



East-West Center Education Programs Promoting Asian Studies and Cultivating Collaboration between the United States and the Asia Pacific Region

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Established by the US Congress in 1960, the East-West Center was founded with the mission to contribute to

a peaceful, prosperous, and just Asia Pacific community by serving as a vigorous hub for cooperative research, education, and dialogue on critical issues of common concern to the region.

This vision has guided the Center over its fifty year history, and its Asia Pacific Education Program for Schools (AsiaPacificEd) and the Asian Studies Development Program (ASDP) have continued to fulfill its mission of peace, prosperity, and cross-cultural dialogue in elementary and secondary (K-12) schools and universities around the United States and across the Asia Pacific. Some 9,000 K-12 teachers and over 4,000 university faculty members have taken part in professional development programs to sharpen their Asia-related content knowledge and pedagogical skills and to make their own contributions to the Center's guiding mission.

ASIAPACIFICED PROGRAM FOR SCHOOLS

Building Global Skills through Cross-Cultural Learning and Exchange

AsiaPacificEd was conceived in 1987 (originally as the Consortium for Teaching Asia and the Pacific in the Schools) to improve the knowledge of Hawai'i's K-12 students about the Asia Pacific region by focusing on teachers and their professional development. Since 2003, the program has widened the lens to foster exchange, joint learning, and cross-cultural understanding between and among diverse groups of American educators and students and their counterparts in the region.

Recent programs have fostered collaboration between Indonesian Islamic boarding school educators and American teachers as they shared best practices in teaching and learning. NEH "Landmarks in American History and Culture" workshops have brought some 500 American and Japanese teachers together to examine multiple dimensions and divergent perspectives of the attacks on Pearl Harbor, and ultimately to investigate the relationship between the forces that have transformed the past and define our present. Another recent effort has facilitated cooperation between American teachers and Indonesian artists and educators to engage Muslim and Christian youth of Ambon Island, Indonesia, an area not long ago embroiled in violent religious conflict, in creating a community art project while developing friendships and discovering common interests.

AsiaPacificEd also reaches out to high school youth through hands-on experiential learning. American students have raised funds to purchase and deliver clean water filters to 308 families in a rural

Cambodian village, and, working alongside their Cambodian counterparts, planted 800 trees to help stem erosion and flooding in a Tonle Sap Lake community. American and Thai students together have found new roles for youth in building disaster-resilient communities, and American and Cambodian students have probed issues of environmental sustainability, power politics, social justice, and the Khmer Rouge tribunal process in Cambodia.

These AsiaPacificEd programs enable teachers and students to explore content and concepts concerning the region of study by building a firm foundation of knowledge and developing key skills, including thinking at higher levels and acquiring an understanding of global issues, while examining different interpretations and appreciating multiple perspectives.

Importantly, they engage participants in cross-cultural exchange of ideas and experience through meaningful one-on-one interactions with people in local communities, all the while promoting an ethic of contribution through hands-on projects that involve as well as support local communities. In the words of one participant,

We found ourselves immersed in a culture that seemed so different from anything we were used to. But because we were provided sufficient context for us to understand the nuances behind the differences we encountered and also had reliable local advisors to guide our exploration, we thoroughly enjoyed the experience and made new friends. In the process, we learned to go beyond applying our own labels to practices and beliefs that seemed strange . . . and to see the world not through a single lens, but through multiple perspectives, appreciating its multifaceted nature and understanding that there is no single 'correct' way to organize life, to think about a problem, or to understand an issue . . . We also discovered our own strengths and gifts.

By reaching beyond the simplistic message that people are all the same, AsiaPacificEd programs help participating teachers and students discover both the fundamental human qualities that bring us together and the cultural differences that enrich our world. And by creating opportunities for participants to develop personal connections to people as well as to places, topics, and issues, AsiaPacificEd provides a people-to-people approach to teaching and learning that fosters a more sophisticated understanding of cultures, societies, peoples, and their issues.

ASIAN STUDIES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (ASDP)
Twenty Years of Promoting Asian Studies and Still Counting

A common challenge facing American colleges and universities that focus on undergraduate education is closing the gap between desires and intentions on one hand, and resources on the other. This has been particularly true when it comes to reconciling the ideal of internationalizing American higher education and the realities involved in hiring new faculty members with International and Asian studies expertise. ASDP, a joint initiative of the East-West Center and the University of Hawai`i, was established in 1991 to bridge this gap and to make international education a reality on diverse campuses across the United States.

Institutional diversity is one of the great distinguishing features of American higher education, but working with a spectrum of institutions that encompasses community colleges, undergraduate-oriented state universities, and liberal arts colleges presents challenges. ASDP found that a strategy of “curriculum development through faculty development” resonates powerfully with both teaching faculty and administrators, and establishes a shared ground for commitment that has been crucial to the successes of ASDP’s distinctive approach of *infusing* Asian studies throughout the undergraduate curriculum.

Over the years, ASDP has offered exciting, content-rich faculty development programs on Asia by drawing on the abundant teaching and research resources of the East-West Center and the University of Hawai`i, the commitment of Asia specialists, ASDP alumni, affiliated institutions in the US and Asia, and the generous support of agencies and foundations in Asia and the United States. To date, ASDP has hosted forty-four residential institutes, twenty-two field seminars in Asia, and over one hundred workshops and conferences for more than

**AsiaPacificEd Program
and the
Asian Studies Development Program**

From conducting workshops and institutes that foster cross-cultural partnerships, to sharing perspectives in teaching and learning, or providing opportunities for American high school youth to work with their Asian counterparts on community service projects, the AsiaPacificEd Program is a valuable resource for K-12 schools and teachers throughout the United States and in the Asia Pacific region. For more information, please visit their Web site at <http://www.asiapacificed.org>.

The Asian Studies Development Program offers community college, college, and university faculty institutional development programs and activities during summer residential institutes, field seminars in Asia, workshops on the US mainland, and an annual academic conference. For more information, visit <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/education/asian-studies-development-program/>.

4,000 program participants from 450 colleges and universities, including some fifty universities in Asia and ten in Latin America.

ASDP began with the notion that it could build institutional capacity by offering a single type of program—a summer institute for teams of faculty members and academic administrators who are not Asia specialists—to learn about Asia from accomplished researchers and skilled teachers through lectures and discussion sessions, exploring the pedagogical potentials for infusing Asian content into undergraduate courses in the humanities and social sciences. The inaugural “Infusing Institute” was overly ambitious. It not only attempted to cover all of Asia in a three-week period, it did so by involving participants in breakfast roundtables, formal lunchtime discussions, afternoon site visits, and evening films, leaving little time for reflection. ASDP’s first lesson—one widely applicable in program development—is that oftentimes “less is more!”

The second lesson, “listen to the learners,” led to a second program model. Advised that learning about Asia might be supplemented by learning in Asia, ASDP initiated a series of field seminars in which faculty members travel together exploring a unifying set of themes. Feedback from participants further suggested the merits of following through with outreach activities on the US mainland, which developed into campus visits and regional workshops.

ASDP’s success has not been due just to the quality of its programs, but also to its “culture of emergence,” ASDP’s willing response to the needs, interests, and insights of the faculty members and administrators at undergraduate-serving institutions. ASDP has quite literally grown along with these institutions over its twenty-year existence and recognizes the importance of learning from others in developing excellence.

The final lessons learned were: first, that program-building success ultimately comes down to the quality of the relationships cultivated over time with individual faculty members and administrators, with specific colleges and universities, with funders, educational organizations and ministries; and second, that activating differences—among disciplines, faculties and administrators, institutions and, indeed, cultures—can create the basis of mutual contribution, and that this is the deeper meaning of diversity.

These final lessons bring us back to the mission of the East-West Center and its focus on building community across the Asia Pacific region, a mission that has become even more important as the East-West Center celebrates its 50th anniversary. Both AsiaPacificEd and ASDP have not only put this mission into practice through their collaborative programming, they also have planted seeds for its continued growth in thousands of young minds and emerging scholars. ■

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