

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY



East Asian Studies at Trinity University

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The EAST Program

Deep in the heart of Texas, in a city that is more than half Hispanic and where shopkeepers have to know two languages if they want to prosper, Latin American Studies are an obvious priority for Trinity University. Indeed, Trinity's Spanish language program is extensive, and the "Mexico, the Americas, and Spain" program, known as "MAS" is a significant strength of the University. Also strong, is EAST, the "East Asian Studies at Trinity" program. EAST is Trinity's acknowledgment that our nation and people, especially our youth, must learn to think clearly and positively about Asia and recognize the certain role that Asian affairs will play in America's future. EAST therefore originated in the 1990s with a Chinese language program and has blossomed into a major interdisciplinary initiative that enjoys strong student demand and substantial alumni support. It is one of five curricular goals in Trinity's current \$200 million capital campaign. New faculty positions are part of the EAST initiative, and within the last year, gifts from alumni and trustees have created two senior professorships, one in Chinese and one in Chinese Business. Plans call for more positions in Political Science, Philosophy, and Japanese.

Chinese Language Program and International Studies

At present, EAST's foundation is Trinity's Chinese language program, founded in 1990. Each semester, nearly 150 students are enrolled in a dozen courses in Chinese language, literature, and culture. Trinity is one of only two schools in Texas to offer a Chinese language major (the other one being the University of Texas at Austin,

whose undergraduate population is 33,000). All majors study abroad, some at our exchange institutions in Hong Kong and Taiwan. In addition, every summer, four students are offered all expense paid internships in business and service-learning in Hong Kong. The service-learning internships anchor our fledgling pre-service Chinese teacher-training program (in conjunction with the Education Department). Returning interns work with San Antonio public school teachers to share their knowledge of Asia with local K-12 students. In addition to its substantial language and literature curriculum, the Chinese program also provides ample



Trinity first year student Xin Ma plays the erhu during a campus Lunar New Year's festival.

extracurricular options for our students, including a Chinese language dorm with a resident expert from China, a Chinese Culture Club, daily tutorial sessions, and a Chinese Language Corner.

International Studies has an interdisciplinary concentration in East Asia that draws on courses in History, Religion, Art

History, Religion, and Philosophy. One course, "The Culture of Business in China" is part of the Languages Across the Curriculum Program. Trinity's curriculum requirements make Asian studies part of the mainstream, with courses on Asian religions and Chinese and Korean history, among others, having long waiting lists at registration.

Scholar-Teachers of Asia

The EAST faculty embody the concept that drove the theme of the 2008 ASIANetwork conference in San Antonio: "Scholar-Teachers of Asia." Among them, **Stephen Field**, who doubles as chair of Modern Languages and EAST co-director, is the founder of the Chinese language program. His career studying divination is evident on his website, www.fengshuigate.com, which gets many hits each day from around the world. Field is looking forward to the September 2008 publication of his book *Ancient Chinese Divination* by the University of Hawaii Press. His colleague **Xing Wen**, an internationally-known authority on ancient silk and bamboo texts, has been working with Roger Ames, Director of Chinese Studies at Hawaii, on a philosophical translation of the Great Commentaries of the Book of Changes (*Yi dazuan*) and is completing an edited volume entitled *Poetry has No Hidden Intentions: Unearthing the Buried Confucian Poetic Tradition*, to be published by M.E. Sharpe. **Randall Nadeau**, who doubles as chair of Religion, published his volume on Confucianism and Daoism through Greenwood Press in 2006; and in History, **Donald Clark** is at work on *Seoul: a Literary and Cultural History* for Signal Press, Oxford, and a volume for the "Key

Issues in Asian Studies” series of the AAS, entitled “Korea in World History,” following the success of his now-classic *Living Dangerously in Korea*.

With three positions established in Chinese, and associated faculty in other departments teaching religion, philosophy, history, comparative politics, and art history, the EAST program is poised to grow into Business/Economics, and recover losses in philosophy and Japanese. For these purposes the University has pledged efforts to find additional capital campaign funding. However, for reasons our ASIANetwork colleagues well understand, we can work hard and be hopeful, but we cannot know how many of our dreams will actually come true.

Spreading the Word about Asia on the Trinity Campus

Trinity EAST faculty share a trait with most ASIANetwork colleagues: we know the West and often travel to Europe in addition to our primary experience in Asia, but our colleagues seldom have any Asian experience to speak of. Building alliances on the campus means exporting colleagues and administrators to Asia to launch them on the road to understanding why it should be an essential part of a college education in, say, south Texas.

Fortunately, Trinity has a very active study abroad program. Approximately 40 percent of Trinity students graduate with abroad experience, most of them on semester-long programs, some on summer language institutes, and a few on year-long experiences. Study abroad also offers opportunities for Trinity faculty and administrators to travel, sometimes to Asia, for example, to the School for International Training sites in Kunming and Mongolia.



Trinity President John Brazil welcoming Korean exchange students.

Trinity encourages faculty visits to study abroad sites, and when our colleagues return from Asia they form an informal caucus of people who “get it” about Asia.

EAST therefore will do almost anything to export a faculty colleague on a study abroad “fam trip” or to give a lecture at one of our partner institutions, which include Lingnan in Hong Kong, Ewha and Yonsei in Seoul, and National Cheng Kung University in Taiwan. Our music colleague **Chia-Wei Lee** regularly takes Trinity students to Taiwan to give concerts. Our long-term goal is to trade athletic teams and faculty members on short lecturing trips. One goal of our current capital campaign is to deepen our exchanges with institutions in Asia.

The Essential Role of NCTA in Building EAST

The National Consortium for Teaching about Asia (NCTA), a Freeman Foundation initiative, chose Trinity as a “partner site” along with two others in Texas (Rice and the Univ. of North Texas). NCTA funds a seminar series for secondary teachers that is aimed at preparing them to teach Asia-related material more effectively in their courses on World History, Geography, and other subjects. At Trinity, Donald Clark has been leading the NCTA program since 2003, with advice from the Education Department and its NCTA liaison, Professor **Angela Breidenstein**. All EAST faculty members contribute special expertise to Trinity’s NCTA series, enriching the teachers’ appreciation for Asian history, philosophy, economics, art, and music.

In 2006, Trinity became the NCTA hub for Texas, organizing study tours to Asia for Texas

teachers and centralizing efforts and resources for dissemination of NCTA programs through distance learning and technology such as podcasting. To manage these projects, NCTA funds a staff position for our Program Associate, Franke Johnson. Ms. Johnson recruits the teachers for NCTA seminars, maintains contact with area schools and NCTA alumni, manages and escorts the study tours, and sees to myriad details not only of the NCTA program but also the EAST program on campus—all in her own Trinity office with the support of a student worker. Franke Johnson also played a major role in planning and hosting the March 2008 ASIANetwork meeting.

The NCTA program has expanded to include the hosting of Fulbright English teachers from Korea in homes and schools in San Antonio each February. In a program that brings them to Texas each year to polish their English skills, Trinity’s EAST program—meaning Franke



The Texas NCTA crew: Rich Smith (Rice), Don Clark (Trinity), and Harold Tanner (University of North Texas)

Johnson—finds them their locations, and Trinity’s NCTA seminar pairs the visitors with area secondary teachers. The far-reaching value of this effort may be inferred from the fact that when the Texas NCTA teachers visit Korea, they are hosted in return by Korean teachers who previously visited them in Texas. The potential for future exchanges between schools and teachers is great.

Liaison with the San Antonio Museum of Art

During the ASIANetwork conference, a number of members visited the Asian Art wing of the San Antonio Museum of Art (SAMA) and enjoyed the unique collection with its strengths in Liao ceramics and Japanese painting and woodblocks. The collection, much of it donated by friends of Trinity, such as longtime trustee Walter

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Professors Stephen Field and Don Clark visiting Trinity junior Christine Grant at Peking University.

Brown and his wife Lenora, was developed by Martha Blackwelder, now director of the Asia Society office in Houston. The collection will soon be under a new curator, Wu Xiaojin, currently at Princeton University. EAST looks forward to working with Ms. Wu at SAMA.

Trinity's NCTA and EAST programs have capitalized on this resource to make the Asian art wing at SAMA a teaching tool, both for undergraduates and for the scores of area teachers who have taken Trinity's NCTA. The size of the collection and its carefully-displayed representative samples make it ideal for teaching Chinese and Japanese art. SAMA itself has an education program that dovetails perfectly with Trinity's NCTA effort.

Making Development Choices

Planning EAST has meant making realistic choices. Though Japanese was part of the original design, enrollments faltered and Trinity decided to concentrate on the strongest possible Chinese major

Korean Students Association, in which non-Korean students are enthusiastic participants, promises to keep the Korea

Traveling Fellowships, one to south China to study gender (2004), one to South Korea to study religion in daily life (2005),

If we believe in liberal education, our own creativity and versatility is what we model for our students, and ASIANetwork is an oasis for us where we pool our resources and find ways to share our experiences.

side of EAST healthy for the foreseeable future.

What ASIANetwork has Meant to Trinity's EAST Program

Trinity joined ASIANetwork in 1998, seeing it as a body devoted to exactly our kind of education. All Trinity EAST faculty belong to the Association for Asian Studies and have histories on AAS panels and committees and are active in the Southwest Conference on Asian Studies (SWCAS), our regional branch of the AAS. We are generalists, however, who must teach in departments where we may be isolated

and one to China to study bamboo and silk manuscripts (2006). In each case the students have returned to invigorate their circles of friends and fellow-students, to offer enlightening presentations, and, best of all, to inspire younger students to study abroad in Asia. The faculty mentors too—Nadeau, Clark, and Xing—have returned as better teachers on many levels. And the traveling fellows themselves in many cases have returned to Asia or Asia-related work after graduation.

What Trinity's EAST Program Needs Now

When Trinity's Chinese program grew to two full-time, tenure track positions (now three, plus preceptors and teaching assistants), NCTA funding made it possible to launch the EAST program. We recognize, however, that NCTA is a "branch" but not a "root" activity for the Trinity faculty. We look forward to the end of our capital campaign and the permanent support that its success will give the EAST program. It will include, but not be dependent on, teacher training in Asian studies. On more than one level, the EAST faculty think that the effort is worthwhile, and we already see the results in the lives of our graduates as they face the new Pacific Century with confidence and skill.

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Professor Don Clark and his ASIANetwork Freeman fellows having an on-the-spot seminar on Korean Neo-Confucianism at the scholar Yi Toegye's academy, summer 2005.

instead. Another decision was to make Korea, not Japan, EAST's "second wheel," using History Professor Donald Clark's experience in that field. Trinity's connection with Korea consists of two courses in history, a steady flow of exchange students between San Antonio and Seoul, and a programming emphasis that includes lectures and performances: a film series, for example, an evening of p'ansori storytelling, and a major lecture by Korean-American novelist Chang-rae Lee. ASIANetwork assisted by granting a team of Trinity students a traveling fellowship to study in Korea in the summer of 2005 under Clark's direction. A strong

share our experiences.

Trinity faculty have regularly attended ASIANetwork meetings, given papers, and competed, successfully and unsuccessfully, for ASIANetwork's Pearl River Delta, Vietnam Scholar Exchange, Arts consultancy, and Traveling Fellows programs. Trinity University has been fortunate to win three ASIANetwork-Freeman Student-Faculty



Franke Johnson (front, right) and Prof. Harold Tanner (UNT), standing, right, with Texas NCTA study tour participants in Xi'an, 2007.