

Northwestern | Asian Languages and Cultures

Faculty News



David Boyk,
Associate
Professor of
Instruction of Hindi
Urdu Language,
published
*Provincial
Metropolis:
Intellectuals and the*

Hinterland in Colonial India (Cambridge University Press, 2025). With Daniel Majchrowicz he published *Zer o Zabar: An Introduction to the Urdu Script*, an open-access interactive textbook. University Press. They also received the Humanities in Translation Award for *The Ajeeb Society*, our translation of a collection of Urdu short stories that will be published by Northwestern University Press.



Laura Brueck,
Professor of South
Asian and
Comparative
Literature, is co-
editing a
forthcoming
anthology of
essays titled *Sex,*

Text, Translation: Reading Gender. The book considers how we might develop nuanced theories of translation from close readings of South Asian texts, as opposed to making South Asian texts objects of a Western theoretical gaze. In December, she co-organized a symposium around this volume at Ashoka University outside of Delhi in India, and next spring will host a second one at Northwestern.

A Message From the Chair

The 2025-2026 year was a challenging one for Northwestern University, but the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures stayed focused on our teaching, research, and service responsibilities and enjoyed another successful year. For the second year in a row, the department's Karaoke night "ALC Can Sing!" was a ringing success and proved once again that learning a foreign language can be fun as well as rewarding. The Provost's Office recognized Noriko Taira Yasohama's transformative service to the university with the Daniel I. Linzer Award for Faculty Excellence in Service. ALC colleagues continued to make pathbreaking innovations in study abroad programs and in the use of AI technology to facilitate foreign language acquisition. And as ever, colleagues contributed to the expansion of knowledge in the Asian humanities. It has been a privilege chairing such a dynamic, talented, and dedicated department and I wish the incoming ALC Chair, Corey Byrnes, all the luck in the world.

Melissa Macauley, Chair

Congratulations Class of 2026!



ALC majors: Laura Shi, Conrad Martin, Aja Frazier, Megan Lin. Not pictured: Michelle Sheen

We are excited to congratulate all of our students who graduated in 2026! We can't wait to see where your next adventure takes you.

Faculty News



Chin-Hung Chang, Associate Professor of Instruction of Chinese Language, received Hewlett Fund for Curriculum

Innovation award, in collaboration with Professor Eun Hee Kim, to further develop Jack, an AI-powered language practice chatbot. With support from MADS, this interdisciplinary project will expand Jack's role-play capacities, introduce voice-based interaction, and enhance its linguistic analysis and evaluation of pronunciation accuracy. These innovations will provide students with more authentic, personalized opportunities to develop their language proficiency beyond the classroom.

Professor Chang also earned her doctoral degree in Education Policy, Organization and Leadership from the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign. Her dissertation, grounded in the New Learning framework, examined the impact of digital technologies on informal language learning. Building on her research interest in educational technology, she received a Baker Faculty Research Grant to investigate how AI can promote deep learning and metacognitive development in language learning, further advancing research on the pedagogical applications of AI in higher education.

In summer 2026, Professor Chang served as an Assistant Faculty Leader for the

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2026 University Teaching Awards



Noriko Taira Yasohama was recognized with the Provost's Daniel I. Linzer Award for Faculty Excellence in Service. A well-deserved honor! Noriko's service record across three decades has been transformative. Her contributions have made an impact on the College and fostered community-building in significant ways. She worked hard and fostered the excellence of language pedagogy at Northwestern University.

Here are just a few highlights from her nomination:

"Noriko has offered superlative service to the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures [ALC] as well as to the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences. In 2013, the Program in Asian and African Languages was broken down into several departments, including ALC. She served as the Director of Language Programs for the first ten years of the new department from 2013 to 2023, supervising four different language programs in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Hindi/Urdu. She managed the transformation and development of the curriculum of these four language programs (to this day, WCAS upholds the course numbering system she invented in ALC as a model for other departments to follow)."

"Beyond ALC, Noriko has offered exemplary service to the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences. In 2004, then Dean Linzer--impressed with her organizational savvy, management skills, and cheerful demeanor--appointed her as the inaugural Co-Chair of the Council on Language Instruction (CLI). Among her many accomplishments during her 2004-2006 term, she oversaw all subcommittee work and improved CLI's internal communications processes."

"Since September 2023, she has been serving as the inaugural Co-Chair of the Language Resource Center of Weinberg College. This new Center serves as an information and collaboration hub for language learning and teaching at Northwestern".



Faculty News

undergraduate Discover Taiwan: Mandarin Language and Culture program. She accompanied the students on their travel to Taiwan and facilitated daily academic and cultural activities, including visits to academic institutions, museums, historic sites, companies, local markets, and religious temples. Before each excursion, she led target Mandarin lessons that prepared students to communicate with local university students, vendors, tour guides, restaurant owners, and company staff in authentic settings. She also served as a key resource for student well-being by assisting with healthcare needs and responding to emergencies during the program.



Wen-pin Hsieh, Assistant Professor of Instruction of Chinese Language was invited by Chinese Studies

International (Vol. 30, 2026) to contribute a scholarly review of *Chinese Characters Across Asia: How the Chinese Script Came to Write Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese* by Zev Handel. His review examines the historical development and regional adaptation of the Chinese writing system, highlighting the book's significance for Chinese language education, East Asian studies, and the teaching of Chinese characters in multilingual and multicultural contexts.

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Speech Contests

The 7th Annual **Midwest Korean Speech Contest** was held at the Korean Education Center on April 4. A total of 51 contestants from 17 universities delivered excellent speeches, supported by more than 100 teachers, parents, and community members.

Three contestants—Kaylyn Nguyen, Elizabeth Castillo, and Zak Massoud—represented KLP at the beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels and gave excellent presentations. This year was especially meaningful for KLP. **Zak Massoud** received an Honorable Mention award, and Northwestern K-Dance presented a wonderful K-pop dance performance.



Fei Hao, a Chinese language student in Professor Luo's Chinese 315 course participated in the **Midwest Chinese Speech Contest** on May 16. Among the 46 contestants from 12 universities in six Midwestern States, Fei received a gold medal in her Advanced Heritage Group. The topic of her speech is "Understanding My Parents' Generation Between Two Cultures." Her talent show was a traditional Chinese dance.



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In April 2026, Wen-pin was invited to deliver the keynote address at the annual conference of the Intercollegiate Taiwanese American Student Association (ITASA). Drawing on his personal journey and professional experiences across Taiwan and the United States, he reflected on the evolving nature of cultural, ethnic, and professional identity and how pivotal life experiences can shape one's sense of belonging and purpose. Encouraging students to view identity as an ongoing process rather than a fixed destination, he explored the value of embracing multiple cultural perspectives, questioning one's own assumptions, and building communities through dialogue, empathy, and shared experiences.

Recognizing his continued leadership in global education, the Northwestern University Office of International Relations reappointed Wen-pin to lead Discover Taiwan and Global Engineering Taiwan Trek in Summer 2026. Building on previous years, he further integrated Mandarin language learning with intercultural engagement and interdisciplinary exploration of Taiwan's religious, cultural, and corporate landscapes.

Students Celebrate International Women's Day

To celebrate International Women's Day, the Council on Language Instruction Outreach Committee invited faculty to encourage their students to participate in a poster exhibit featuring remarkable women from across the globe. Language students from 14 languages created posters either individually or in groups. Students from Asian Languages and Cultures created posters featuring: Lata Mangeshkar, Kalpana Chawla, Durgabai Deshmukh, Rani Lakshmibai, Zheng Yi Sao, Li Qingzhao, Tu Youyou, Banana Yoshimoto, and Mariko Okada.



ALC Can Sing!

ALC hosted our 2nd annual Karaoke night! Originating in Japan, Karaoke is an interactive form of entertainment, where people sing along to pre-recorded music while the lyrics are displayed on a screen. 17 faculty and staff members helped organize the event. Harris 107 was jam packed with 100+ students and faculty singing in Chinese, Hindi Urdu, Japanese and Korean. Northwestern's East Asian-interest a cappella group the Treblemakers kicked-off the event and got everyone into the singing mood! We had a blast!



Faculty Focus: **Eunmi Lee**, Professor of Instruction, set to retire in 2027



Tell us a little about your path to becoming a professor.

I came to Northwestern in 1994, fresh from teaching Korean as a graduate student at Indiana University. It was the year Kurt Cobain of Nirvana passed away and President Bienen was announced as Northwestern's new leader. Smelling like a rookie spirit, I started teaching Korean – a language then considered strictly less commonly taught. During my first year, the campus was shaken by a historic student hunger strike demanding an Asian American Studies program. Seeing these students yearn to learn about their own heritages and history gave me a new perspective on my work. I realized that teaching Korean wasn't simply language instruction; rather, I was helping students reconnect with their families, communities, histories, and identities, as almost everyone in my classroom shared a connection to the Korean lineage.

You built the Korean Language Program - What changes have you seen in the department over the years?

My thirty-some-year tenure at Northwestern roughly coincides with the span of a generation. The students during my first years were second-generation Korean Americans; today, most students of Korean heritage belong to the third generation. The people they want to learn to communicate with are no longer their parents, but their grandparents. Furthermore, heritage students are no longer the mix of students from majority in the classroom, which has transformed into a diverse various backgrounds, lineages, and nationalities. Over the past decade, Korean has become the fastest growing major foreign language on North American college campuses. For this surge in popularity, I give credit for this cultural phenomenon to BTS and *Hallyu* - - the Korean Wave. I feel truly blessed to have ridden this incredible wave as I now approach the shore of retirement.



Eunmi (top row third from right) at ALC's first official department meeting in Sept 2013.

Faculty Focus continued..

What's next?

Presidents have come and gone - - Bienen did it twice - - yet I have been at Northwestern all those years without missing a single day. Reflecting on it, I remember receiving perfect attendance awards during my school years in Korea. Steadfastness and diligence are important Korean virtues, and I have tried to uphold them since a young age. There have been days when I had good classes, not-so-good classes, or messed-up classes, but I persevered through them all, anchored by the Serenity Prayer I keep on my desk: "to accept things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference." My days ahead will likely be no different, and I will continue:

"Living one day at a time,
Enjoying one moment at a time"



Eunmi (center) with friends from Program of Asian and African Languages (PAAL)



Eunmi in the early days



Eunmi with ALC major Kiana Staples



Eunmi (bottom center) with faculty and students at Scary Movie Night!

Study Abroad



As the CLP study abroad advisor, **Chin-Hung Chang** conducted study abroad site visits in Taipei in June 2026 in collaboration with the Global Learning Office as part of a Provost's initiative to evaluate Chinese language study abroad programs. The visits focused on two programs: the International Chinese Language Program (ICLP) (pictured left), an existing partner program, and CET Taiwan (pictured right), a potential future partner program. During the visits, Chin-Hung met with program staff,



administrators, and instructors to discuss curricular structure, language instruction, and program goals, and observed both language and elective classes in order to better understand each program's instructional approach and student learning experience.

The site visits were designed to support ongoing review of program quality and curricular alignment as Northwestern continues to strengthen its study abroad offerings in Chinese language education.

As the founding faculty member of the Global Horizons Initiative, **Wen-pin Hsieh** worked in partnership with Northwestern's Global Learning Office to secure a \$300,000 grant supporting a three-year pilot study abroad program for first-generation, low-income students. In Spring Break 2026, he successfully led the inaugural cohort of 19 students to Taiwan, designing an interdisciplinary curriculum grounded in intercultural learning and place-based education. The program encouraged students to examine Taiwan through multiple perspectives—including Indigenous cultures, migration, religion, community engagement, sustainability, and contemporary society—while fostering cultural humility, global awareness, and confidence navigating unfamiliar cultural environments.

As the demand for study abroad opportunities in Korea continues to grow, we have seen the need to expand our Korean Study Abroad program. The Global Learning Office (GLO) and the Korean Language Study Abroad coordinators, **Ihnhee Kim** and **Eunmi Lee**, have collaborated to add Korea University to our existing partner institutions: Yonsei University and Ewha Womans University. Students will be able to apply to Korea University for the Fall 2027 term. This addition will provide an excellent new learning opportunity for both the NU student community and the KLP program. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Sara Tully and Lauren Yurman (GLO) for their initiative and dedication. Our heartfelt thanks also go to Melissa Macauley, our department chair, for providing a letter of endorsement.

At the request of the Global Learning Office (GLO), **Yumi Shiojima** visited the CET Osaka Program on July 7 as part of an exploration of potential new opportunities. The GLO and the Japanese Language Program (JLP) regularly evaluate existing programs and explore new partnerships to strengthen and diversify student options. Reviews consider academic quality, distinctive program features, immersion opportunities, student engagement, and how a program complements and enhances existing offerings. CET Osaka is currently under consideration as a potential addition to the Japan-based program portfolio. The visit reflects the continued commitment of the GLO and JLP to providing students with a diverse range of high-quality global learning opportunities.

Faculty News



Yangtian Luo,
Assistant
Professor of
Instruction of
Chinese
Language, and
Jingjing Ji
published

Advanced Chinese: Language, Society, and Culture, an open educational resource designed for advanced-level Chinese learners. Developed through Northwestern University Libraries' Open Books initiative, the textbook features authentic contemporary materials on topics such as digital culture, literature, technology, and global Chinese communities, while integrating language development with critical cultural inquiry. Freely available online, the resource supports equitable access to high-quality instructional materials for Chinese language learners and instructors worldwide.



Melissa Macauley,
Professor of
Modern Chinese
History, has been
serving on the
editorial board of
a major digitization

project, *The National Archives of Great Britain, Foreign Office Records, China, 1830-1930*, and she is happy to see that it is beginning to see the light of day. Module I: "1830-1895," the first of an anticipated three modules, is now available. She recently has given talks at Berkeley, the National University of Singapore,

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Language Learning is Fun!



Above: Japanese III students hosted a Jeopardy table at Bunkasai (the Japanese cultural festival) organized by JASA and the Japanese Club.

Below: Faculty-in-residence Myrna Garcia organized an event that included games and Dim Sum for students living in Allison Hall and also students enrolled in Chinese language classes. Co-Hosted with Prof. Jingjing Ji.



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Rice University, and the Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies. She is marching toward the end of her three-year term as the chair of the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures and is looking forward to devoting more time to her ongoing project, *The South China Sea in World History*.



Daniel Majchrowicz,
Associate
Professor of
South Asian
Literature and
Culture,
published a

book in Urdu titled *Duniyā 'aurat kī naẓar meñ: Mashriq o Maġhrib kā safarnāma—ma' muqaddama, ḥavāshī va ẓamīme* [The World Through a Woman's Eyes: A Travelogue of East and West"—With an introduction, annotations, and appendices]. It was published simultaneously in Delhi and Karachi.

Daniel gave talks at the Library of Congress, Rutgers, University of Lausanne, North Central College, and Peking University, and at the Lahore Literary Festival. He started a three-year Kaplan-funded workshop called "The Language of Islam" with Usman Hamid (Religious Studies).

He was also re-elected vice president of the American Institute of Pakistan Studies.

Support from Council on Language Instruction

The CLI supports initiatives for the enhancement of teaching such as trips to ethnic restaurants, course events, the purchase of special instructional material, etc. Pictured below are students from Prof. **Jieyu Zhou's** Chinese 121 and 125 classes. They learned about and celebrated Chinese New Year.



Support from Associated Student Government

The ASG supports Student-Faculty Interaction Grants that enable meaningful bonding experiences between students and faculty. Prof. **Rami Nair** was a recipient of one of these grants and in spring quarter took her third year Hindi-Urdu language students to the Art Institute of Chicago to see an exhibit on Kashmir by Raqib Shaw called "Paradise Lost". The theme of her Hindi-Urdu 210-0 course was "Hindi-Urdu in the Media", and one of the topics they covered was art. While at the Art Institute, students also visited other exhibits there, and some of them even chose to use the art work that they saw to later complete parts of their home assignments! They ended the trip by having South Asian snacks at Chiya Chai near the Art Institute.



The Chinese and Northwestern

Xuemao Wang, Dean of Libraries, and **Licheng Gu**, Professor of Instruction of Asian Languages and Cultures, are working on a traveling exhibition and a book project entitled *The Chinese and Northwestern*. They are digging deeply into the history of the connections between Northwestern and China. They then explore the legacies of yesterday's Chinese students and Chinese faculties on today's campus. After examining this rich history, they demonstrate the remarkable success of today's Chinese students and celebrate the achievements of our Chinese faculty members. They also celebrate the great achievements of our Chinese alumni all over the world as well as the contributions of Chinese trustees of the University.



China faculty top row: Jieyu Zhou, Jili. Sun, Wen-pin Hsieh, Chin-Hung Chang, Yangtian Luo, bottom row: Hsiu-Ling Robertson (emeritus), Melissa Macauley, Licheng Gu

ALC Colleagues Celebrate Joel Mokyr



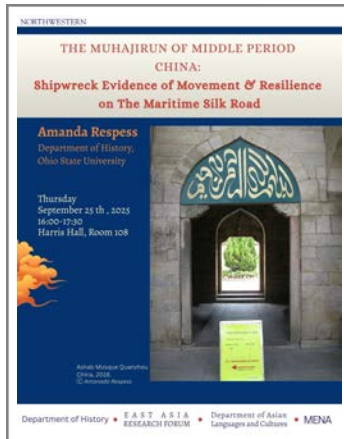
In January, Professors Jili Sun, Yumi Shiojima, Noriko Taira Yasohama, Melissa Macauley, Jingjing Ji and Licheng Gu helped to celebrate Professor Joel Mokyr (center) on his Nobel Prize. He received half of the prize for his development of a theory for sustained economic growth. You can read more [here](#).

Where Is Our Discipline Going?

Scholarly research on the East, South, and Southeast Asian regions typically dwells on individual national cultures and languages, but one recent trend in Asian Studies has been toward expanding the geographical range of analysis to consider transnational interconnections. The Department of Asian Languages and Cultures is well-positioned to contribute to this trend given our geographical coverage across East and South Asia. We are the only department in the university that has expertise across the fields of Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Tibetan, and South Asian studies. Although we usually sponsor events and lectures that focus on one of those cultural fields, we also initiate such transregional programming as Jeffrey Wasserstrom's recent lecture on "Orwell in Asia," a talk that considered George Orwell's interactions with Burmese, Indian, and Chinese intellectuals; and we co-sponsor such lectures as Amanda Respress's talk on the medieval maritime Silk Road that linked Europe and the "Middle East" with South, Southeast, and East Asia (see next page). Working in synergy with the history and religious studies departments, ALC has contributed to the emergence of Northwestern's notable reputation as a major center of Eurasian Studies. We are not simply participating in the major trends in our fields, we are generating them.

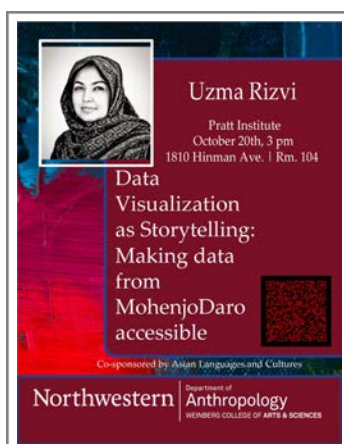
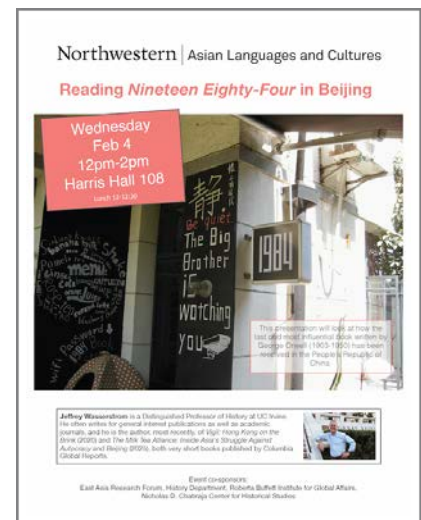
Co-sponsorships

Co-sponsorship enables departments and programs to pool their resources to invite speakers, performers, and artists to Northwestern and it also enhances interdisciplinary programming and creates larger intellectual communities on campus. Here are a few from this past year.



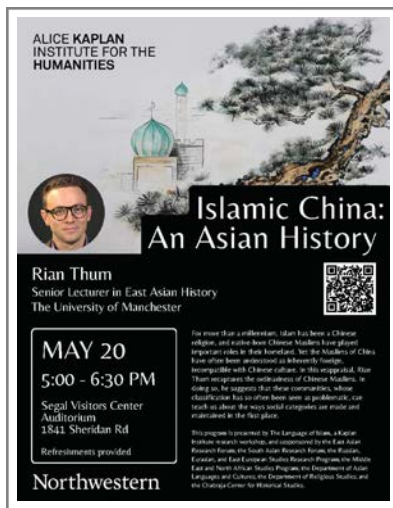
Dr Amanda Respass (History, Ohio State). Changsha-ware recovered from the ninth-century Belitung shipwreck have been described as the largest group of Tang dynasty ceramics ever found. These objects, and other shipwreck artifacts recovered from the waters of the premodern Maritime Silk Road, embody Inter-Asian connections that transcend modern boundaries. Using an archive of materials recovered from sunken merchant ships, this talk followed the trail of Persian Gulf merchants across the Indian Ocean trade routes to ports in Southeast Asia and China. Examining the remains of the Intan, Phanom Surin, and Belitung shipwrecks, *The Muhajirun of Changsha* explores the roles of conflict and resilience in patterns of movement, migration, and cultural production in the Muslim merchant community of Middle Period China.

Jeffrey Wasserstrom is a Distinguished Professor of History at UC Irvine. His talk looked at how the last and most influential book written by George Orwell (1903-1950) has been received in the People's Republic of China. Not surprisingly, it dealt with issues of censorship and surveillance, but there were unexpected sides to the story, too. The PRC is the rare case of a Big Brother state in which for decades bookstores have stocked both *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) and *Animal Farm* (1945). The first copy of Orwell's final book to reach China was ripped in two, but this had nothing to do with it being seen as a taboo work. And Shanghai was, until recently, the unlikely home to the only "1984 Bookshop" in the world. Wasserstrom also provide some background on how the material he presented fit into his current book project, "Orwell and Asia," which is under contract with Princeton University Press.



Uzma Rizvi (Pratt Institute) specializes in the archaeology of the first cities, while teaching anthropology, ancient urbanism, new materialisms, critical heritage studies, decolonization/the postcolonial critique, and social practice. Rizvi's own work intentionally interweaves archaeology with cultural criticism, philosophy, critical theory, art, and design. Her talk explored data visualization as a form of storytelling from the third millennium BCE site of MohenjoDaro (Sindh, Pakistan). These forms of communication address concerns around data accessibility, as well as providing a platform to experiment with new methodologies that expand the scope of archaeological work.

Co-sponsorships continued...

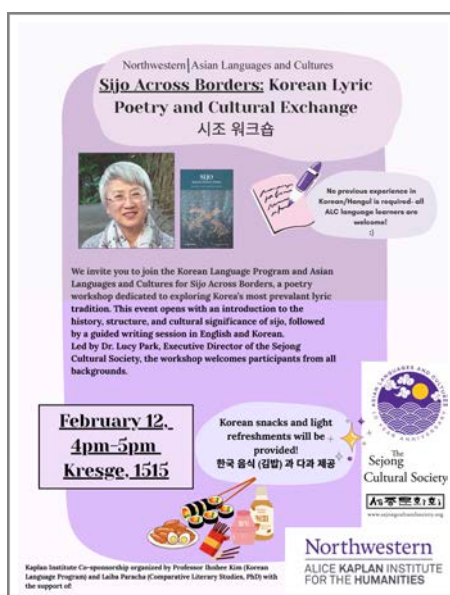


Rian Thum is Senior Lecturer in East Asian History at the University of Manchester. A contributor to the New York Times, the Washington Post, and The Nation, he is the author of *The Sacred Routes of Uyghur History*, winner of the Fairbank Prize for East Asian History from the American Historical Association and the Hsu Prize for East Asian Anthropology from the American Anthropological Association. His talk "Islamic China: An Asian History" discusses that for more than a millennium, Islam has been a Chinese religion, and native-born Chinese Muslims have played important roles in their homeland. Yet the Muslims of China have often been understood as inherently foreign, incompatible with Chinese culture. In this reappraisal, Rian Thum recaptures the ordinariness of Chinese Muslims. In doing so, he suggests that these communities, whose classification has so often been seen as problematic, can teach us about the ways social categories are made and maintained in the first place.

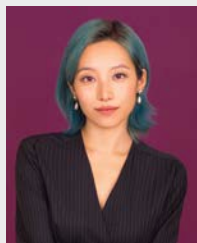
Author **Min Jin Lee** talks Korean diaspora stories, anti-Asian sentiment. Korean American Student Association executive members Weinberg senior Jun Park and Weinberg junior Henry Im moderated a discussion with Lee. The conversation explored topics including her path from law to writing, the Korean diaspora and anti-Asian sentiment. Afterward, it opened to an audience Q&A. [Read more here.](#)



Dr. Lucy Park, Executive Director of the Sejong Cultural Society gave a lecture titled "Sijo- Korea's Poetry Form", which introduced the history, structure, and philosophical underpinnings of sijo, tracing its historical evolution from the Joseon Dynasty to its modern adaptations. She then led a workshop "Writing Sijo: A Workshop in Lyric Form", which offered hands-on instruction in composing sijo in English and Korean, emphasizing its adaptability across languages and cultures.



Faculty News



Jeong Eun Annabel We,
Assistant
Professor of
Korean
Literature and
Culture

published an article in the journal *positions* on topics related to her second project. She was awarded the Buffett fellowship to work on this project in the AY 26-27.



Noriko Taira Yasohama,
Professor of
Instruction of
Japanese
Language, was
honored with
the [Daniel I. Linzer Award of](#)

[Excellence in Faculty Service](#), recognizing her outstanding and sustained contributions to language instruction in ALC and beyond. She also received the [Buffett Institute Global Collaboration Grant](#) to integrate *Global Talk*—an online exchange with university students across Japan—into the second-year Japanese curriculum, enriching language learning while fostering meaningful intercultural connections. This year marks the conclusion of her inaugural term as co-director of the Weinberg Language Resource Center, where she and Professor Elena Lanza established a strong and lasting foundation. In the coming academic year, she will continue to support the Center as Assistant Director while devoting more time to Japanese instruction.

Senior Theses

ALC awarded Departmental Honors to three graduating seniors in 2026. In their senior year, students with a sufficiently high GPA and the support of a faculty member can opt to write a senior thesis in pursuit of departmental honors. Senior honors theses represent the culmination of an outstanding amount of work in language and cultural studies, as well as a rigorous year-long process of researching, writing and revising while working one-on-one with a faculty advisor.

Conrad Martin's thesis, "From Martial Way to Medal Count: The Problems with the Sportification of Judo" was directed by Professor Laura Hein. Examining the history of judo both in Japan and globally, Conrad shows that strains of sporting competition, ethical cultivation toward a goal of self-perfection, and martial combativeness have been present and in mutual tension since the martial art's origins in the late nineteenth century. Through a detailed consideration of the efforts of judo practitioners, state authorities, and others to adopt, transform, or regulate judo, Conrad shows how judo's "sportification" originated in prewar Japan, rather than due to foreign influence in the postwar era, as earlier historians have held.

Michelle Sheen's thesis, "The Good Old Days: An Analysis of Reply 1988's Nostalgic Representation of South Korea in the '80s and the Minjung Movement" was directed by Professor Jeong Eun Annabel We. Michelle has done a careful reading of *Reply 1988's* depiction of social upheaval in South Korea in the 1980s. She shows how, at the same time as this 2015 TV show gained tremendous popularity through its meticulous recreation of a less prosperous and technologically saturated moment in recent history, its nostalgic evocation of a time when South Koreans "didn't have much, but people's hearts were warm" evacuates much of the political substance out of the conflicts it portrays.

Laura Shi's thesis, "Setting Detective Literature's History Ablaze: Regendering Japanese Detective Fiction" was directed by Professor Thomas Gaubatz. Laura's thesis is an impressive and intellectually ambitious work that demonstrates remarkable command of both English- and Japanese-language sources. It not only reassesses the history of Japanese detective fiction in important ways but also lays the foundation for a meaningful intervention into the field. Laura shows a level of professional mastery with respect to both her primary materials and secondary sources. Moreover, she fuses an incisive literary-historical narrative with a highly original close reading that is rich in empirical detail but that mobilizes such detail in service of compelling theoretical claims. This is all the more impressive considering that this is a new text that remains entirely unstudied, part of a literary moment and movement that remain uncharted—this is genuinely original work.

Student Awards



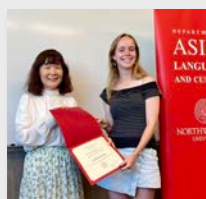
Nathan Leong and **Xiaowen Li** were awarded the Outstanding Achievement Award in Chinese Language and Culture.



Laura Shi and **Tomas Serna** were awarded the Outstanding Achievement Award in Japanese Language and Culture.



Lauren Zelnak and **Zakariah Massoud** were awarded the Outstanding Achievement Award in Korean Language and Culture.



Michelle Sheen and **Conrad Martin** were awarded the Francis L.K. Hsu-John Henry



Wigmore Senior Thesis Award.

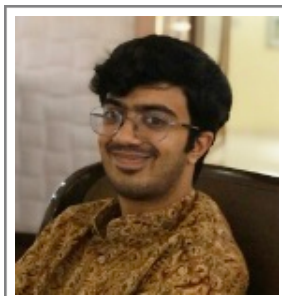


Japanese National Honor Society inductees are **Aja Frazier**, **Laura Shi**, and **Tomas Serna**.

Vrinda Gupta was awarded The Jock McLane prize for Best Paper in the field of Asian Studies.

Grad Student News

Eamon Lahiri presented his paper titled "Against Testimony: Affective Counterarchives of Internment in *When the Emperor was Divine*" at the Association for Asian American Studies Conference (AAAS) Conference, held in April, in Honolulu, Hawai'i.



Ishan Mehandru published a short essay as a part of a newly launched magazine called [The Qafila Annual](#) by a psychosocial research collective. He has an upcoming translation of an Urdu short story by Zakia Mashhaddi called "Kamina" in the USAWA Literary Review's summer edition. Ishan will be defending his dissertation titled *Dispersed Relations: Caste, Communalism, and Women Writers in South Asia (1950-2020)* on July 23rd, and joining Wake Forest University as a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Middle East and South Asia Studies program.

A big thank you to our student workers!

Ziyuan (Anna) Zhao, Tianyi Li, and Hunter Bachrach.

Special Thanks to our generous donors Aug 2025-July 2026

Andrew Jason Thomas '11, **Catherine Adele Papez '09**, **Clare Croghan Fisher '17**, **Di Xiao '18**, **Erica HuiYi Cao '26**, **Guobiao Li '17**, **Katherine An Li '26**, **Kathryn Kimura Mlsna '74, '77 JD ('03, '12 P)** and **Timothy M. Mlsna '74 JD ('03, '12 P)**, **Kelsey Joanne Allen-Niesen '19, '26 MBA**, **Korea Foundation**, **Logan Dawson Groover '10, '19 MS, '19 MBA**, **Meghana Versha Karan '24**, **Schmitz Family WCAS Scholarship Fund**, **Si Chen '20 MS**, **Swathi Kancherla Rao '10**, **Sydney Rae Smith '22**, **Tianli Yuan '14**, **Willy C. Lai '00**, **Xinyi Liu '18** and **Glenn Xu '18, '20 MS**.