

ASIAN STUDIES

What can I do with this major?

AREAS

EDUCATION

Higher education:

Teaching

Research

Student affairs administration:

International student services

Study abroad

Multicultural programming

Student support services

Information/Library science

Primary and secondary education

Community education:

Literacy

English as a second language

GED preparation

EMPLOYERS

Universities and colleges

Campus cultural centers

Support programs (e.g., Educational Advancement Program, Upward Bound)

School and community libraries

K-12 schools, public and private

Head Start programs

Non-profit organizations including those promoting literacy (e.g., VISTA)

Adult education programs (e.g., those focusing on GED preparation)

STRATEGIES

Earn a Ph.D. to teach and research at four-year institutions. The interdisciplinary nature of Asian Studies makes it good preparation for advanced education in a variety of fields.

Obtain a master's degree in student affairs or library/information science to prepare for those fields.

If interested in K-12 teaching, fulfill requirements for certification. This may involve a double major or a minor. Research alternative paths to certification such as Teach for America and other similar programs.

Get involved in leadership roles on campus (e.g., peer mentor, resident advisor, orientation leader, etc.)

Join related professional associations as a student member.

Interact with students from Asia and the Middle East. Participate in international programming on campus.

Plan to study or work in Asian and Middle Eastern countries.

Develop strong communication and public speaking skills. Learn to speak relevant languages such as, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, or Arabic.

Volunteer with community organizations that serve the Asian population. For example, tutor non-native English speakers.

Secure strong recommendations from faculty, and maintain a high grade point average. Assist a professor with research or take an independent study class to develop research skills.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

ADVOCACY

Domestic and international advocacy
Humanitarian services
Development:
 Economic
 Community
 Housing
Disaster/Disease relief
HIV/AIDS advocacy
Policy development
Program administration
Education
Volunteer coordination
Grant writing
Fundraising/Development
Research

Community action agencies
Non-profit organizations (e.g., Asian American Alliance)
Private voluntary organizations
Faith based organizations (FBO's) and Asian-American church communities
International aid and relief organizations
Non-governmental Organizations (NGO's), (e.g., International Red Cross)
Federal government agencies with an international focus (e.g., Peace Corps, USAID) or focus on community assistance (e.g., Americorps)
State and local government agencies
Research organizations
Community action agencies

Volunteer at local social service agencies that work with Asian communities to gain experience and demonstrate interest.
Participate in an international service learning experience or church-led mission trip to Asia.
Learn to speak relevant languages (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Arabic, etc.).
Get involved with cultural and international events or organizations on campus.
Take additional courses in social work, global studies, or other relevant areas.
Develop excellent research, writing, communication, and organizational skills. Learn how to motivate individuals and groups.
Plan to move to geographic regions where the Asian population is growing.

HUMAN SERVICES

Counseling
Psychotherapy
Mental health services
Case management
Programming
Community relations
Fundraising/Development
Administration

Mental health institutions
Hospitals and clinics
Residential treatment facilities
Private and group practice
Correctional institutions
Federal, state, or local government:
 Department of Human Services
Organizations that aid immigrants, migrant workers, and refugees or focus on cultural issues
Youth organizations and camps (e.g., YMCAs, Boys and Girls Clubs, etc.)
Non-profit and social services organizations:
 United Way
 Goodwill Industries
 Salvation Army
 Church-based programs

Supplement curriculum with courses in psychology, social work, or child and family studies.
Obtain a graduate degree in psychology, counseling, or social work for increased counseling opportunities or advancement into administrative work.
Gain essential practical experience through part-time or summer jobs and internships.
Volunteer with organizations that assist people of diverse backgrounds, particularly the Asian population.
Participate in training opportunities, e.g. suicide prevention or crisis hotline response.
Gain a firm understanding of various Asian cultures and how culture impacts individuals and families.
Become bilingual in a relevant language in order to better assist some clients.
Acquire knowledge of government and community resources available for those in need.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

BUSINESS

International business
Importing/Exporting
Logistics
Banking
Management
Customer service
Sales
Marketing
Advertising
Public relations
Training and development
Human resources
Equity and diversity functions
Travel and tourism
Consulting

Public and private corporations in various industries:
Banks and financial institutions
Insurance companies
Retail stores
Hotels and restaurants
Consumer goods manufacturers
Businesses targeting Asian customers/clients
Staffing agencies
Consulting firms
Market research firms specializing in Asian consumers
Public relations agencies
Asian firms operating in the U.S.
U.S. firms with operations in Asia
Asian chambers of commerce
Minority Business Development Centers
Asian trade associations (e.g., Asian Pacific American Chamber of Commerce (APACC))
Travel agencies and tour operators
Convention and visitors' bureaus

Double major or minor in business.
Gain business experience through internships or part-time and summer jobs.
Through research, identify corporations that have a reputation for reaching out to Asian populations.
Join campus organizations or professional societies and seek leadership roles.
Understand the skills employers' desire and be prepared to demonstrate them (e.g., communication (oral and written), technology, leadership, teamwork, etc.).
Conduct informational interviews and/or job shadowing experiences with professionals to learn more about career fields.
When job searching, seek employers interested in hiring "any major."
Learn how to sell your Asian Studies major to companies that value cultural diversity.
For international assignments, plan to start in U.S. based positions and gain experience with the company/industry. Usually more seasoned employees are given international assignments.
Earn an MBA or a graduate degree in another area of interest for more advanced opportunities.

LAW AND POLITICS

Law:
Corporate practice
Public interest law
Civil law
Lobbying
Government relations
Elected or appointed leadership
Public policy
Research
Intelligence
Campaign management
Special interest advocacy
Program administration

Law firms
Corporate legal departments
Public defenders offices
District attorneys
Public interest groups (e.g., Asian American Legal Defense & Education Fund (AALDEF))
Civil rights organizations (e.g., Asian Americans Advancing Justice)
Legal aid
Sole practitioner
Government agencies, (e.g., Department of State (foreign service))
Lobbying groups

Obtain the J.D. for law positions or an advanced degree in public administration, public policy, or international relations for government positions.
Supplement curriculum with relevant courses to prepare for law school.
Participate in activities that develop strong debate and public speaking skills such as mock trial.
Get involved with the pre-law society on campus.
Gain relevant experience through jobs or internships with law firms, government agencies, or mediation centers.
Maintain a high grade point average and secure strong faculty recommendations.
Prepare for and take the Law School Admission Test (LSAT).

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

LAW AND POLITICS CONTINUED

Apply for federal government internship programs while in school.

The Foreign Service requires passage of the Foreign Service Exam, after obtaining a master's degree or significant work experience.

MEDIA AND THE ARTS

Journalism
Creative writing
Freelance writing
Copy writing
Editing
Research and analysis
Broadcasting:
Television
Radio
Media sales
Museum work
Arts programming
Art sales
Fundraising/Development

Broadcast media companies (e.g., television and movie industry)
Radio stations
Foreign news agencies
Trade, professional, or consumer publications
Internet sites marketed toward Asian Americans
Advertising agencies
Publishing houses
Large corporations
Freelance
Museums
Galleries
Organizations and centers dedicated to promoting Asian visual and performing arts, (e.g., Asian American Arts Alliance)
Smithsonian Institution (e.g., Freer & Sackler Galleries)

Pair an interest in Asian Studies with communication skills to write about Asia, write on topics of interest to minorities, or for publications targeting an Asian audience.

Study a second field such as journalism, English, or broadcasting to prepare for career in media.

For positions in the arts, consider a minor in art history. Plan to pursue a relevant graduate degree such as museum studies.

Write for campus publications such as college newspapers, magazines, or department/program newsletters. Work at campus radio or television stations.

Intern with a publishing house, magazine, radio or television station depending upon area of interest.

Create a portfolio of writing samples, especially those that have been published. For other areas, create a website or digital portfolio to showcase skills to potential employers.

Seek opportunities for recognition and networking through writing contests and freelance writing submissions.

Become familiar with the proposal and submission process involved in freelance writing.

When job searching, research media outlets to find those that target Asian populations.

Volunteer in local museums or galleries.

Travel to Asian countries and visit local museums and cultural attractions.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Asian Studies provides an interdisciplinary background that helps students develop analytical, critical thinking, and writing skills while gaining knowledge about the cultures, histories, and languages of Asian countries.
- When paired with a major in another field, Asian Studies can enhance the employability of a student because of a deeper understanding of the Asian experience which many organizations will value. Training in this field can lead to a better appreciation of certain customers or clients.
- Some students may choose to pursue Asian Studies because they enjoy the subject but wish to pursue careers requiring “any major.” In this scenario, it is critical to develop skills relevant to targeted field through internships, part-time or summer jobs, or volunteer experiences.
- Asian Studies majors are excellent candidates for a number of graduate school options because of their broad liberal arts background as well as specific interests that may set them apart from other students. For those wishing to pursue graduate education, maintain a high GPA, establish relationships with faculty to secure strong recommendations, and gain experience through volunteer, work, or research opportunities.
- Travel as much as possible to Asia to experience it first-hand. Complete at least one study abroad experience. In the U.S., look for ways to interact with people from Asia who are living in or visiting the United States.
- More job opportunities may exist in parts of the United States where the Asian population is the largest or growing such as California, Washington, and New York.
- Read and stay abreast of politics and current events in regions of interest.