

Department of East Asian Languages & Literatures

August 2023 Newsletter



(L-R): IMDA graduates Zane Zaloga and Yutian Jia
with advisors Kun Quian and Charles Exley



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures Newsletter, which we hope to publish semi-annually to keep our alumni and friends up-to-date on doings in the Department. 2023 has been a very busy year for the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures. Both students and faculty are joyfully adjusting to our full return to in-person instruction following the pandemic and making up for the years when travel to Asia was nearly halted. Our students can now participate in a wide variety of study-abroad experiences and enjoy full programming on campus in Oakland. I invite you to read about our recent activities and to contact me (eaoyler@pitt.edu) if you have news you would like to share with the EALL community!

Elizabeth Oyler, PhD

DEPARTMENT CHAIR, EAST ASIAN
LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

On-Campus Happenings

In March, our Spring Fling showcased student talent in a celebration of East Asian cultures featuring dance, song, instrumental music, martial arts, and kong zhong (“Chinese yo-yo”). The event was kicked off by screening a documentary film showcasing memories of Pittsburgh’s Chinatown by residents of this once-lively community in downtown Pittsburgh. The screening was in a series of events by our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee addressing Asian, Asian-American, and Pacific Islander experiences and concerns in our community.

Our REALL DEALL undergraduate research conference (April 21, 2023) featured the capstone presentations of our graduating seniors and several rising seniors. The REALL DEALL allows students to present capstone or seminar research in a formal setting before faculty, classmates, and guests. This year’s presentations addressed linguistics and language learning; literature; economics; film; and other topics. The award for best research presentation was shared between Nathaniel Aaron for “An Investigation into Chinese Classifiers:

The Creation and General Acceptance of New Nominal Connections in Mandarin Chinese” and Benjamin Gilby, Oleksii Kucherenko, and Kellen Weidman for “Japanese Women’s Language and Its Relation to the Traditional Family Structure.”

Our faculty has been busy as well. In February, we cooperated with the Japan Society of America, Pennsylvania, to host a series of performances and workshops of the multi-media puppet performance of *Akutagawa*, a collaboration between writer Tom Lee and Nishikawa Koryu V’s Hachioji Cart Puppet troupe from Hachioji, Japan. The performances at Pittsburgh Public School’s CAPA 6-12 auditorium transformed the stage into a magical landscape where the stories of famed author Akutagawa Ryunosuke came to life. In addition to the performances, the artists also ran a workshop for students at Pitt and neighboring institutions at Pitt’s Henry Heymann Theatre and workshops for adults and children at City of Asylum and the Children’s Museum.

In May, Charles Exley and Elizabeth Oyler hosted the Association for Japanese Literary Studies’ 30th

meeting on campus. The conference brought together prominent scholars of Japanese literature from around the globe for a long weekend of exploring new work on Japanese literature. The event highlights included a reading by poet Ito Hiromi and her translator, fellow poet Jeffrey Angles, and a lecture by Professor Tsuboi Hideto of Waseda University.



Student panelist at the REALL DEALL, top r-l: Thomas Hayden, Benjamin Gilby, Oleksii Kucherenko, Zane Zaloga (chair); bottom l-r: Nathaniel Aaron, Kellen Weidman

CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!

Our graduating class of 2023 overcame the many challenges of the Covid pandemic to complete their degrees despite online classes and closed borders that foiled study abroad. We are proud of their perseverance, ingenuity, and academic achievements. Best wishes to all in your next steps.

BA Graduates

- Nathaniel Aaron (B. Phil., Chinese; Chinese honor society)
- Helen Bovi (Chinese honor society)
- Malinda Chau (Japanese honor society)
- Winnie Chen
- Halley Cook (Chinese honor society)
- Rozie Fero
- Chase Fong
- Chris McGlade (Chinese honor society)
- Lisa Sipe

IDMA Graduates

- Yutian Jia
- Zane Zaloga



FACULTY NEWS

Welcome, Shunichi Maruyama!

Shunichi Maruyama will join us as Visiting Instructor of Japanese in Fall, 2023. He holds an MA degree in East Asian Languages and Language and Literatures from the Ohio State University, where he's also currently working on a PhD in Japanese Language Pedagogy. We are delighted he will join our Japanese language program for the 2023-24 academic year. He will be teaching First- and Third-Year Japanese in Fall, 2023.

Welcome, Seung-Hwan Shin!

We are thrilled that Seung-Hwan Shin will join us as Associate Teaching Professor of Korean in Fall, 2023. Professor Shin has been with us as a Visiting Lecturer, helping build our offerings in Korean Culture, Film, and Literature, and we are delighted that he is now with us permanently. Professor Shin will be teaching World of Korea: Past and Present, Introduction to Korea Through Films, and Introduction to Modern Korean Literature in Fall, 2023.

Congratulations, Yi Xu!

Yi Xu has been promoted from Associate Professor to Professor in recognition of her important contributions to Pitt as a very popular teacher and internationally recognized researcher. After a busy sabbatical semester in Spring, 2023, during which she published and presented research in numerous venues, she's looking forward to returning to teaching in the Fall, when she will teach Fourth-Year Chinese.

Faculty Updates

Wanching Hsieh-Meyers was in Taiwan this summer to teach a Business Chinese course at Tunghai University, where 7 of our EALL students from the Chinese program also participated in the Taiwan Fulbright CSAT mini-semester study abroad program. Hiroshi Nara spent his sabbatical finishing a book on Ernest Fenollosa, tentative title: "The True Theory of Art: The Legacy of Ernest F. Fenollosa in Japan," now forthcoming from Lexington Books.

Abby Lombardi (A&S '23)

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Each year, we recognize advanced undergraduate students who excel in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean language and academics. Winners are chosen by faculty in each of these three sections.

Congratulations to this year's winners:

Academics Prize in Chinese

Nathaniel Aaron

Language Achievement Award in Chinese

Helen Bovi

Academic Prize in Japanese

Thomas Hayden

Language Achievement Award in Japanese

Benjamin Gilby

Academics Prize in Korean

Abby Lombardi

Language Achievement Award in Korean

Hannah Faulkner



ALUMNI NEWS

- Jason Burrell (2020) received a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship grant and has taught English in Taiwan since graduating. He received a promotion this year and will teach at National Cheng Kung University, Taiwan, starting September 2023.
- Austin Rosencrans (2022) is heading to Japan for ten months! He will study intensive Japanese at the Inter-University Center for Japanese Studies (IUC) in Yokohama from September 2023 to June 2024.
- Emma Russel (2020) has worked as a Chinese and Korean language analyst at the National Security Agency since graduating. In addition to her full-time position at the NSA, she plans to pursue an M.A. degree in Second Language Acquisition at the University of Maryland part-time starting in Fall, 2023.
- Marc Smith (2022) has been working as a part-time English language mentor at Tunghai University, Taiwan since he graduated. He was recently accepted by the National

Chengchi University (Taiwan) and will pursue a Master's Degree in International Relations starting in Fall, 2023.

- Abby Lombardi (2023) is pursuing an MBA at Hanyang University in Seoul, South Korea. She is happy to continue studying Asia by specializing in Korean and Asian Business Studies.

SUMMER PROGRAMS

EALL has been busy with the following summer language and culture programs!

Advanced Medical Chinese, taught by Yi Xu

EALL launched an inaugural Advanced Medical Chinese professional enrichment course in the Summer of 2023, catering to 10 students from the School of Medicine. The course embraced an array of dynamic formats, including lectures and practices on appropriate and sensitive language use within clinical settings, interviews with standardized patients, and guest lectures given by medical professionals. Students acquired practical vocabulary, essential patterns, and pragmatic competence to handle the intricacies of communication in real-life medical situations as they learned to understand patients' chief complaints and their medical, social, and family history and, in turn, explain courses of action in Chinese. The course covered a wide range of case scenarios, including various types of pain, flu-like symptoms, palpitation, pneumonia, allergies, prenatal visit, etc. Students also engaged in a remote bilingual seminar session in which they learned



Pitt In Japan 2023

about the philosophies and practices of traditional Chinese medicine from doctors in Zhejiang Hospital, China. Students found the experience “very cool” and the course “extremely well designed.” Professor Xu received funding from the Asian Studies Center to develop this course, and she is currently exploring avenues for collaboration with students and faculty from the School of Nursing, School of Medicine, and School of Public Health. The aim is to create a sustainable series of medical Chinese learning opportunities for Pitt students.

speed friending with native Chinese speakers and heritage students, went grocery shopping in a local Chinese store, created their own bubble tea recipe, and served the guests at the last-day celebration party.

“CoolChinese” has ignited students’ interest in learning the Chinese language, fostered a deep appreciation and respect for both U.S. and Chinese cultures, and forged a strong bond between the local community and Pitt.

Pitt in Japan, taught by Charles Exley

Pitt in Japan is a five-week summer program based on the CUBE campus of Konan University in Nishinomiya, Japan. This year we traveled with ten students, most of whom had little to no Japanese language training. We learned about the exciting Kansai area of Osaka, Kobe, and Kyoto through survival language and culture classes, business and foodways courses, and field trips to Nara, Osaka, Kobe, and Kyoto in a jam-packed 5-week summer program. Apart from experiencing Japanese culture, history, and food first-hand, Pitt students made lifelong connections with students from Konan University at cultural events, late-night karaoke, tea drinking, and taiko drumming. We created a short film (modeled after US morning news programs) that introduced Pittsburgh as a gesture of thanks to our amazing hosts. The highlight of the trip was probably our trip to nearby Koshien stadium to cheer on the Hanshin Tigers baseball team.

CoolChinese, taught by Bei Cheng and Fan Fan

This summer, the Chinese program successfully ran the “CoolChinese Language and Culture” camp again after a 3-year pause during the Covid-19 pandemic. The 3-week long camp was from June 26 to July 14 and offered language and culture immersion opportunities to ten local high students from five school districts. The students joined the camp with zero to little prior experience of the language, but at the end of the program, they were not only able to converse on common daily topics, such as self-intro, family and hometown, school, and grade, but also gain an understanding multiple aspects of Chinese culture, like square dance, tea culture, and Beijing Opera. The curriculum was created to help students learn the language through doing and dealing with real-world situations. The students did



CoolChinese Participants

Summer East Asian Language Study (SEALS), Intensive Japanese Language, taught by Sachiko Takabatake, Junzo Oshimo, and Stephen Luft

The Japanese program successfully completed another SEALS (Summer East Asian Language Studies) Japanese in July. This intensive program allows students to complete a year's worth of language classes in an intensive summer program. An upper-class student serves as a teacher's assistant, helping the students by answering their questions and advising them on how to study. This year the students enjoyed a Japanese movie, an outing to the Carnegie Museum, Japanese calligraphy, and, of course, Japanese food. They also learned how to play Go, a Japanese board game. This year's assistant, Olivia, observed that they "improved a significant amount over the ten weeks of instruction." She recommends these intensive courses "for students looking to advance their Japanese knowledge at a fast but rewarding pace."

Imagining Global Cities of the Future, taught by Elizabeth Oyler

This co-located, hybrid course brought together a group of nine Pitt students with peers from Konan University to create cross-cultural experiences as we study sustainable initiatives in Pittsburgh and Kobe. The course culminated with a trip by Pitt students to Kobe, Japan, where we visited the Kobe Farmers' Market and the Farmstand cooperative; KIITO Design Center, where we learned how to make bread with the "Panji," a group of retired men who build community through baking, both in Kobe's city center. We also explored museums focused on the rebuilding of Kobe following the devastating 1995 earthquake and were invited to a farm where we helped prepare a field for rice planting. We look forward to continuing the program with a visit by Konan students to Pittsburgh next summer!



Imagine Global Cities of the Future

CLASSES FOR FALL 2023

The following classes still have openings, and we invite all interested students to check them out!

CHIN 0001

Join CHIN 0001, Beginning Chinese and discover the wonders of one of the world's most-spoken languages (second only to English). Immerse yourself in small-group learning and experience the rich cultures through board games, mahjong, Chinese yo-yo, and Chinese calligraphy, and put it into practice to order delicious Chinese dishes and bubble tea. Connect with new friends worldwide through enrichment opportunities and social media apps. Please email us at xuyi@pitt.edu for all Chinese language-related inquiries or at wahsieh@pitt.edu for questions about CHIN 0001.

CHIN1050

Join CHIN1050 Fourth-Year Chinese and take your advanced-level Chinese proficiency to new heights! Whether you're a heritage language speaker or have honed your skills through dedicated study, this course is designed to challenge and engage you. Explore authentic materials such as news articles, documentary clips, films, and online forum posts, and be amazed at how much you can discuss current events and controversial topics of public interest in just one semester. Immerse yourself in the rich cultures of the Chinese language through collaborative projects and forge lasting connections with fellow Chinese language and culture enthusiasts on campus and beyond. Do not miss your chance to unleash your full potential! Contact Professor Xu (xuyi@pitt.edu) to inquire or to request a placement.

CHIN 1040

CHIN 1040, Advanced Literary Chinese introduces the basic grammar and structures of literary Chinese. In addition, fundamental background knowledge and reference tools that can aid in understanding classical Chinese texts will be introduced. English is the primary language of translation and class discussion, with supplementary use of modern Mandarin. Students will be required to recite assigned texts out loud in Chinese at several points during the semester. Certain homework and the final project will also require the use of modern Mandarin Chinese. This course fulfills the Advanced Language requirement for graduation.

CHIN 1089

CHIN 1089 The World of China in Fall, 2023 will be taught by Professor Chik. The course will interrogate the idea of "Chineseness." People often focus their attention on the "center" and tend to overlook the regions traditionally referred to as the "periphery." However, how are the "center" and "periphery" defined? Which areas are considered the "center," and which are considered the "periphery"? From what perspective are these distinctions made? Like other cultural circles worldwide, the entire Sinosphere also exhibits differences between the "center" and the "periphery." Is it possible to simply disregard the people and cultures in these "peripheral" regions?

Looking Ahead

FALL 2023 EVENTS

- Professor Jon Holt of Portland State University will lecture on “Reading seikatsu in manga” at 6 p.m. on September 20 on the Pitt campus. For more information, contact Professor Exley at exley@pitt.edu
- Professor Emerita Noriko Reider of Miami University will lecture on “Japanese Demons: Oni” on November 7, 2023. For more information, contact Professor Oyler at eaoyler@pitt.edu



SUPPORT EALL

Gifts – of all sizes – ensure that EALL is able to provide quality programming and student support. If you would like to make a charitable donation to EALL to support our programs, please visit our Support page at www.deall.pitt.edu/about/support. Please note in the memo box if you would like your contribution to be used for a specific program.

And please keep in touch! We're eager to know what you're doing and to share your stories with other EALL alumni and friends.