. Justification

The College of Charleston seeks approval to establish a new Bachelor of Arts degree in Asian Studies, to be housed in the School of Languages, Cultures and World Affairs. LCWA is home to the departments of German and Slavic Studies; French and Francophone Studies; Hispanic Studies; Classics; the Department of International and Intercultural Studies (including International Studies, Jewish Studies and Asian Studies); and a robust range of other area studies and cultural studies Minors (International Studies, African Studies, African-American Studies, British Studies, European Studies, Japanese Studies, Jewish Studies, Italian Studies, Russian Studies).

The College of Charleston has undergone rapid and transformative change in the four decades since it joined the South Carolina state system. Its exponential growth over this period has been accompanied, especially since the mid-1990s, by an increasingly international focus, shaped, first, by our self-study during our 1994-95 Southern Association of Colleges and Schools reaccreditation, and reaffirmed by our 2009 Strategic Plan. Goal Three of the new Strategic Plan commits “to providing students with the global and interdisciplinary perspectives necessary to address the social, economic, environmental, ethical, scientific and political issues of the 21st century.” It is widely recognized that U.S. education must be strengthened to increase language skills and cultural awareness of the linguistically, culturally, politically and economically diverse regions of Asia. The US government recognized that the development of strong area studies programs is fundamental to creating “a pool of international experts to meet national needs” (Higher Education Act of 1965, section 601(a). Central to the purpose of the School of Languages, Cultures and World Affairs is to develop and support robust and rigorous interdisciplinary programs with a focus on international, comparative, and intercultural studies grounded in language training. The new Strategic Plan for the College of Charleston names Asian Studies as one of the interdisciplinary programs that will develop a Major.

The Major in Asian Studies will play a key role in insuring that students enter a global workforce prepared to interact with and in Asia, which is home to more than half the world’s population, and where developing economies are predicted to become increasingly dominant over this century. US involvement in two wars in South and Western Asia has further brought into sharp focus the urgent need for global competencies in both foreign languages and in grounded knowledge of these world regions. The Major in Asian Studies, to include intensive foreign language training; in-depth historical, cultural and intellectual, and international and intercultural perspectives; and study abroad, will prepare students to become engaged and knowledgeable global citizens who possess the cultural skills necessary to working in an interconnected, interdependent world.

IV. Program Demand and Productivity

Of the thirteen languages offered in the School of Languages, Cultures and World Affairs, four are housed in Asian Studies: Arabic, (Mandarin) Chinese, Hindi and Japanese; these four Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTL) are also identified as

Strategic Languages by the US Department of State, underscoring the urgent need to train citizens to develop competencies in these languages. The College of Charleston is the only institution in South Carolina to offer this range of Asian languages and to support these with a rich and flexible curriculum across disciplines involving the regions that are home to these languages. More than 300 students enroll for courses in these languages each semester. Courses that fulfill the Asian Studies Minor are taught by approximately 20 faculty in 8 departments including languages and literature, Art History, History, Philosophy, Political Science, and Religious Studies.

At present the College of Charleston supports two interdisciplinary Minor programs on Asia: Asian Studies and Japanese Studies. Together these serve nearly four dozen students each year; approximately two dozen minors graduate each year in Asian/Japanese Studies. These students represent a broad range of disciplines from International Business to History, Religious Studies, Art History, English, Theatre, Economics, Political Science and others. The Asian Studies Major will provide students the opportunity to strengthen their knowledge of Asia in a focused, in-depth program of study that will analyze Asian regions from a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives, including history and politics, cultural perspectives (e.g., religion, art, and literature), all grounded in advanced language study and study abroad, and working with professors with extensive lived experience in the regions in which they conduct research. Our location in the School of Languages, Cultures and World Affairs and within the department of International and Intercultural Studies will help ensure that students gain not only in-depth study of a region but also be able to understand that region as it interacts with other regions in world systems.

V. Program Duplication

Minors in Asian Studies have been established at Clemson University, which offers East Asian Studies, and The University of South Carolina, with strengths in Business and professional training. Coastal Carolina University has initiated an Asian Studies program, and offers Japanese. The College of Charleston's program in Asian Studies is distinguished by the range of Asian languages we offer and the depth and breadth in the Humanities our teacher-scholar faculty represent. These particular strengths are complemented by a growing expertise in Asian politics (3 faculty). As a result, the College of Charleston is poised to develop and implement a Bachelor of Arts in Asian Studies, which would provide an in-depth, focused program of study in Asia and its sub-regions. Our strengths are in South Asia (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan), China, and Japan, with particular depth and breadth - in terms of faculty - in South Asia; we have recently introduced Hindi, which can now satisfy the language requirement for General Education. We would be the first state-assisted institution in South Carolina to develop a Major in Asian Studies, and thus could provide South Carolina students a unique opportunity to develop necessary expertise in Asia.

VI. Relationship of Program to Existing Programs at Proposing Institution

The proposed Major in Asian Studies grows from the development of the Asian Studies Minor over the last ten years; as such, it is linked to and works with academic departments across the institution. Asian Studies Faculty are housed in eight/ nine departments, including the nine faculty in the Department of International and Cultural Studies in LCWA. There will be considerable overlap in terms of shared enrollment and courses between students who major in Asian Studies and those who major in

International Studies with a Concentration in Asia; students in each major will take classes with one another. Students in International Studies with a concentration in Asia will take Asian Studies courses, while students in Asian Studies will be required to take at least one course with an International Studies designation. These programs do not duplicate one another, in that Majors in Asian Studies will follow a focused program of in-depth study of a region from a multi- and interdisciplinary perspective grounded in a rich Humanities curriculum, while the emphasis of International Studies Majors will be the study of a region in the context of world systems, with a Social Science focus.

VII. Relationship of the Proposed Program to other Institutions via Inter-Institutional Cooperation

The College of Charleston has established bilateral exchange programs in Soka University and Kansai Gaidai University in Japan and Nottingham University program in China; we plan to establish a bilateral exchange program with Yunnan University in China and with University of Pune and University of Hyderabad in India. We aspire, in cooperation with the School of Education, Health, and Human Performance, to offer content-rich programs in Asian Studies for K-12 social studies teachers in Charleston, Berkeley, and Dorchester Counties. The School of Business is creating a Center of Vietnamese Enterprise, an MBA program for Vietnamese students. Faculty in Asian Studies currently serve as consultants to the Beaufort County School system as they develop a Chinese Immersion program. Our membership in ASIANetwork, a consortium of more than 100 liberal arts colleges with programs in Asian Studies, insures that we remain closely linked to developments and funding resources nationally in Asian Studies programs. As a member of the American Institute of Indian Studies, we are part of a national consortium of over 100 universities and colleges.

VIII. Total New Costs Associated with Implementing the Proposed Program (general estimate only)

Annual Costs:

Director (Adjunct salary for teaching release)	\$4400
Staff (1/3 time)	
Library and media collection	\$5000
Printing and advertising costs	\$1200
Travel to ASIANet and Association Asian Studies	\$2400
Speakers and other Sponsored Events	\$5000
<u>Office supplies and operating costs</u>	<u>\$2500</u>

Total Recurring Costs

Nonrecurring Expenses

Enhancement of Library collection	\$10000
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Some funding is in place (1/3 staff salary; membership dues). Additional funding for this program comes from reallocation of funds from the Dean’s operating budget and endowed funds that have already been raised which support the School. Library funds come from reallocation of existing library materials budget.