

## About EALC

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The Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures was one of the first academic departments devoted to the study of Asia established in the United States. Its history dates back to 1872 when one of the founders of the University of California, Edward Tompkins—convinced that the future of the state and its citizens lay not in the Atlantic ‘old world’ but in the Pacific—presented the then four-year old institution with its first endowed chair, the Agassiz Professorship of Oriental Languages and Literature. More than a century later, the Department continues to build upon its distinguished tradition of scholarship and service as an innovative and vibrant center for the teaching and research of East Asian languages, literatures, and cultures.

In 1901, the Department began to develop a curriculum in Japanese to complement its initial strengths in Chinese, and in 1942 became the first department in the country to offer instruction in Korean. By the 1960s—in the wake of an unprecedented expansion in the postwar era of Area Studies programs in the American academy—Berkeley and the department cemented its national pre-eminence in the study of East Asia, and played host to many of the most renowned modern scholars of Chinese and Japanese linguistics, literature, and cultural history.

Today, the department offers a comprehensive curriculum in the East Asian humanities for both [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) students that encompasses modern and classical languages, literatures, philosophies, and cultures. [Faculty](#) research and teaching interests are diverse and interdisciplinary, running the gamut from premodern literary and artistic expression to contemporary writing and popular cultures.

EALC is also at the center of a lively campus-wide community devoted to the study of East Asia, and EALC students benefit immensely from the expertise of over fifty [Berkeley faculty](#) members conducting research on China, Japan, and Korea in disciplines such as Anthropology, Architecture, Art History, Comparative Literature, Economics, Film, Geography, History, Journalism, Music, Political Science, and Sociology.

[The Institute of East Asian Studies](#)—the administrative home of Berkeley’s Centers for Chinese, Japanese, and Korean Studies—serves as a locus for cross-disciplinary activities and conversation by organizing lectures and academic symposia, hosting visiting scholars from U.S. and Asian universities, and sponsoring faculty and student research across the campus and the Pacific.

Berkeley’s [East Asian Library](#) boasts one of the largest and most esteemed collections of East Asian books, journals, manuscripts, maps, and digital and other media outside Asia. The [Center for Chinese Studies Library](#) also maintains an impressive collection of textual and audio-visual materials relating to modern and contemporary China.

Brief descriptions of departmental curricula may be found in the online [General Catalog](#) and current course offerings are listed on the departmental website.

Basic modern language courses (Chinese, Japanese, Korean) are offered as two-semester sequences beginning in the fall. Entering students unsure of their levels of language competence should meet with language instructors during the advising period. Chronic over-enrollment in basic language courses makes it necessary to limit admission to registered University students.

Ten-week intensive language workshops in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean are offered in the summer. Each course is equivalent to one year of language training and carries ten semester units of credit. Classes meet five days a week for four hours each morning. Workshop applications may be obtained online from the [Summer Sessions Office](#), or from 22 Wheeler Hall, University of California, Berkeley, California 94720; (510) 642-5611.

The San Francisco Bay Area, home to a large and diverse Asian-American and Asian Pacific community, provides many amenities of special interest to students in the department. Chinese and Japanese films are frequently shown off campus, and the campus [Pacific Film Archive](#) maintains one of the largest collections of Japanese and other Asian films in the world. There is regular programming in Chinese, Japanese and Korean on local television channels. There are many Chinese, Japanese, and Korean bookstores and innumerable Asian restaurants and markets. There are also excellent permanent collections of Asian art, as well as frequent special exhibitions at the [University Art Museum](#) on campus, the [Asian Art Museum](#) and [Yerba Buena Center for the Arts](#) in San Francisco, and the [Cantor Center for Visual Arts](#) at Stanford University.

Affordable housing within easy commuting distance of the campus is in short supply. We advise that students begin their search for housing early, and that they take full advantage of assistance offered by the [Housing Office](#).

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