

# Newsletter

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## New Department of Asian Languages and Literatures at UVM

The establishment of the Department of Asian Languages and Literatures at UVM was approved by the Board of Trustees at the University of Vermont on September 7, 2007.

The Department was established on the basis of the two existing Asian language programs, Chinese and Japanese, which had been generously funded by the Freeman Foundation in the past 12 years.

Although only Chinese and Japanese are currently offered to UVM students, the name of the new department suggests that the University is forward looking, hoping to offer more Asian languages to UVM students in the future.



John Jing-hua Yin, Associate Professor of Chinese, has been appointed to chair the Department.

The Chinese Program and the Japanese Program used to be part of the Asian Studies Program headed by Peter Seybolt, Professor of History, who had taught at UVM for more than 30 years before his retirement in May, 2007.

Professor Seybolt, with support of Dean Eleanore Miller of the College of Arts and Sciences, played a vital role in the establishment of the new Department.

This academic year, the Department has started to offer two new majors: Chinese and Japanese, in addition to the Chinese minor and Japanese minor already offered.

## Arabic Language at UVM in the Spring of 2009

To provide UVM students with the opportunity to learn Arabic language and understand Arabic culture, the College of Arts and Sciences has decided to hire Mr. Darius Jonathan to teach Arabic at UVM. This

move has made all the five official languages of the United Nations available to our students at UVM.

Two sections of Elementary Arabic language courses have been planned to be

offered in the spring semester of 2009.

Mr. Jonathan is a native Arabic speaking specialist on Darfur. He will also offer a course on Darfur at UVM.

## New Faculty Member

After a national search in the fall of 2007, Dr. Kyle Ikeda from the University of Hawaii at Manoa was offered the position of tenure-track assistant professor of Japanese. In summer, 2008, he and his family moved to Burlington, Vermont and joined the Asian Languages and Literatures faculty at UVM.

Professor Ikeda completed his Ph.D. in

Japanese at the University of Hawaii, Manoa this past December. His research focuses on the literary fiction of an Okinawan second-generation war survivor, Medoruma Shun, analyzing how Medoruma uses narrative fiction to engage war trauma and memory in ways that survivor testimony cannot. Additional research interests include the question of Okinawan

war memory in relation to that of the Japanese mainland, the U.S. military occupation of Okinawa, and the challenges of translating poly-lingual texts.

This academic year, Professor Ikeda teaches two Japanese literature courses (pre-modern and modern Japanese literature), and he also teaches Japanese language courses.

*A good university may not have good buildings, but it must have good faculty and staff.*

## Visiting Lecturers of Chinese from China

Ms. Rui Liu and Ms. Huili Sun, two visiting lecturers of Chinese from China, arrived in Burlington on August 27 and began to help with Chinese language teaching at UVM in the 2008-09 academic year.

Both Ms. Liu and Ms. Sun graduated from Beijing Language University with master degrees in teaching Chinese as a foreign language.

Ms. Liu started to teach Chinese at Yunnan

Normal University in 2000. She has been teaching UVM students studying abroad in China at her university since 2002. She heard a lot about UVM, and now she is at the UVM campus this year, teaching the 2<sup>nd</sup> Year and 5<sup>th</sup> Year Chinese. She is also the hostess for the Chinese Tea Hour (i.e., time to speak Chinese) every Friday afternoon from 3:00 to 4:00.

Ms. Sun is the first Chinese language teacher

dispatched by Chinese Language Teaching Council International to UVM to support Chinese language teaching here. Before coming to UVM, she was an instructor teaching Chinese to international students at Nanjing University of Information Science and Technology. She teaches the 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Year Chinese and is also assisting the Chinese Tea Hour and Chinese House at the L/L Center's Global Village.

## New Staff Member

In spring, 2008, the new Department underwent a search for a new Department Administrative Coordinator. The search for someone to fill this position lasted about four months. Ms. Alice Wang

accepted the offer for this position and started to work in May, 2008.

Ms. Wang holds a BA in Economics and Management. She worked as a part-time accounts

payable/purchase specialist for Kaycan Ltd. from 2002 to 2007, and she also worked part-time for the Vermont Chinese School from 1999 to 2003 as its treasurer.

## Teaching

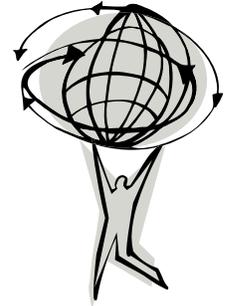
To improve the quality of teaching and learning and to adopt new teaching approaches, the language programs have adopted new textbooks for their language courses.

The Chinese Language Program has adopted a new textbook, *New Practical Chinese Reader Book 4 and Book 5* for its 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Year Chinese courses respectively. The 1<sup>st</sup> Year Chinese has

started to use Practical Rhythmic Chinese, a new textbook written by Professor John Yin and Ms. Diana Sun.

The Japanese Language Program has replaced *Situational Functional Japanese I & II*, which had been used for more than ten years at UVM, with *Genki I & II*, which are used by many universities in the US that have Japanese majors.

Asian language faculty members were pleasantly surprised, at the beginning of this semester, that all classrooms at L/L are equipped with LCD projectors and other multimedia facilities. Now more Asian language courses can use PowerPoint instead of transparencies in their classrooms.



## Research & Academic Activities

✧ Professor John Yin presented the paper entitled "Development and Use of Digitized Presentational Materials for an Entry-Level Chinese Character Course" at the 5<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Technology and Chinese Language Teaching, held in the University of Macau, June 6-8, 2008.

He will also chair a panel on teaching 1<sup>st</sup> Year College Chinese and present a paper at the Chinese Language Teachers Association Annual Meeting during 2008 ACTFL Convention, Orlando, Florida, Nov. 21-23, 2008.

✧ Professor Kyle Ikeda presented the paper "Critical Sentimentality and Vicarious Trauma in Medoruma Shun's 'Tree of Butterflies'" at the New England Association for Asian Studies Conference, Boston on October 18, 2008.

✧ Ms. Diana Sun will present her paper "Designing Rhythmic-Verses-Based Speaking Activities" at the CLTA Annual Meeting in Orlando, Florida, Nov. 21-23, 2008.

✧ Ms. Mutsumi Corson and Ms. Kazuko Carlson

attended the 17th Conference of the Japanese Language Teaching Association at Tokyo Woman's Christian University, Tokyo, Japan on June 28, 2008.

Along with Professor Ikeda, they will also attend the 1<sup>st</sup> Conference for the Japanese language teachers in Vermont to be held at Middlebury College on Nov. 1, 2008.

*Asian Languages and Literatures faculty members view research as a resource for improving their teaching.*

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## Extracurricular Activities

Asian Languages and Literatures faculty members do not limit their teaching in classrooms only. Teaching is extended to the outside of classrooms.

Students can learn their target language and culture not only in class but also after class.

For activities organized by the Chinese Program for the fall semester, please visit <http://www.uvm.edu/~chinese/2008fall.htm>

For activities organized by the Japanese Program for the fall, please see <http://www.uvm.edu/~japanese/?Page=Calendar&agenda=Program,Japanese&display=format=aslist&period=month>

## Study Abroad

Study abroad has always been a very important part of students' undergraduate experiences in learning an Asian language at UVM. Students are encouraged to study abroad after learning an Asian language for at least one year.

### CHINA

17 students participated in 2008 study abroad program at Yunnan Normal University in

Kunming, China. Most of the students will return at the end of 2008, and a few students will continue to study in China until April, 2009.

For more information about study abroad program in China, visit [www.uvm.edu/~chinese/studyabroad/sld001.htm](http://www.uvm.edu/~chinese/studyabroad/sld001.htm)

### JAPAN

The Japanese Program has designated several universities in Japan as UVM's exchange

partners, including Aoyama Gakuin University and Kansai Gaidai University. For more information about exchange programs, visit [http://www.uvm.edu/oie/exchange\\_index.php](http://www.uvm.edu/oie/exchange_index.php)

The Japanese Program is now exploring the possibilities of setting up its own study abroad program with a Japanese University in Japan for UVM students.