GREETINGS FROM
THE CO-DIRECTORS

The Asian American Studies Program (ASAM) at Penn prepares students academically as well as socially for the opportunities and challenges they will face in their future careers, whatever industry or area they choose.

An interdisciplinary program that offers a minor as well as a broad range of courses, programs, events, research opportunities, and awards, ASAM contextualizes the history, experiences, and contributions of Asian immigrants and persons of Asian ancestry in North America and the diaspora. Faculty in English, History, and Sociology explore how race, ethnicity, caste, religion, sexuality, gender, and class shape the lives of Asian Americans in a national and global context. Today, nearly one-third of the undergraduates at Penn are Asian and Asian American. In recent years, demand for our courses has skyrocketed. All our classes are oversubscribed. In order to serve our students and our communities better, we must continue to build.

In addition to our core offerings, ASAM provides a wide range of upper-level and elective courses in related fields such as anthropology, creative writing, folklore, East Asian studies, law, psychology, and South Asian studies. We emphasize the critical analysis of history, society, and culture while addressing longstanding inequities in civic and social life.

Finally, ASAM offers a number of community-based classes and internships that underscore our commitment to social justice and address the varied needs of our numerous constituencies. Bringing together creative and critical thinking skills from the arts and humanities with the analytic methods of the social sciences, our ASAM minor may be completed alongside a wide range of majors throughout the University.

Recent years have witnessed an alarming backlash against Asian American communities and racialized communities more generally. Discrimination against Asian Americans often occurs without conscious acknowledgement on the part of others or, most poignantly, on the part of ourselves. In conjunction with renewed activism for Asian American and ethnic studies on university campuses everywhere as well as demands for Asian American political representation in the public sphere, we are proud to offer students, scholars, artists, and activists a place to come together, think together, create together, and organize together. We invite you to learn more about our Program and to join us in our efforts at a critical time of momentous growth.

David L. Eng
Faculty Director of ASAM
Richard L. Fisher Professor of English
Email: deng@upenn.edu

Fariha I. Khan
Co-Director of ASAM
Email: fariha@upenn.edu
As we celebrate the 25th anniversary of ASAM, we look forward to building our Program as the intellectual home and a central community for Asian American students and scholars at Penn. In a series of events in March 2022 that attracted several hundred students, alumni, and supporters, and with special guest speakers including director Jon Chu, poet and memoirist Cathy Park Hong, and novelist Viet Thanh Nguyen, we commemorated both the struggles and the triumphs of our program, field, and students, past and present. Recognizing our history calls for a renewed commitment to our communities in the face of heightened anti-Asian racism and insecurity resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. As the field of Asian American Studies grows, we are redefining research and scholarship throughout the University. ASAM is now expanding with a series of new faculty hires, additional course offerings, and a planned major while shaping the conversation of what it means to be Asian American at Penn and beyond.

Without the tools or knowledge to contextualize their place in American society, Asian American students struggle with feelings of alienation and loss, regardless of how externally accomplished they may be.

Angela Shen, W'24
ASAM UAB Board Member
On October 11th 2022, Councilmember Helen Gym commemorated the 25th Anniversary of Asian American Studies at Penn with a City Resolution.
FALL 2022

ASAM 0100-001: Intro to Asian American Studies*
   Rupa Pillai

ASAM 0102-401: Intro to Asian Am History*
   Eiichiro Azuma
   LEC MW 03:30 PM-04:59 PM
   (HIST 1155-401)

ASAM 0103-401: Intro to Asian American Literature and Culture*
   David Eng
   LEC TR 01:45 PM-03:14 PM
   (ENGL 1270-401)

ASAM 1000-401: South Asians in the US*
   Fariha Khan
   SEM TR 12:00 PM-01:29 PM
   (SAST 1000)

ASAM 1020-001: Asian Am Entrepreneur
   Rupa Pillai
   SEM MW 10:15 AM-11:44 AM

ASAM 1200-401: Creative Writing:
   Asian American Lives
   Pyali Bhattacharya
   SEM TR 10:15 AM-11:44 AM
   (ENGL 3025)

ASAM 1300-401: Asian Am Cinema*
   Robert Buscher
   LEC W 05:15 PM-08:14 PM

ASAM 2310-401: 18th Century Seminar:
   China in the English Imagination
   Chi-Ming Yang

"Asian American Literature and Culture," March 2022; "South Asians in the U.S.,” September 2022; Guest Speaker Bakirathi Mani in "Asian American Literature and Culture, September 2022
THE MINOR IN ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES

The ASAM Minor in the School of Arts and Sciences presents to students the academic approaches and methodologies of an extensive range of discipline including anthropology and ethnography, folklore, history, literature, sociology and demography, political science, and urban studies. The flexible program of study allows students to engage in the interdisciplinary study of race, ethnicity, history, and literature of Asian Americans while also preparing for careers in education, law, business, social work, the health professions, journalism, urban planning, politics, work with non-profit organizations, and creative writing and art.

- Study the history of Asian Americans and learn about the issues they face today.
- Gain an understanding of social and cultural aspects of careers in fields such as education, law, business, social work, public health, journalism, urban planning, politics, non-profits, and art.
- Explore courses that are cross-listed with other departments, including Sociology, English, History, Religious Studies, Urban Studies, and South Asia Studies.
- Complete 6 course units to finish the minor, which YOU get to choose.
- Fulfill the General and Distributional Requirements within your school with ASAM courses — most fulfill Cultural Diversity in the US and Cross Cultural Analysis requirements.
- Engage in the small class sizes that will help you develop strong relationships with professors.

Have any questions about the ASAM minor? Check out our website and feel free to ask us in person or by email.
asianamerican@sas.upenn.edu
In partnership with the Undergraduate Advisory Board (UAB) and the Graduate Asian American Students Association (GASAM), ASAM hosts special events, programs, conferences, and workshops including academic lectures, book talks, community-based internships, film screenings, cultural performances, and reading groups. Among these events are three ongoing series:

Asian America Across the Disciplines
ASAM Food for Thought
Co-Sponsorship Events
Asian America Across the Disciplines is a lecture series based in an ASAM course. Formal scholarly talks on specific topics are centered in the coursework but are open to the Penn community.

October 2022

AAAD in conversation with Bakirathi Mani, "Unseeing Empire"  
Sept 20, 2022

AAAD in conversation with Ali Zaker and Najneen Kabita, Moder Patshala  
Sept 27, 2022

AAAD in conversation with Director Josh Chuck, "Chinatown Rising"  
Oct 5 2022

AAAD in conversation with Dr. Tiffany Huang  
Oct 5, 2022

AAAD in conversation with Senator Nikil Saval and Mohan Seshadri  
Nov 17 2022
FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Food for Thought Speaker Series invites students, scholars, and community members to an informal discussion on current issues in Asian America. Join us to learn more about critical issues over lunch.

**FFT in conversation with ASAM Fellow Angela Ji on her research on contemporary queer Asian American women’s literature**  
Sept 2022

**FFT In conversation with Ilhyung Lee, University of Missouri School of Law, on Anti-CRT Laws and their Impact on Asian Americans**  
Sept 30, 2022

**FFT in conversation with folklorist and author Dr. Margaret Magat**  
Oct 10, 2022

**FFT in conversation with ASAM Fellow Jennifer Kang on building community through civic engagement**  
Oct 14, 2022
FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Food for Thought Speaker Series invites students, scholars, and community members to an informal discussion on current issues in Asian America. Join us to learn more about critical issues over lunch.

FFT in conversation with ASAM Fellow Jean Paik on legacies of US Empire in Korean American memoir, Oct 27, 2022

FFT in conversation with ASAM Fellow Vernon Wells on neocolonialism’s impact on Indigenous Filipino lifeways, Oct 28, 2022

FFT in conversation with Asam Fellow Yuting Zhu on improving Asian Americans’ wellbeing through community Qigong exercise, Nov 4, 2022

FFT in conversation with ASAM Fellow Ella Yang on community Qigong exercise and the psychological wellbeing of Asian Americans, Nov 11, 2022
CO-SPONSORSHIP EVENTS

Penn Museum Second Sunday Culture Films: Modern Mambabatok
Oct 9, 2022

Oct 12, 2022

AAPI Women in Writing, co-hosted by the Asian Pacific Student Coalition and featuring guest speakers I.W. Gregorio and Dr. Fariha Khan
Oct 28, 2022
CO-SPONSORSHIP EVENTS

ASAM x Rice Up, a conversation with Wei Chen
Oct 28, 2022

Migration and Asylum in conversation with J. Karagulov,
hosted by Fernando Chang-Muy, Thomas O’Boyle Lecturer in Law at Penn, Nov 9, 2022

Graduate Asian American Studies (GASAM)
Writing Retreat,
Nov 12, 2022

Penn Museum Second Sunday Culture Films: Mu and the Vanishing World
Nov 13, 2022

Asian Pacific American Heritage Week (APAHW) x ASAM dinner
Nov 30, 2022
ASAM FELLOWS PROGRAM 2022

In addition to pursuing the minor, undergraduates can apply for the ASAM Fellows Honors Program, which provides students with comprehensive academic training in archival research, methodology, and theory to enhance their critical thinking and writing skills. Along with a faculty advisor, students conduct original research to complete an independent honors project that strengthens their knowledge of Asian American studies, topics, and identities. The program provides an excellent opportunity to build one's resume while exploring personal interests and learning valuable skills and expertise for one's professional future.
JEAN PAIK: "CHILDREN OF MEMORY AND LEGACIES OF U.S. EMPIRE IN KOREAN AMERICAN MEMOIR"
Jean is a junior from California studying English. Through this project, she aims to examine issues of power, memory, silences, and generational trauma in Asian American fiction novels.

JENNIFER KANG: "BUILDING COMMUNITY, POWER, AND TRUST THROUGH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT"
Jennifer is a junior majoring in Sociology and minoring in ASAM and Nutrition Science. She is interested in bringing greater awareness about civic engagement in our local communities.

YUTING ZHU: "IMPROVING ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN'S WELLBEING THROUGH COMMUNITY QIGONG EXERCISE"
Yuting is a sophomore from China, majoring in Health and Societies. Her study aims to understand the mental health effect of community traditional medicine practice exercise on Asian American female populations.

YI (ELLA) YANG: "UNDERSTANDING AA WOMEN'S SOCIAL WELLBEING AND COMMUNITY QIGONG EXERCISE THROUGH AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL LENS"
Yi is a junior from China majoring in Anthropology and Psychology. Her study aims to study how Qigong exercise reshapes the living experiences and identity recognition of Asian American women in the US, and how traditional medicine practice like Qigong is perceived among the population.

VERNON WELLS: "TOWARD ANCESTRAL DOMAIN: INDIGENOUS SOVEREIGNTY AMIDST U.S. NEOCOLONIAL EXPANSION IN THE PHILIPPINES"
Vernon is a junior from Maine studying Anthropology and Sociology with a minor in ASAM. Their project seeks to cultivate a dynamic understanding of Indigenous Filipino responses to their continued land dispossession through a neocolonial framework.

ANGELA JI: "LOOKING TOWARDS UTOPIA: ENVISIONING A "THEN AND THERE" THROUGH CONTEMPORARY QUEER ASIAN AMERICAN"
Angela is a senior majoring in English, with a Creative Writing concentration, and minors in ASAM and Economics. In her project, she hopes to research on how utopia negotiates an alternative understanding of the body and its desires, alienation and connection, and finding community and family.
The Sachs Program for Arts Innovation awarded one of the 2022 grants to Fariha Khan, Asian American Studies for the project, "The Third Space: Unfurling Diasporic Arts of South Asia." Conceived as a series in four parts, "The Third Space," will combine artistic practice and scholarship to envision a cultural consciousness within the American contemporary art industry that simultaneously acknowledges the diasporic artist, their transnational experience of identity, place, and time, as a primary grounding for the conception, aesthetics, and impact of their work.

THE DIRECTORS TALK
FEBRUARY 8, 2023 | 12:00 PM | MCNEIL 473

THE WORKSHOP WITH RUBY CHISHTI
FEBRUARY 22, 2023 | 04:00 PM | ARCH 108

THE ARTISTS PANEL
MARCH 27, 2023 | 04:00 PM | ARCH 108

THE ARTISTS TALK WITH SHAHZIA SIKANDER AND AROOJ AFTAB
APRIL 06, 2023 | 05:00 PM | ARCH 208

Please check our website https://asam.sas.upenn.edu/ for more information and RSVP in advanced
The Asian American Studies Undergraduate Advisory Board (ASAM UAB) is comprised of dedicated undergraduate students who support the Program through outreach, conference and event planning, and advocacy. The UAB are University leaders who represent the Program and its mission serving as liaisons to both students and the administration.

ASAM UAB at the Welcome Back Lunch September 2022;
ASAM UAB and other students at the End of the Year Celebration, May 2022
OUR BOARD MEMBERS

Lily Suh

Lily Suh (she/her) is a junior in the College of Arts and Sciences, and she is majoring in Psychology and minoring in Asian American Studies. In addition to being a member of the ASAM UAB, Lily was a 2021-2022 ASAM fellow. Lily is also a Penn Benjamin and does research in the Hunt Lab.

Khue Tran

Khue is a sophomore from San Jose, CA interested in studying environmental science and minoring in Asian American Studies. She is passionate about sustainability and the unique environmental practices of marginalized communities. Outside of the UAB, she is involved in the Vietnamese Students Association and volunteers with the Civic Engagement Program.

Minola Lee

Minola is a Hmong American from Arkansas and is majoring in Neuroscience in college. Dedicated to the promotion of human rights, she is passionate about examining the challenges and development in Southeast Asia. Outside of class.

Vernon Wells

Vernon Wells is a junior in the College pursuing majors in Anthropology and Sociology and a minor in Asian American Studies. They are interested in exploring pathways toward decolonization in the Philippines and strive to use their degree to work with Indigenous Southeast Asians/Asian Americans. At Penn, Vernon is a current ASAM Fellow and serves as a board member in the Penn Philippine Association, Southeast Asia Working Group, and Queer People of Color.
Ryan Sathianathen

Ryan is a senior from the San Francisco Bay Area studying Biology with minors in Asian American Studies and Bioethics. Post-Penn, Ryan hopes to pursue an MD and work as a Pediatric Oncologist. Outside of the UAB, he is an active member in Penn MERT as well as plays the flute in the Penn Band.

Nithya Chekuri

Nithya Chekuri is a senior in the College of Arts and Sciences majoring in Economics. She is interested in elevating Asian American civic engagement and public service participation.

Jennifer Kang

Jennifer is a junior and second generation Korean American from Columbus, Indiana. In the College of Arts and Sciences, she is a Sociology major with a triple minor in Asian American Studies, Nutrition Sciences, and Chemistry. She is involved with the Penn Figure Skating Club, Promoting Enriching Experiences and Relationships (PEER), ASAM Fellows Program, and Penn's Medical Emergency Response Team (MERT).

Jean Paik

Jean is a junior from Valencia, California studying English. With a commitment to collective action, Jean finds joy in building and being in community. She is currently the Co-Chair of the Asian American Studies Undergraduate Advisory Board. On campus, Jean is also involved in 34th Street Magazine, the Asian American Studies Fellowship Program, and the Penn Association for Gender Equity.
The Spring 2022 semester commemorated 25 years of Asian American Studies at Penn. Every Wednesday evening we learned about our history through the personal experiences of our ASAM alums in our new speaker series, Wednesday Nights with ASAM Alumni. Covering a different period each week, we kicked off the chronological series in January 2022 with a close-up look back at Penn and Asian American life in 1996.

The series culminated in May 2022 with a look ahead to 2023. These informal conversations among ASAM friends were led by the ASAM UAB and were not only informative but offered lively memories and shared experiences of undergraduate and graduate life firsthand.

Meet some of our amazing alumni here! All ASAM alumni are welcome to join the ASAM Alumni spotlight. Contact us at asianamerican@sas.upenn.edu
ASAM CORE FACULTY

Eiichiro Azuma
Professor of History

David L. Eng
Richard L. Fisher Professor of English
Faculty Director of ASAM

Josephine Park
Professor of English

Rob Buscher
Lecturer

Fariha I. Khan
Co-Director of ASAM

Rupa Pillai
Senior Lecturer
ASAM Program Assistant & Work-Study Students

Anabel joined us from Cuba in 2019 as the program assistant for CLALS and ASAM. She is currently full-time ASAM Program Assistant. She has a Master's degree in Development Practice from The Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO). Anabel graduated from Sociology Faculty at the University of Havana in 2011. She has an extensive experience in project management, coordination, and communications. She worked with local governments and international organizations as an advisor on local development projects and capacity building in vulnerable communities in Cuba.

Sophie is a senior studying Business Management and Chinese. Besides her work-study position with ASAM, she is also a leader of the Asian-American political group Lotus Collective. She is passionate about history and social equality and appreciates connecting with fellow students about these topics through ASAM. In her free time, she enjoys baking, hiking, and exploring Philadelphia.

Mira is a sophomore in the College planning on majoring in Cinema and Media Studies and minoring in Consumer Psychology. As a third generation Korean American from Los Angeles, she hopes to combine her interests in filmmaking and Asian American identity in order to highlight underrepresented narratives and produce meaningful dialogue that promotes change. In her free time, she enjoys playing the drums, learning how to box, watching movies, and spending time with her friends and family.