

Form E-1-A for Boston College Core Curriculum

Department/Program East Asian Languages and Cultures

Have formal learning outcomes for the department's Core courses been developed? What are they? (What specific sets of skills and knowledge does the department expect students completing its Core courses to have acquired?)

The Program in East Asian Languages and Cultures at BC in recent years have offered several courses in rotation (EALC 2064 Far Eastern Literary Masterpieces, EALC 2161 Ghosts and Strange Happenings in Chinese Literature, EALC 2162 Gods and Heroes in Chinese Literature) that fulfill the undergraduate Diversity core requirement. In addition, the EALC Program offers one Chinese literature course (EALC 3166 Traditional Chinese Literature) that fulfills the Literature core requirement.

All the EALC Diversity courses aim to not only introduce students to the diverse cultures and histories of East Asian countries but also to instill the necessary research, writing, and critical thinking skills needed when encountering peoples and issues concerning East Asia. With only one exception (EALC 2064) that covers China, Japan, and Korea, most Diversity courses offered by the EALC program in recent years focus on the geographic region that we call China today. However, even in those China centered courses, special emphasis is placed on the historical changes and regional, religious, and ethnic diversity within the country itself. Because of different historical experiences, China and the rest of East Asia may seem to have some unique characteristics. However, these relative differences are taught in our diversity courses not as essential "otherness" but as case studies of human diversity. In other words, neither China nor the rest of East Asia is taught as an unchanging monolith. The diversity within China is shown to mirror the diversity within East Asia and within humanity itself. To that aim, in class discussions we frequently use comparative theories or global frameworks as starting points when we treat East Asian examples. In summary, the most important learning outcome of all EALC diversity courses is for students to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to think, research, and write about China and the rest of East Asia in an informed, critical, and intelligent manner that will ultimately better our own understanding of ourselves and the world.

EALC 3166 "Traditional Chinese Literature" fulfills the Literature core requirement. The learning outcome for the course is to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for critical analysis of masterpieces in traditional Chinese literature in English translation, including understanding of major genres, poetics, themes, writers, and masterworks. The learning outcomes include research and critical writing skills about Chinese literature in English translation.

Where are these learning outcomes published? Be specific. (Where are the department's expected learning outcomes for its Core courses accessible: on the web, in the catalog, or in your department handouts?)

The above learning outcomes are written in the respective syllabus of each EALC Diversity and Literature core courses. The wording may not be exactly the same, the learning outcomes are fully expressed in ways that are appropriate to the specific topics of each course. All these syllabi are in turn published online in our university Canvas system.

- 1) **Other than GPA, what data/evidence is used to determine whether students have achieved the stated outcomes for the Core requirement?** (What evidence and analytical approaches do you use to assess which of the student learning outcomes have been achieved more or less well?)

Since all the EALC Diversity and Literature core courses aim for students to acquire the cultural and historical knowledge and critical thinking skills necessary to do intelligent research and writing about aspects of China or East Asia, in addition to quizzes and tests, all these core courses require students to write a series of short papers leading to a final presentation and research paper on a topic covered by the course. For courses that use literary texts as materials (such as EALC 2161 and EALC 2162), in lieu of the traditional research paper students have the added option of writing a research/creative project modeled upon/paying tribute to a specific Chinese masterwork or traditional genre/literary type. For this alternative writing option, students still need to write a researched based defense/apology of his or her own creative work to highlight the indebtedness to the literary model and to justify the innovations. Regardless of the form of the final project a student chooses, I evaluate all student projects using the same criteria that support the stated learning outcomes of the course, namely the ability to do critical thinking and research for a writing project that demonstrates in-depth understanding about aspects of China/East Asia and human diversity in general.

- 2) **Who interprets the evidence? What is the process?** (Who in the department is responsible for interpreting the data and making recommendations for curriculum or assignment changes if appropriate? When does this occur?)

As the sole faculty member responsible for teaching all the EALC Diversity and Literature core courses, I personally teach, advise, and assess all my students' quizzes, tests, and writing projects for each course. I do not use a grader or teaching assistant. The Departmental Chairperson makes recommendations for curriculum changes when necessary, although this has not been necessary in recent years.

- 3) **What were the assessment results and what changes have been made as a result of using this data/evidence?** (What were the major assessment findings? Have there been any recent changes to your curriculum or program? How did the assessment data contribute to those changes?)

There have not been major changes to the EALC diversity core courses in recent years. There have only been minor adjustments made regarding course materials and numbers of quizzes and tests, all in service to enhancing the stated learning outcomes, which have remained unchanged over the years.

- 6) **Date of the most recent program review.** (Your latest comprehensive departmental self-study and external review.)

Since the EALC program only offers a minor in Chinese, there has not been a dedicated program review since the last Slavic and Eastern Languages and Literatures Departmental review before the now defunct SELL merged with the former German Studies Department.

by Sing-chen Lydia Chiang, Director

East Asian Languages and Cultures Program