

Harrison Maddox

Asian Studies: Proposal for Interdisciplinary Studies

One of the earliest memories that I have as a young child is from the novel *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*. I remember picturing a different world that was filled with unusual and foreign objects that I had never seen before. I was thoroughly confused by it all. I can vividly picture myself questioning my mother about the seemingly alien culture. This novel opened my eyes to the possibility of a foreign world. Today, however, I realize that the continent of Asia is not as foreign, but, despite this, it still just retains its fascination. In the summer of 2011, I traveled with Dr. McDaniel to China to visit and learn basic Mandarin. Once stepping off of the plane in Beijing and absorbing my surroundings, I experienced a fiery passion that has not been felt since those days of reading *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* before bedtime. This experience was a life-changing event that helped to convince me that an Asian Studies major is the major for me and that another major would simply not suffice my thirst for Asian history, culture, philosophy, religion, and language.

The major that I am proposing is comprised of three portions. The first and foremost section of an Asian Studies degree focuses on the histories of China, Japan, and the Koreas. It is in this part that I find the most fascination. I have always had a love for the study of history and of the past, but my admiration for the histories on the Asian continent has placed this love on into the category of obsession. I believe that by focusing on the histories of the continent of Asia, I will be able to learn and cultivate, not only the past events of the continent, but also how to think and analyze critically. This is

something that the History Department at Hendrix focuses upon heavily and I believe that this is vital to my success in the future, whether here or abroad.

The second portion of the major is the focus on Asian religions and philosophies. By concentrating on the religious aspects of China, Japan, and the Koreas, I will be able to understand more of the intimate details of the Asian continent. This is important because of the fact that so much of what happens in history is linked with religious aspects. By focusing on the importance of religion, I am better able to understand the historical aspects. Philosophy is also important, as it is needed in order to comprehend the thinking process of the people of the East. Because not all people think alike, a concentration on philosophy would immerse me into a world in which I would be forced to think critically about my surroundings and analyze the aspects of history and of religion.

The third portion of the major is the focus on Chinese language. After taking four courses in Mandarin Chinese and studying abroad in Harbin during the summer, I have picked up the language quite well. While being far from fluent, I am able to navigate myself around a city and converse with its people. I find this to be helpful as it immerses me deeper inside the Asian continent. As so much of culture is dependent upon the use of language, the language component fits perfectly into the Asian Studies major.

The process of creating an interdisciplinary major is needed for me because of the lack of an actual Asian Studies major at Hendrix. The desire for the concentration of the historical, religious and philosophical, and linguistic aspects of the continent of Asia has naturally led me to the need to create my own major. Due to the fledgling Asian Studies program, there are only a few professors who teach courses that relate to this major, but

there are a multitude of possible classes that could be used to fulfill the requirements of graduation. I believe that the Asian Studies major that I have proposed successfully fulfills the requirements and rigor that Hendrix College strives to maintain, due to its structure and the high standards of the History, Religion, Philosophy, and Chinese Departments combined.

Completed Coursework:

2010-2011 Fall Semester:

LBST 100 08 *Journeys*
LBST 101 08 *Explorations*
HIST 118 01 *History & Culture of Modern China **
BIOL 150 02 *Cell Biology (with Lab)*
ANTH 100 01 *Intro to Cultural Anthropology*

2010-2011 Spring Semester:

RELI 111 01 *Asian Religions: An Introduction **
POLI 251 01 *Theories of International Relations*
POLI 100 02 *Issues in Politics: Terrorism*
HIST 285 01 *20th Century East Asian-American Relations **
KINA F80 01 *Kick Boxing*

2010-2011 Summer Transfer from Heilongjiang University:

CHIN 112 *Beginning Chinese II **
CHIN 120 *Intermediate Chinese I **
LBST 121 *Modern Chinese Culture **

2011-2012 Fall Semester:

CHIN 130 01 *Intermediate Chinese I **
ENGL 220 01 *Short Fiction*
HIST 292 01 *The Two Koreas **
LBST 215 01 *Testimonies: Life Stories & Social*

2011-2012 Spring Semester:

CHEM 100 02 *Concepts of Chemistry*
CHIN 140 01 *Intermediate Chinese II **
HIST 307 01 *Gender & Society of East Asia **
MATH 115 01 *Mathematics in Contemporary Issues*
KINA D50 01 *Hip Hop*

2012-2013 Fall Semester:

ASIA 300 01 *Asian Medical Traditions **
HIST 246 01 *Modern Japan **
HIST 300 01 *Historiography **
HIST 306 01 *Crime & Punishment in East Asia **

2012-2013 Spring Semester at Heilongjiang University:

CHIN 000 *Chinese Culture* *
CHIN 000 *Intensive Chinese Reading* *
CHIN 000 *Intensive Chinese Listening* *
CHIN 000 *Conversational Chinese* *

* denotes coursework in intended major

A total of 18 courses will be completed in the Asian Studies major as of the beginning of 2013-2014 Fall Semester.

Asian Studies Major

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Language: Two Courses

CHIN 110 *Beginning Chinese I*
CHIN 120 *Beginning Chinese II*
CHIN 130 *Advanced Beginning Chinese I*
CHIN 140 *Advanced Beginning Chinese II*
CHIN 000 *Intensive Chinese Reading*
CHIN 000 *Intensive Chinese Listening*
CHIN 000 *Intensive Chinese Speaking*

Humanities: Four Courses

ASIA 100 *Survey of Asian Cultures and Ethnicities*
ASIA 300 *Asian Medical Traditions*
ENGL 397 *Vietnam in the Literary Imagination*
PHIL 250 *Philosophies of India*
PHIL 260 *Philosophies of China and Japan*
RELI 111 *Asian Religions: An Introduction*
RELI 222 *Chinese Religions*
RELI 223 *An Introduction to Hinduism*
RELI 225 *An Introduction to Buddhism*
RELI 2xx *Tibetan Buddhism*
RELI 334 *Buddhist Saints*
RELI 337 *Contemporary Buddhist Thought*
RELI 410 *Topics in Asian Religion*

Social Sciences: Four Courses

ASIA 100 *Survey of Asian Cultures and Ethnicities*
ASIA 300 *Asian Medical Traditions*
HIST 160 *East Asia to 1600*
HIST 293 *Korea: The Forgotten War*
HIST 243 *Modern Japan*
HIST 244 *Modern China*
HIST 245 *Imperial China*
HIST 292 *The Two Koreas*
HIST 285 *20th Century East Asian-American Relations*
HIST 291 *Japan's Pacific War*
HIST 304 *Mao and the Chinese Revolution*
HIST 306 *Crime and Punishment in East Asia*
HIST 307 *Gender and Society in East Asia*

Methodology/Capstone: Two Courses

HIST 300 *Historiography*
HIST 497 *Advanced Research and Writing*

At least five 300- or 400-level courses. These will include HIST 300 *Historiography* and HIST 497 *Advanced Research and Writing*. Capstone Experience is to be a historical research paper of at least thirty pages in length which will be presented at an academic conference like NCUR.

Dr. Sprunger – Committee Chair

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Dr. Gorvine – Committee Member

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "William Gorvine".

Dr. McDaniel – Committee Member

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Taym McDaniel".