WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

ASIANetwork BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Suzanne Wilson Barnett
History, University of Puget Sound

Now in its seventh year, ASIANetwork continues to provide a lively context of conversation about Asian life, thought, and affairs in connection with excellence in undergraduate education in the liberal arts. Essential to the promise and effectiveness of our ongoing dialogue is the range of the consortium's formal activities, including the newsletter, the annual conference in late April, and grant-funded initiatives for faculty, program, and curricular development. What distinguishes ASIANetwork is the effort to link scholarship with intellectual community in the classroom, across the campus, and among institutions.

A fundamental principle of ASIANetwork is that the achievements and vision of faculty colleagues at member institutions are the heart of the enterprise. Thus I invite your participation, as individual faculty members within your separate institutions, in the effort to sustain and advance the centrality of Asian studies in undergraduate curricular experience. We hope especially that you will join us at the upcoming annual conference, where conversations in the sessions, over meals, and in the hallways make everyone a "presenter," not only those conferees whose names appear on the official program. One of the satisfactions of our conferences is the interaction between panelists and audience, and this seems a fitting extension of the indivisibility of teaching and learning in our work.

Membership

The opportunities provided by ASIANetwork are available with annual membership, which is by institution at a modest cost. Important: Please check to be sure that your institution renews its membership upon receipt of the annual dues invoice card early in the fall term. The invoice card will reach current member institutions in a mailing to each faculty colleague who routinely receives ASIANetwork mailings. An invoice card also will go to chief academic officers (the academic vice president, provost, or dean) of institutions suited to ASIANetwork membership, so more than one invoice card may come your way. In any case, the continued existence of ASIANetwork and the prospects for Asia in the undergraduate curriculum depend on annual dues; please act swiftly to secure your institution's membership.
1999 Conference

Tacoma, Washington, April 23-25, 1999. (Tacoma is about 30 minutes south of Seattle-Tacoma International Airport.) The seventh annual conference will take place at the Sheraton Tacoma hotel, which has newly refurbished guest rooms and a good location in a revitalized downtown area that includes the Tacoma Art Museum, the new Washington State History Museum, and the campus of the recently founded University of Washington-Tacoma. Details about the program will come at a later time, as the schedule of plenary sessions and concurrent panels falls into place.

Andaya and Larson

Keynote speakers have much to do with the tenor of conversation at and after an ASIANetwork conference. We are pleased to welcome as speakers in 1999 Professor Leonard Andaya, University of Hawai‘i, a historian of Southeast Asia, and Professor Gerald Larson, Indiana University, a specialist in South Asian religions.

The city of Tacoma is home to two ASIANetwork member institutions, Pacific Lutheran University and the University of Puget Sound. The two Presidents of these universities graciously will co-host a reception for ASIANetwork conferees. This event will occur at the University of Puget Sound on Saturday, April 24, following the afternoon sessions and prior to dinner at the hotel. We are arranging bus transportation to and from the campus, and thus can enable conferees to have some sense of the tree-lined neighborhoods of Tacoma’s North End.

Funding the educational mission

Over the six years of its brief existence ASIANetwork has attracted more than $1,500,000 in funding from such sources as the Henry Luce Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the Freeman Foundation, and grant funds continue to make a wonderful difference to the place of Asia in undergraduate education. Grants cannot be the only basis of support, however, for they are of specified duration for specific projects.

Member institutions are critical to ASIANetwork, and not just by way of annual dues. Our colleges pay for participation by faculty colleagues, including ASIANetwork Board members, in the annual conference. Sending at least one faculty colleague to the conference is the surest way for an institution to make good its membership investment. An ASIANetwork conference is like no other, in that it has a prior emphasis on the interplay of ideas and excellence in teaching and learning. Because it is not an academic meeting

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like that of professional associations in the disciplines, many member institutions have established separate and dedicated funding to allow one or more faculty colleagues to attend the conference each year.

ASIANetwork also is the beneficiary of unseen largesse from member institutions, for they are the environments in which we do our work of teaching and learning about Asia and communicating with each other by e-mail, telephone, and hard copy. Invariably the home institutions of ASIANetwork Board members provide essential services that enable the consortium to function, and we are grateful for such contributions. One institution deserving special recognition for the provision of unseen services is The Colorado College, which is the venue for the office of the Executive Director of ASIANetwork.

Beginning this year, ASIANetwork invites faculty colleagues to make individual contributions to the consortium as a means of assuring the continuation of its mission to promote the study of Asia at the undergraduate level. Your contribution, which is fully tax deductible, will convey your commitment to this mission and the promise of the consortium. (Please take note of the announcement about individual donations that appears elsewhere in this newsletter.)

Asia and liberal arts education

Zhuangzi's defense of "the realm of nothing whatever," in Arthur Waley's translated phrase, may be an apt representation of the potential of Asian area studies in American higher education: in order to walk we need much more ground than that which is immediately beneath the landed foot. By analogy, we cope the better with the flights and folly of human existence to the degree that we have access to varied ways of thinking and can call upon a vast array of ideas. Underlying the very existence of ASIANetwork is the conviction that the complex traditions and historical experiences of Asian peoples hold elegant promise as part of the liberal education so important to the wise governance of our shared world.

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1999 ASIANetwork Conference
To be held in the Northwest

You are invited to the 1999 Conference of the ASIANetwork a Consortium of Liberal Arts Colleges to Promote Asian Studies
April 23-25, 1999
Sheraton Tacoma Hotel

On April 23-25, 1999, the ASIANetwork Conference will be held at the Sheraton Tacoma Hotel, Tacoma, Washington. The ASIANetwork Conference is held customarily in a different part of the country in one year and at the Hickory Ridge Conference Center near Chicago in alternate years. The choice of venue in the Northwest follows ASIANetwork conferences held (alternately with the Chicago area site) in the Southwest (Santa Fe, New Mexico), in the Southeast (St. Petersburg, Florida), and in New England (Manchester Village, Vermont).

Keynote speakers
Our keynote speakers will feature Southeast Asia and South Asia, subjects of the current ASIANetwork faculty curricular development seminars funded by a grant from the Ford Foundation.

Leonard Y. Andaya, History, Southeast Asia, University of Hawai‘i
Gerald J. Larson, India Studies, South Asia, Indiana University

Presidents’ Reception
President Susan Resneck Pierce of the University of Puget Sound and President Loren J. Anderson of