

Assessment Plans for Student Learning (May 2006)

Introduction to the Program:

The Center for East Asian Studies acts as a coordinating center for teaching, research, and learning about East Asia across the whole University of Wisconsin – Madison campus. Most of the faculty and courses associated with our Center are located in disciplinary departments, but our Center does directly teach some courses that are highly interdisciplinary in nature, in particular our introductory survey course, EAS 222 “Introduction to East Asian Civilizations”. The Center directly administers a rapidly-growing B.A. major, an undergraduate certificate (newly offered since 2003 and equivalent to a minor), and a Ph.D. minor in East Asian Studies. We are currently in the process of planning for a new graduate level certificate in East Asian Studies aimed at professional and terminal master’s students, to be taken in conjunction with a graduate degree program. As of fall 2005, we had 39 declared B.A. Majors, 11 declared undergraduate certificate students, and 5 declared Ph.D. minors. In the period 2002-2005, we graduated 39 B.A. Majors, 6 certificate students, and 4 Ph.D. minors.

Learning Goals:

In addition to the general education goals of the College of Letters and Sciences relating to critical and analytical thinking, writing skills in English, etc., the Center for East Asian Studies has the following specific learning goals for our students:

1. Breadth of knowledge

Student knowledge of East Asia will extend beyond the narrow confines of a single discipline, time period, or culture, so that students will be able to situate their specific areas of concentration within the broader East Asian context

1.A. interdisciplinary skills - a student will skillfully select and apply appropriate methodologies and perspectives from more than two disciplines in understanding an East Asian culture

1.B. historical skills - students will draw on a balance of historical and contemporary knowledge and show awareness of changes over time in East Asian culture

1.C. comparative skills - a student will be able to compare and contrast aspects of 2 or more East Asian cultures or sub-cultures with each other and with the student’s home culture

2. Depth of knowledge

Students will deepen their generalized knowledge of East Asia into an area of concentration consisting of more specialized knowledge of at least one discipline and culture

3. Language skill

Students will demonstrate functional linguistic and cultural competence (at a level appropriate to their academic goals and career plans) in communicating in at least one East Asian language, communicating effectively orally and in writing in a contemporary East Asian cultural context.

4. Research skills

Students will be able to conduct original research in the field of East Asian studies and to make an effective contribution to the expansion of knowledge in the field.

Different student populations served and learning goals expected of them:

Undergraduate:

Non-majors taking intro survey courses	Goal 1
EAS undergraduate certificate students	Goals 1 & 2
EAS B.A. major students	Goals 1, 2, & 3, 4

Graduate:

EAS graduate certificate for professional students (proposed)	Goals 1,2 & 3
EAS Ph.D. minor students	Goals 1, 2, & 3, 4

Assessment Plan Overview:

The Center for East Asian Studies has not previously had a formal plan for assessment of student learning filed with L&S, although of course we have been involved in many program assessment activities, particularly those required by our Title VI grant. In terms of activities relevant to assessing student learning, we do collect standard course evaluations from students in the classes we teach and we already routinely conduct an exit survey of graduating undergraduate major/certificate students. These may need improvement to collect better information about student learning. We also have collected information about student placement for Title VI reporting, and this may serve as an indirect measure of student learning.

The learning goals of the Center for East Asian Studies are outlined above, along with a chart showing how those expectations apply to the different student populations we serve. The differences in expectations are partially accounted for by the fact that non-majors might take only one course, and the fact that the undergraduate certificate has no language requirement. Also, the proposed graduate certificate is oriented towards professional students who may not be able to acquire sufficient depth of knowledge and language skills to be able to conduct original research at the level expected of graduate students. We plan to publicize these learning goals to faculty and students on our website and in our advising handouts.

Measures of student learning chosen and plans to improve or to implement collection of those measures are outlined below. No immediately feasible measures of goal #4 were identified. Measuring student progress towards this goal is complicated by the fact that upper-level courses that typically involve research are taught in departments all over campus that are not under our program's direct control. We will continue to investigate the feasibility of possible options for measuring goal # 4.

Measures of goal #3 must be coordinated closely with the assessment plan of the Department of East Asian Languages & Literature, which teaches the relevant language courses. Their existing plan for assessing language proficiency includes the use of embedded questions in the final exams for the 4th year courses in Chinese and Japanese, and exit interviews to assess oral and listening proficiency for graduating majors. At the end of each year, aggregate results of these measures are reported to the departmental curriculum committee which reviews the results and makes any recommendations for programmatic improvement to the departmental executive committee. Language faculty have also been involved recently in pilot testing and development of new STAMP standardized tests for testing language proficiency in Chinese and Japanese. These are not yet ready for full implementation, and none is available for Korean. ACTFL OPI tests for Chinese, Japanese, and Korean are available but the questions of feasibility, in terms of time, cost, and availability of trained labor, are still being investigated to determine whether it would be realistically feasible or suitable to use this measure for the large groups of students in the Dept. of East Asian Languages & Literature. In collaboration with the language faculty, we plan to work towards implementing language proficiency testing in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, using nationally-recognized standardized tests as they become available and feasible to administer within the limits of time, cost, and availability of trained labor.

The Center plans to have an annual assessment meeting of the CEAS faculty advisory committee to discuss results of measures of student learning and to decide on any appropriate program-level actions for improvement. Results of measures of student learning and recommendations for action and improvement generated in the CEAS assessment meeting will be reported to the dean's level and to other bodies with budget resources as needed, and will be incorporated into the periodic program reviews and reports required by L&S and our Title VI grant.

Planned Measures of Student Learning:

	Goals measured:	Planned use of the information:
Direct Measures:		
Use measures in current language department assessment plan (embedded questions in 4 th year level classes and proficiency interviews with graduating majors). Work towards implementing language proficiency testing in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, using nationally-recognized standardized tests as they become available and feasible.	3	To be analyzed for areas for potential programmatic improvement. To be reported in aggregate to EALL language curriculum committee and to CEAS annual assessment meeting. Committed to doing this in Title VI proposal.
Adapt assessment already conducted within EAS 222 introductory survey course to provide useful measures of student progress towards learning goals, possibly including a pre- and post- test if feasible.	1 & 2	Instructor for EAS 222 will report annually to the CEAS assessment meeting with an analysis of aggregate student strengths and weaknesses in relation to our learning goals and any suggestions for improvement.
Plan assessment within proposed core course for new EAS graduate professional certificate students to provide useful measures of student progress towards learning goals, possibly including a pre- and post- test if feasible.	1 & 2	Instructor for graduate certificate core course will report annually to the CEAS assessment meeting with an analysis of aggregate student strengths and weaknesses in relation to our learning goals and any suggestions for improvement.
Indirect Measures:		
Adapt standard course evaluation form already used in all CEAS courses to solicit not only assessment of instructor's performance but also student perceptions of how well they achieved the learning goals, how well the course helped them to achieve the learning goals, suggestions for improvements to aid their learning, etc.	1,2,3,4	To be analyzed for areas for potential programmatic improvement. To be reported in aggregate at CEAS annual assessment meeting.
Adapt exit survey already collected from all graduating undergraduate major/certificate students to solicit not only assessment of quality	1,2,3,4	To be analyzed for areas for potential programmatic improvement. To be

<p>of student advisor's performance but also student perceptions of how well they achieved the learning goals, how well the overall curriculum and degree program helped them to achieve the learning goals, suggestions for improvements to aid their learning, etc.</p>		<p>reported in aggregate at CEAS annual assessment meeting.</p>
<p>Conduct survey of alumni to solicit same information as above about alumni perceptions of their learning. Also use survey to determine rate of admissions to graduate programs or placement in jobs that require use of East Asia - related skills and knowledge, as one indirect indicator of student learning</p>	<p>1,2,3,4</p>	<p>To be analyzed for areas for potential programmatic improvement. To be reported in aggregate at CEAS annual assessment meeting. Placement data is included in Title VI grant reporting requirements.</p>

Plan for Assessment of Student Learning:

Introduction to East Asian Civilization

Richard Miller, August 23, 2006

This document provides suggestions for modifying the existing in-class assessment of student learning in *Introduction to East Asian Civilization* (East Asian Studies 222) to allow collation and reportage to the Center for East Asian Studies (CEAS) and the College of Letters and Science (L&S). This document thus addresses the direct assessment of student learning within the entry-level stage of the degrees and certificates provided by CEAS; it does not address potential changes to the relevant course evaluation form or any other methods for indirect assessment.

Course Description

East Asian Studies 222, Introduction to East Asian Civilization (cross-listed as Political Science 222) is a survey course that uses a blend of approaches from the humanities and social sciences to introduce students to the histories and cultures of China, Japan, and Korea. This course does not assume prior knowledge of the history, languages, cultures, and societies of East Asia, but is intended to encourage greater interest and provide a base for further study. As such, the course is primarily intended for freshmen and sophomores, but as it is required for the undergraduate major and certificate in East Asian Studies, and strongly encouraged for the undergraduate major in Political Science, a significant proportion of the student body consists of juniors and seniors. Enrollment averages 100 students per semester, with Fall semester enrollments typically higher than Spring semester enrollments. The past two years (2004-5 and 2005-6), approximately 25-30% of the students have been Asian, primarily Korean.

East Asian 222 incorporates five major learning objectives into a comprehensive introduction to the nations and region of East Asia:

- ✓ Identify, compare, and contrast key features of the physical and cultural geography of East Asian countries.
- ✓ Understand and explain unifying characteristics of the region's cultures as a whole, as well as unique aspects of the individual cultures.
- ✓ Recognize and explicate key historical events and movements conditioning the past and present of the region as a whole and the individual nations.
- ✓ Relate historical events and socio-economic structures to cultural and artistic practices on national and regional levels.
- ✓ Use the skills and knowledge developed in the course to continue studying East Asia.

These goals are addressed through a combination of readings (currently focused on a single primary textbook, Ebrey, Walthall, and Palais's *East Asia: A Cultural, Social, and Political History*, supplemented with electronic reserve readings), lectures by the principal instructor as well as guest lectures, and events related to East Asia occurring outside the classroom, such as films, visiting speakers, art exhibits, community events, and so forth. Successful students are expected to perform well on three multi-format exams, seven small projects, and a term paper concerning a literary work (poetry, fiction, biography) related to East Asia.

Relation of Course to CEAS Learning Goals

The *CEAS Plan for Assessment of Student Learning* identifies four learning goals for CEAS students to be achieved over the entire scope of the Center's courses and programs:

1. *Breadth of knowledge* beyond a single discipline, time period, or culture, developing skills in interdisciplinary, historical, and comparative understanding.
2. *Depth of knowledge* into specialized understanding of at least one discipline and culture.
3. *Language skills* in at least one East Asian language.
4. *Research skills* to conduct original research and make an effective contribution to East Asian Studies.

As the gateway course for the East Asian major and certificate, 222 directly addresses the first learning goal, *Breadth of Knowledge*, by drawing upon a wide variety of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences to understand material across the region from prehistory to the present. This course does this through a set of fairly detailed case studies grounded in specific disciplines, and on occasion by means of guest lectures by area and disciplinary specialists, thus providing students with an introduction to the *Depth of Knowledge* available through study at the UW-Madison. Due to the introductory nature of the course, the instructor can only stimulate student interest in developing *Language Skills* by providing units on language history and structure, writing systems, and communicational practices. However, by requiring attendance at outside events, encouraging critical and analytical thinking, introducing students to online and paper information sources, and employing both essay exams and a term paper as major assessment tools, East Asian 222 does support the development of *Research Skills* that can form the base for future work in more advanced courses related to East Asia.

Assessment Instruments and Evaluation

There are three areas of assessment in East Asian 222: assessment of basic geographic knowledge, assessment of ability to apply cumulative cross-cultural knowledge to historical analysis, and assessment of ability to synthesize critical arguments concerning substantive issues in East Asia. Each of these approaches employs its own instruments; the results are aggregated for recording and analysis.

Geographic Knowledge

The course begins with an ungraded benchmark exercise in which the students identify specific locations on an unlabeled map of East Asia—principal cities, rivers, mountains or mountain ranges, seas, and island or island groups. The exercise establishes each student's level of geographic knowledge on entry to the course. After appropriate lecture and discussion in class, the students then complete a graded take-home exercise in which they create a free-hand map of East Asia with the principal features properly labeled. This map provides an initial assessment of the regional geography portion of the course, and then becomes a study guide, because, as the semester progresses, each exam includes a mandatory map

question in which the student draws and labels a map of the relevant country from memory. After each exam, the instructor compares the initial (ungraded) baseline map to the (graded) exam question to assess the development or retention of geographical knowledge.

Cumulative Cross-Cultural Knowledge

East Asian 222 is organized geographically by country (China, Korea, Japan), and therefore learning is not explicitly cumulative in the way that, for example, a mathematics or chemistry course might be. Nevertheless, because of the enormous influence of Chinese culture on Korea and Japan, and Korean culture on Japan, students who draw successfully upon earlier portions of the course in order to understand later portions of the course will have an advantage. For example, Chinese political structures repeatedly appear as models for Korean and Japanese political structures, so a student who grasps the Chinese case and relates it to the Korean and Japanese cases will develop knowledge of all three cases more rapidly, and retain that knowledge more successfully, than a student who approaches each case in isolation. In order to encourage and assess this kind of cumulative knowledge, the Korea and Japan exams include essay questions that require reference to the previous section(s) for successful response. For example, a question about the political ramifications of the layout of the Japanese capital of Heian might be best answered with reference to the Tang Chinese capital of Changan. The students answers are then evaluated by means of seven rubrics corresponding to the seven possible letter grades:

Grade	Criteria
A	Addresses the question completely with a strong, clearly stated thesis, logical argument, clear prose, and appropriate evidence.
AB	Addresses the question completely; prose is clear but thesis is weakly presented and/or supported.
B	Addresses the question completely; prose unclear, thesis must be inferred from the body of the answer; argument, supporting evidence weak.
BC	Addresses the question incompletely; prose unclear, thesis must be inferred from the body of the answer; no apparent evidence.
C	Addresses the question incompletely; prose unclear, poor structure, thesis must be inferred from the body of the answer; no apparent evidence.
D	Addresses the question incompletely; no apparent thesis, argument, or evidence.
F	Fails to address the question at all, provides an unintelligible response, or is never completed.

Critical Arguments

The final project for East Asian 222 is a five-page paper that provides a critical review of a work of literature, situating that work with respect to one of the issues raised in the course. The students are provided a list of three East Asian works in translation, each representing one genre (fiction, poetry, biography) and one country (China, Korea, Japan). This semester (Fall 2006) the choices are a Chinese novel, a book of poems by a noted Korean poet, and the diaries of Japanese *kamikaze* pilots; previous semesters the choices have included a Japanese murder mystery, collected Chinese poems, and the autobiography of a soldier in the Chinese Nationalist Army, and a collection of short stories by Korean women. They are also provided with a guiding question which directs their thinking and writing toward using the literary work as a capstone for the course. Students are not required to base their paper on this question, but the vast majority do (a small percentage create their own approach to the work, and an even smaller percentage may choose a different literary work; students must obtain agreement from the instructor prior to beginning the project). As with the essay questions on the three exams, the essays are evaluated by means of seven rubrics corresponding to the seven letter grades. If the student has created their own paper topic, then the question/thesis used as the basis for each rubric is their own.

Final Learning Assessment

At the end of the semester, after the exams and papers have been graded, the instructor reviews the grades with an eye to evaluating the progression of their understanding of East Asia. The aggregate scores for each assessment area are tabulated, compared with previous semesters and the course goals, and used as the basis for future course modifications.