

Final Assessment Report

East Asian Studies (Minor, Diploma)

January 2025

Executive Summary

Reviewers found that the East Asian Studies (Minor, Diploma) programs delivered by the Department of Culture and Language Studies were in good standing.

“The East Asian Studies program plays an important role at the University of Waterloo in offering courses (and extra-curricular experiences) focused on Chinese, Japanese, and Korean language study as well as the politics, religion, literature, and culture of the region. At a time when this region is increasingly prominent in the global affairs, this role is invaluable to the university and the unit’s courses appeal to students across the entire campus.”

A total of five recommendations were provided by the reviewers, regarding organizational structure, sessional teaching, programming expansion and marketing, administrative staff, and library liaisons. In response, the program created a plan outlining the specific actions proposed to address each recommendation as well as a timeline for implementation. The next cyclical review for this program is scheduled for 2027-2028.

Enrollment over the past three years

	Minor	Diploma**
2024-2025 (CURRENT YR)	14	0
2023-2024 (LAST YR)	15	0
2022-2023 (THREE YRS)	22	0

*Based on Active Student extract from Quest on January 15, 2025.

** See explanation for enrolment numbers in Program Characteristics section.

Background

In accordance with the University of Waterloo’s Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), this final assessment report provides a synthesis of the external evaluation and the internal response of the East Asian Studies (Minor, Diploma) programs delivered by the Department of Culture and Language Studies. A self-study (Volume I, II, III) was submitted to the Associate Vice-President, Academic on July 10, 2023. The self-study (Volume I) presented the program descriptions and learning outcomes, an analytical assessment of the programs, including the data collected from a student survey, along with the standard data package prepared by the Office of

Institutional Analysis & Planning (IAP). The CVs for each faculty member with a key role in the delivery of the program(s) were included in Volume II of the self-study.

As a minor and diploma, this program was appraised by two faculty members from the University of Waterloo, one with knowledge of the program and one from a faculty not associated with the minor: Professor Eric Helleiner, Department of Political Science; and Professor Manjo Sachdev, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering.

Reviewers appraised the self-study documentation and conducted a site visit to the University on November 20-22, 2023. The visit included interviews with the Associate Vice-President, Academic; Dean of the Faculty of Arts; Vice-President Academic and Dean (VPAD) of Renison University College; President and Vice-Chancellor of Renison University College; Chair of the Department, as well as faculty members, staff and current undergraduate students. The Review Team also had an opportunity to meet with representatives from the library.

Following the site visit, the reviewers submitted a report on their findings, with recommendations. Subsequently, the program responded to each recommendation and outlined a plan for implementation of the recommendations. Finally, the Dean and the VPAD responded to the external reviewers' recommendations, and endorsed the plans outlined by the program.

This final assessment report is based on information extracted, in many cases verbatim, from the self-study, the external reviewers' report, the program response and the Dean's response.

Program Characteristics

The **EAS Minor** has remained relatively unchanged throughout the course of this program review cycle. The minor was open to all UWaterloo students, regardless of disciplinary major. Students completing the EAS Minor were required to complete eight 0.5 credit courses and maintain a 65% average. In 2018-2019, the introductory course to the EAS Minor was shifted from EAS 200R (Introduction to East Asia) to EAS 100R (Introduction to East Asia) and the 200-level course was deactivated. This made the introductory course to the minor more visible to students earlier in their studies.

During the program review cycle, the **EAS Diploma** maintained a parallel structure to the EAS Minor. The diploma was open to non- or post-degree students who were required to complete eight courses and maintain a 65% average. Like the EAS Minor, in 2018-2019, the introductory course to the diploma was shifted from EAS 200R to EAS 100R.

In 2022-2023, the EAS Diploma and Minor both required 8 courses. While UW students pursued the minor, the diploma was reserved for post-degree students. As there were very few post-degree students who could take eight courses, there was no uptake on the eight-course EAS Diploma.

In 2023-2024, there was an effort to differentiate between diplomas and minors. As of that year, both UW students and non-degree students could pursue either an eight-course minor, or a four-course diploma.

We may currently (since 2023-2024) have students planning to graduate with the EAS Diploma. Students indicate on their intent to graduate form if they plan to graduate with a diploma. In a few years, we will likely see students graduating with the EAS Diploma.

Summary of Strengths, Challenges and Weaknesses based on Self-Study

Strengths

- The East Asian Studies program has a long history of success and provides diverse offerings, both in terms of course topics and variety of programming (cultural events, speakers, contests, etc.).
- East Asian Studies has a diverse complement of highly qualified faculty. This body is inclusive of all the faculty categories at the university, and their research/teaching expertise covers an admirably wide range of different important topics (various languages, politics, history, religion, literature, etc..).
- East Asian Studies overall enrolments are robust, and students regularly achieve the EAS minor.
- Students report high satisfaction with both language and culture courses in East Asian Studies.
- The EAS program regularly produces award-winning language students, indicating the excellence of the instruction and support.

Challenges

- Like most educational institutions, Renison University College faces financial pressures, which affect the ability to add/replace crucial instructional positions.

- Evolving geopolitical, medical, and other conditions make study-abroad and exchange opportunities difficult and affect the number of international students available to participate in EAS courses.

Weaknesses

- A significant minority of students seek greater diversity of course options and greater availability of existing courses.
- Upper-level courses are difficult to offer at times due to low enrolment.
- Data on the number of students in the EAS Minor and Diploma lags behind the actual numbers as most students do not declare the EAS Minor or Diploma until they are ready to graduate, making it challenging to accurately estimate student numbers.
- East Asian Studies is significantly lacking in online course options compared to other programs at UW.
- There is a lack of tenure-stream positions for language instructors.

Summary of Key Findings from the External Reviewers

“Course enrolments are good and student satisfaction with the program is high. The unit responded well to the last review and its faculty and staff are working very hard to ensure the program’s success in a resource- constrained environment.

We have made five recommendations. First, we recommend that the role of the four “coordinators” in the unit be clarified and better rewarded. Second, we propose that the high level of dependence on sessional teaching reported in the self-study be reduced. Third, we recommend an exploration of whether EAS courses could be marketed to a wider potential audience in the university. Fourth, we suggest improvements to the level of administrative staff support in the unit/department. Finally, we suggest that the unit should consider appointing a liaison person with the Lusi Wong library.”

Program Response to External Reviewers’ Recommendations

- 1. Organizational Structure:** The unit should meet to discuss its governance and organizational structure. In particular, the four coordinators in EAS should have clear roles, responsibilities, reporting lines, and selection procedures, and they should be rewarded beyond just counting their work as regular service work.

Program Response

EAS offers courses under four codes: EASIA, CHINA, JAPAN, and KOREA. Course offerings for each code are coordinated by a unit coordinator. Coordinators provide subject-matter expertise for curriculum development, hiring (in conjunction with the Chair), course scheduling, and other discipline-specific administrative tasks. Prior to 2020, coordinators received a one-course release for their work. Currently, coordinators count their activity as part of their service work.

Consequently, we support this recommendation. For the future, we will develop...

- a) a clear and efficient selection procedure for the coordinators.
- b) a diagram of the organizational structure of the EAS program, with clear reporting structure.
- c) appointment letters for each coordinator delineating workload expectations.

In addition, we reaffirm the need for compensation, either as a course release or stipend, as appropriate to coordinator workload.

Dean Response (VPAD-Renison)

Renison recognizes the complex nature of the Culture and Language Studies Department, which unifies all culture and language programming offered at Renison. The current administrative structure has an area coordinator for each language unit, and coordinator duties fall under faculty service requirements, which account for 20% of a faculty member's workload. I agree that the Academic Unit needs to clearly define and articulate the work of an area coordinator to understand better how their duties are reported as service to the Department and Renison and to manage their service load. Course scheduling and staffing fall under the purview of the Academic Unit Lead (Chair), who in turn consults with subject matter experts to ensure that scheduling and staffing align with each area's curricular and pedagogical needs. The work of area coordinators is valuable to the academic unit. At this juncture, the area coordinators' work is recognized under service obligations to the Department and Renison and recognized through the Annual Activity Report structure. Compensation for area coordinators will be reviewed through strategic planning and the annual budgeting process

Dean Response (Dean of Arts)

This programming belongs to Renison and, to the extent that is relevant, we support the response to the recommendation.

2. **Sessional Teaching:** We propose that the Department and the college should plan to reduce sessional teaching from the 58% level reported in self-study in the next 3-5 years, particularly given the stable enrolment of the minor.

Program Response

The EAS Program Review period covered the years 2014 to 2021; however, delays related to the COVID-19 pandemic and administrative changes between 2021 and 2022 meant the site visit was completed in 2023. In the gap between 2021 and 2023, EAS has already made progress towards reducing reliance on the percentage of instruction attributable to sessional instructors.

Implementation of the recommendation would require that the EAS program be granted more tenure track, continuing lecture, and definite term lecturer positions to further reduce reliance on sessional instructors. Moreover, we would like to support the possibility of retired faculty with years of teaching experience to take on sessional teaching if they so desire.

Dean Response (VPAD-Renison)

The East Asian Studies unit provides valuable arts breadth courses within the University of Waterloo ecosystem and has experienced a recent history of relative enrollment stability in the one-hundred- and some two-hundred-level courses. It is often challenging to attract student interest in senior-level courses (third- and fourth-year courses), which frequently need to be cancelled due to low enrollment because of competing degree requirements that limit the number of electives students in other degree programs have. Having low-enrolled senior-level courses compromises either students' ability to obtain the necessary credits toward a minor or diploma or creates scenarios where Renison must run low-enrolled courses at a loss to ensure that a small number of students can meet the requirements of a diploma or certificate. East Asian Studies will need to review how the EAS minor and language diplomas can run with the ongoing faculty complement and supplement with sessional lecturers. At this time, Renison cannot commit to hiring ongoing faculty in the EAS unit. We hope to pursue possible opportunities to collaborate with the Cultural Identities Minor in the Faculty of Arts to offer greater stability to EAS programming. We believe there could be possibilities for mutually beneficial partnerships.

Dean Response (Dean of Arts)

This programming belongs to Renison and, to the extent that is relevant, we support the response to the recommendation.

3. **EAS Programming Expansion and Marketing:** We suggest that the CLS department should look into marketing EAS course offerings to other faculties and graduate students provided it results in proportional increases in department revenue/budget.

Program Response

We agree with this recommendation. We think that the EAS program requires resources for outreach and program promotion activities. To attract undergraduate students from other faculties and possibly graduate students, as well as maintain the strength of our minor and diploma numbers, we need investment in administrative support (recommendation 4) to assist us in our program promotion needs. To support/teach graduate students, we would need additional financial assistance from main campus.

Beginning July 1, 2025, the Culture and Language Studies Department will merge with the Social Development Studies Department to form the new Renison School of Social Sciences and Humanities (tentative School name). Renison will consider program promotional needs and related resourcing during a period of significant fiscal restraint. Renison's initial intention was to move program promotion centrally in the Renison Registrar's Office; however, the program promotion position was made redundant. Program promotion efforts will be undertaken by staff in the Office of the Vice President Academic and Dean until they can be adequately resourced in the new School. This work will be iterative and ongoing.

Dean Response (VPAD-Renison)

The East Asia Studies courses offer UW students diverse arts breadth courses required for degree completion. After completing arts breadth requirements, some students take an interest in EAS programming and continue to complete an EAS minor, diploma, or one of the three language diplomas or certificates. Program promotion must occur within the UW ecosystem. CLS program promotion has been shifted to Renison's Office of the Registrar under the umbrella of Strategic Enrollment Management. Students who enroll in EAS courses help Renison meet its teaching obligations under the UW-AFIW Equity Agreement; Renison does not receive additional funding for increased student enrollment.

Dean Response (Dean of Arts)

This programming belongs to Renison and, to the extent that is relevant, we support the response to the recommendation.

- 4. Administrative Staff:** We suggest that the level of administrative staff support to the unit/department needs to be increased.

Program Response

We agree with this recommendation, as per the rationale in recommendation 3.

Dean Response (VPAD-Renison)

At this juncture, Renison cannot commit to providing the EAS unit additional administrative support. The Department has an Academic Unit Lead and a .67 administrative staff to liaise with the Office of the VPAD, Human Resources, and Finance. We engage in continuous reprioritization of tasks and redistribution of tasks across the organization.

Dean Response (Dean of Arts)

This programming belongs to Renison and, to the extent that is relevant, we support the response to the recommendation.

5. **Library Liaison:** We suggest that the unit should consider appointing a liaison person with the Lusi Wong library.

Program Response

We agree with the recommendation. We will appoint an EAS faculty member to Renison's Library Committee. This person may steward the robust East Asian collection in the Lusi Wong Library and encourage greater use.

Dean Response (VPAD-Renison)

The Academic Council Library Committee is a standing committee that supports Library services for Renison faculty and students in degree programs. Per the Renison University College bylaws (revised October 2023), the Committee's responsibilities are:

- a) to provide a channel for communication between Academic Council and the Librarian on library services for degree programs at Renison
- b) to provide feedback on reports from the Librarian
- c) to make recommendations to Academic Council on library service developments of significance to degree programs,
- d) to develop operational guidelines as related to degree programs, and;
- e) to develop strategic plans and priorities for the Library as related to degree program.

Dean Response (Dean of Arts)

This programming belongs to Renison and, to the extent that is relevant, we support the response to the recommendation.

Recommendations Not Selected for Implementation

N/A

Implementation Plan

	Recommendations	Proposed Actions	Responsibility for Leading and Resourcing (if applicable) the Actions	Timeline for addressing Recommendations
1.	Organizational Structure	<p>We will develop...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a clear and efficient selection procedure for the coordinators. b) a diagram of the organizational structure of the EAS program, with clear reporting structure. c) appointment letters for each coordinator delineating workload expectations. <p>In addition, we reaffirm the need for compensation, either as a course release or stipend, as appropriate to coordinator workload.</p>	<p>The CLS Chair is responsible for coordinator positions and organizational structure of the EAS unit.</p> <p>The Renison VPAD is responsible for resources.</p>	<p>a, b, and c have been accomplished.</p> <p>Uncertain</p>
2.	Sessional Teaching	We will work towards reducing reliance on sessional instructors across the EAS unit. This will require additional faculty hires in tenure- track and lecturer positions.	The Renison VPAD is responsible for resourcing new ongoing positions.	Uncertain
3.	EAS Programming Expansion & Marketing.	Beginning July 1, 2025, the Culture and Language Studies Department will merge with the Social Development Studies Department to form the new Renison School of Social Sciences and Humanities (tentative School name). Renison will consider program promotional needs and related resourcing during a period of significant fiscal restraint. Renison's initial intention was to move program promotion centrally in the Renison Registrar's Office; however, the program promotion position was made redundant. Program promotion efforts will be undertaken by staff in the Office of the Vice President Academic and Dean until they can be adequately resourced in the new School. This work will be iterative and ongoing.	The Renison VPAD is responsible for resourcing staff positions.	Ongoing

4.	Administrative Staff	See Proposed Actions in Recommendation 3 above.	The Renison VPAD is responsible for resourcing staff positions.	Ongoing
5.	Library Liaison	We will appoint an EAS faculty member to Renison's Library Committee.	CLS Chair	Done

The Department Chair/Director, in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty, shall be responsible for the Implementation Plan.

Date of next program review

2027-2028

Date

Signatures of Approval

Julia Williams

February 25, 2025

Chair/Director

Date

Justin Barton

May 8, 2025

AFIW Administrative Dean/Head (*For AFIW programs only*)

Date

[Signature]

March 14, 2025

Faculty Dean

Date

Note: AFIW programs fall under the Faculty of ARTS; however, the Dean does not have fiscal control nor authority over staffing and administration of the program.

Dan De Vidi

Feb. 14, 2025

Associate Vice-President, Academic
(For undergraduate and augmented programs)

Date