The Asian Edge, a bi-annual report, summarizes the main news and events of UBC's Department of Asian Studies.

Top Stories

New Acting Head: Dr. Joshua Mostow

Dr. Joshua Mostow, Professor of Pre-Modern Japanese Literature and Art, will serve as Acting Head of the Department of Asian Studies while Dr. Ross King takes a one-year sabbatical. In 2015, Dr. Mostow was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and is included among Canada's foremost scholars, artists and scientists. He discussed his research in this 2015 interview with UBC's Faculty of Arts.

Asian Studies Welcome Back Lunch

Save the Date: the 2017 John Howes
All transfer and returning Arts Undergraduate students are invited to join us for our Welcome Back Lunch on Imagine Day (2nd-, 3rd- and 4th-year students). Come learn about the Asian Studies Experience and join the Asian Studies community.

**Lecture in Japanese Studies**

This year’s lecture, titled “UK wartime training in Japanese, the importance of being able to read Oshima Hiroshi's despatches to Tokyo and why it was all kept secret so long,” will be held on November 16th and features guest speaker Dr. Peter Kornicki (Cambridge University).

**New Hire: Hsiang-ning Sunnie Wang**

Dr. Hsiang-ning Wang will be joining us this fall as a tenure-track Instructor in Chinese Applied Linguistics. Dr. Wang received her Ph.D. in Comparative and International Education and M.A. in both Chinese Pedagogy and Educational Psychology from Indiana University-Bloomington.

**New Hire: Xiaowen Xu**

Dr. Xiaowen Xu has also joined the Department as a tenure-track Instructor in Chinese Applied Linguistics. Dr. Xu holds two doctoral degrees: one in East Asian Studies from the University of Toronto (2014), and the other in English from the Beijing Foreign Studies University (1997).

**Connect**

**New Hong Kong Studies Initiative**

Hosted by the Department of Asian Studies at the University of British Columbia, the Hong Kong Studies Initiative (HKSI) is devoted to promoting the teaching and research of Hong Kong, its history, and its culture.

**Asian Studies is on Linkedin**

With over 270 members, start reconnecting with other Asian Studies alumni and students today!
Interviews

**Faculty Spotlight Interview: Dr. Thomas Hunter**

"My special area of interest is the relationship of the ancient literature of South Asia and the literature of ancient Java and Bali. This means that I look at the Indian “court epics” called kāvya that were composed in metrical Sanskrit and how they stimulated and influenced the development of the closely related kakawin literature of Java and Bali."

**Faculty Spotlight Interview: Dr. Peter Nosco**

"My work sits at the intersection of the intellectual and social history of Japan about two-to-three hundred years ago. I’m currently wrapping up work on a book that will come out next year on the theme of individuality in Japan from about the 1680s through to the end of the Tokugawa period in the 1860s."

**Faculty Spotlight Interview: Francesca Harlow**

"I’m interested in the interactions of Indians and the British during imperial conquest and pacification, generally from the mid-eighteen to mid-nineteenth centuries. I am especially concerned with how these interactions affect, and are affected by Indian social institutions such as family and kinship structures."

**Graduate Student Interview: Kiran Sunar**
"My research engages the study of gender, sexuality, and the fantastical looking at the multilingual cornucopia of literary traditions in the early modern period (16th to 18th century) and their interactions with each other."

**Graduate Student Interview: Gurinder Mann**

"My passion is South Asian Studies, and I would be delighted to have the opportunity to instruct in the field. I am hopeful that my graduate studies at UBC shall support me in pursuing that desire."

**Graduate Student Interview: Peder Gedda**

"My research is focused on translating, contextualising and analysing a series of Sikh etiquette manuals (Rahitname) composed in the early 18th century in North India."

**Alumni Spotlight: Alison Winters, BA '89**

Since graduating, Alison Winters has started her own consulting company specializing in Event Management, Marketing, and Canada China business and relations.

**Alumni Spotlight: Nick Angiers, BA '08**

Nick Angiers is currently an advisor at a private high school, for students from China and Taiwan.

**Featured Courses**
### ASIA 313: Tibetan and Himalayan Culture and Society

History and culture of the Himalayan regions, including India, China, Tibet, Nepal, and Bhutan. Term 2 course taught by Tsering Shakya

### ASIA 433: The Cinematic Lives of Muslims in South Asia

Depictions of Muslims in South Asian cinema, with a particular focus on the Hindi film industry. Term 1 course taught by Sunera Thobani

### ASIA 373: History of Hong Kong

History, culture, and identities of Hong Kong from the early 1800s to the present. Term 2 course taught by Leo Shin

### ASIA 208: Cultural Foundations of South Asia

A survey of South Asian cultures, including language and literature, art, religion, polity and society, as they developed in the past and have been transformed in the modern period. Term 1 course taught by Dr. Allison Busch

### ASIA 254: Sex, Gender, and Sexuality in Japanese Literature and Film

The integral role that sex, gender, and sexuality play in literary and cinematic works from Japan. Literary works will be read in translation, movies will be subtitled. Term 1 course taught by Ayaka Yoshimizu

### ASIA 327: Korean Popular Music in Context

History, contexts, and the genres of Korean popular music. Students will analyze specific artists and songs using a range of approaches. Term 1 & 2 course taught by Cedar-Bough Saeji

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**Spring Highlights**
Launch of Hong Kong Studies Initiative

Hosted by the Department of Asian Studies and led by Dr. Leo Shin, the UBC Hong Kong Studies Initiative (HKSI) was officially launched on April 26, 2017, with the symposium “Hong Kong: 20 Years After.”

In Memoriam: John Howes

Dr. John Howes was a founding member of UBC’s Department of Asian Studies, which he joined in 1961 after earning his doctorate from Columbia University. Professor Howes was instrumental in nurturing the phenomenal growth and success of Asian Studies at UBC. A wonderful reflection on the life and impact of Dr. Howes was recently published in the Globe & Mail.

Screening of Yellowing

On November 22nd, a screening of Yellowing, a mesmerizing documentary about the 2014 Umbrella Movement of Hong Kong, played at the Frederic Wood Theatre. The screening was followed by a conversation with Director Chan Tze Woon.

Sunera Thobani Honoured for Standing Up Against Islamophobia

"As part of its Hands Up Against Racism campaign, Spice Radio celebrated UBC Dr. Sunera Thobani for her human-rights work on Saturday (March 11). Thobani, a former head of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, has been on the forefront of battling Islamophobia."
The 2017 Harjit Kaur Sidhu Memorial Program

The program welcomed Samuel John, award-winning actor and theatre activist, back to UBC to perform for the public. Hundreds of Punjabi language enthusiasts gathered to watch Mr. John’s performance, in collaboration with Rangmanch Punjabi Theatre, as well as honoring a local writer and student essay winners.

Buddhism and Business, Market and Merit Conference

On June 16-18, 2017, the Frogbear (From The Ground Up: Buddhism and East Asian Religions) project co-hosted a conference which brought together over 40 international scholars from various disciplines to explore the intersection between Buddhism and Business.

2017 Yip So Man Wat Lecture with guest speaker Dr. Barbara Mittler

Dr. Barbara Mittler, from the University of Heidelberg, explored the images of culture of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, and more importantly why the visuals of this movement are still prevalent today.

2017 Lunar New Year Celebration

We kicked off the new year with crafts, performances, and activities.

2017 Asian Studies Careers Night

Every year, Careers Night is a wonderful opportunity to gain advice and network with people who have

food, and more! See photos from this year's celebration [here](https://secure.campaigner.com/CSB/public/archive.aspx?args=MjE2Mjk1MzA=8/11).

Research

**Edward Slingerland named a Distinguished University Scholar**

This prestigious distinction recognizes exceptional members of our faculty who have distinguished themselves as scholars in research and/or teaching and learning, or who have the potential to demonstrate such leadership. The award runs for five years and is renewable for another five years. Photo by Martin Dee.

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**Dr. Christopher Rea's Latest Book Awarded the Joseph Levenson Post-1900 Book Prize**

Congratulations to Dr. [Christopher Rea](https://secure.campaigner.com/CSB/public/archive.aspx?args=MjE2Mjk1MzA%3d) for being awarded the Joseph Levenson Post-1900 Book Prize (China) by the Association for Asian Studies for his latest book, *The Age of Irreverence: A New History of Laughter in China* (California, 2015).

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**Dr. Peter Nosco releases new book, "Individuality in Early Modern Japan"**

In his new book, Dr. Nosco argues that aspects of Tokugawa society point to far higher degrees of individuality in early modern Japan than has heretofore been acknowledged.
Dr. Anne Murphy Receives Dean of Arts Research Award

These awards are to allow research faculty one semester to concentrate entirely on research without teaching or administrative duties.

Dr. Christina Laffin One of Ten Canada Research Chairs at UBC to Receive Funding this Year

Dr. Laffin received renewed funding for her position as the Canada Research Chair in Premodern Japanese Literature and Culture.

Dr. Joshua Mostow Receives a Japanese Foreign Minister's Commendation

The Foreign Minister's Commendations are awarded to individuals and groups with outstanding achievements in international fields, in order to acknowledge their contributions to the promotion of friendship between Japan and other countries and areas.

Student News

The 29th Annual BC Japanese Speech Contest

2017 BC "Chinese Bridge" Mandarin Speech Contest Results
Nineteen students from UBC were selected as the finalists to participate in the 29th Annual BC Japanese Speech Contest held at the Asian Centre on March 4th. Of these contestants, four UBC students moved on to the national finals.

Forty-eight students from eight post-secondary institutions over BC participated in the contest. Out of the 11 prizes in total, UBC students won 6.

**UBC Student Clarisa Madilao Wins First Prize at Toronto Korean Speech Contest**

The event was hosted by the Centre for the Study of Korea at the University of Toronto, the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea in Toronto and the Korean Education Centre in Canada.

**Okinoshima: A Field Visit Report**

From October to November 2015, Dr. Christina Laffin and four graduate students of Japanese literature travelled to the remote islands of Okinoshima in Shimane Prefecture to present an exhibit, workshop, and series of lectures aimed at making local cultural heritage more accessible.

**BC "Chinese Bridge" Mandarin Singing Contest**

On Saturday, November 19, 2016, the BC "Chinese Bridge" Mandarin Singing Contest for University Students was held at UBC. About 60 students from eight post-secondary institutions across BC participated in the contest. Out of the 18 prizes in total, UBC students won 9.

**Merchandise**
Check out our Asian Studies Merchandise!

Stop by the main office (Room 607 in the Asian Centre) to find out more about our Asian Studies' merchandise. As of now, we can only accept cash or check.

Find us on social media: