

Asian American Report

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Coordinator's Report

In recent weeks, there has been considerable public attention given to the significant presence and special problems of Asian American students on the Berkeley campus. Specifically, the *New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times* have published articles on the rising number of Asian American immigrant students, their areas of study and their problems in meeting the basic skills requirements of the University. To help better understand the situation, *Asian American Report* is publishing some preliminary data on the statistical profile of Asian American undergraduates and identifying areas for further research. It is our hope that such data, together with our on-going discussions with various Asian American student groups, will assist the Program in developing relevant curriculum and teaching techniques to better serve the changing Asian American student population.

In this regard, I am pleased to report that since September last year the Curriculum Committee, following extensive input from students, community, staff and faculty, has been reviewing the curriculum with the intention of making necessary changes in the coming years. The first phase of its recommendation, to strengthen our efforts in meeting the reading and composition needs of Asian American immigrant students through the recruitment of a full-time instructor with expertise in teaching and researching language acquisition, bilingual education and curriculum development, is expected to be carried out by the end of this quarter. (See *Asian American Report*, December 1980) Together with Prof. Elaine Kim, the prime mover and developer of the Asian American Studies 6 series on Reading and Composition, and Ms. Merle Woo, the Program will undertake a systematic approach toward meeting the reading and writing needs of both American-born and foreign-born Asian American students. We also look forward to adding a sixth member to our meager ladder-rank faculty to not only strengthen but to lend greater stability to the faculty. The development of Asian American Studies depends on the strength and quality of its faculty in teaching, research and community service. Equally important is persistent student support by their participation in the Program's decision-making structure and in taking the courses offered. This year, more than 1,800 students enrolled in 41 courses, in spite of a number of faculty members taking leaves of absence to complete their research.

I am also pleased to note that the work of the Curriculum Committee, made up of faculty, staff, community and student representatives, demonstrated beyond any doubt the viability of the current decision-making structure in Asian American Studies. By having fixed and accountable membership and by holding regular open meetings, the committee collected information, solicited input from interested parties, and acted

responsibly and responsively in its deliberations and recommendations. It recommended the strengthening of services to immigrant students and a budget increase to develop the Community Studies component of the curriculum. This way Program needs and priorities were established orderly and fairly, quite apart from personnel actions which rightfully follow curriculum decisions. In this context, I consider recent public criticisms by a small, but determined band of people to be misleading at best and divisive and destructive at worst. Their actions are reminiscent of the destructive outbursts in 1977.

Aside from teaching and research, the Program has also been expanding its contacts and working relations with the Bay Area Asian American community. Our relations with the community take many forms: experienced and distinguished community workers offer their knowledge and experience to students through part-time teaching on campus, faculty members advise and participate in community projects, community artists give performances on campus, faculty members deliver lectures in the community and last but not least, students work in community organizations under faculty supervision. Examples of such developing symbiotic relations can be seen from the brief description of faculty activities in this report. Moreover, an evolving structure, the Community Relations Committee, is now emerging to cement and institutionalize these relations.

In conclusion, the Program is taking the initiative and assuming a leadership role in establishing curriculum and innovative pedagogical approaches in Asian American Studies on the Berkeley campus. The faculty is fully committed to the building of a strong academic program consistent with the goals established by its founders in 1969 and relevant to the changing needs of Asian American students. Working closely with students and community groups, the Program expects to continue to improve its curriculum, faculty, library, student, and community services.

—L. Ling-chi Wang, Coordinator

LOOKING FOR TEACHING JOBS NEXT YEAR?

Every quarter the Asian American Studies Program employs a number of teaching assistants, tutors, fieldwork assistants, work-study students and other temporary employees. If you are looking for a part-time position next year and are interested in broadening your experience through teaching or tutoring, be sure to apply at the Asian American Studies office before you leave for summer vacation. To help prepare T.A.s and tutors for their jobs, the Program will conduct a special training session the week of pre-enrollment. For additional information, call 642-6555 or come to 3407 Dwinelle Hall.

Undergraduates of Asian Ancestry at the University of California, Berkeley

Fall 1980 — A Statistical Profile

Students of Asian ancestry now comprise 19.7% of the undergraduate population at the University of California, Berkeley. Since 1976, there has been a 35% increase in the number of Asian-ancestry students. This is equivalent to an annual increase of 8%. Projecting the trend at the same rate of increase, it is possible that by 1985, 30% of the undergraduates at Berkeley may be of Asian ancestry.

Within the Asian-ancestry undergraduate population itself, the number and percentage of foreign-born immigrants are increasing. Today, 47% of the Asian-ancestry undergraduates are foreign-born. Of the foreign-born, with the exception of the Filipinos, the great majority are still immigrants—that is to say, they have not been in the United States for the requisite five years to have become naturalized citizens.

However, the foreign-born Asian American undergraduates and their families have come to settle permanently in the United States. With the exception of the Vietnamese, of whom almost 10% remain stateless, over 90% of the undergraduates of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino and Asian Indian ancestry list California and other states of the U.S. as their present home locations. The Chinese, Filipino, Vietnamese and Asian Indian undergraduates come predominantly from the Bay Area. In the case of the Koreans, about 45% come from the Bay Area and 45% come from Los Angeles. Japanese American students show the most diverse home locations within the state of California, with significant numbers from the Central Valley and Southern California.

American-born Asian American undergraduates show Scholastic Aptitude Test score profiles which are quite similar to the national distribution of verbal and math scores. Their verbal scores are comparable to those of other undergraduates admitted to the Berkeley campus. 71% of the American-born Asian American undergraduates had SAT verbal scores which ranged from 400 to 600, compared to a mean SAT verbal score of 540 for male undergraduates, and 521 for female undergraduates entering Berkeley in Fall 1980. American-born Asian American undergraduates did better than undergraduates of other ethnicities in their SAT math scores. 60% of the American-born Asians scored above 600, compared to mean SAT math scores of 628 and 567 for male and female undergraduates, respectively, who entered Berkeley in Fall 1980.

In contrast to the American-born, foreign-born Asian American undergraduates showed a test score profile which differs markedly from the national norms. There is a wide differential between their verbal and math scores. 48% of the foreign-born Chinese, 65% of the foreign-born Korean and 69% of the foreign-born Vietnamese undergraduates scored less than 400 in the SAT verbal test. However, these students met the admissions criteria because their spectacularly high SAT math scores compensated for the low verbal scores.

The difference in the academic performance of the American-born and foreign-born with regard to their SAT verbal test points to one significant conclusion: students of Asian ancestry are *not* inherently poor in verbal skills, since the American-born perform as

well as their white counterparts. The reason the foreign-born have low verbal scores is that they are immigrants, and English is not their mother tongue. While many questions have been raised about the validity of standardized tests in measuring academic ability, still, taken as a rough indication of *relative* verbal ability, the difference between the scores of the American-born and the foreign-born underscores the disadvantage suffered by Asian immigrant students.

In terms of the choice of majors, Asian American students tend to concentrate more heavily in engineering, computer science, the physical and biological sciences than their white, Black and Hispanic counterparts. While approximately 10% of Berkeley's non-Asian juniors and seniors are majoring in the humanities. Among the foreign-born, only slightly over 3% are humanities majors.

While complex factors enter into students' choice of majors and potential careers, at least several factors may be identified to account for the heavy concentration in engineering and the sciences. These include:

- 1) a limited proficiency in English and a consequent tendency to avoid subjects requiring large amounts of reading and writing,
- 2) parental pressure on students to major in "useful" or saleable subjects,
- 3) the possible tendency of career counselors to encourage Asian-ancestry students to go into quantitative fields because of a persistent stereotype that Asian Americans are good in math and make good technicians,
- 4) a history of job discrimination which kept Asian Americans out of most professions except engineering and the hard sciences, and
- 5) current market forces in California's high technology economy which can absorb a large number of workers in micro-electronics industries.

To encourage Asian-ancestry students to diversify more in their choice of majors and careers, efforts must be made by the University to:

- a) provide Asian immigrant students with better help than they are currently receiving in the development of their verbal skills
- b) sensitize academic and career counselors to the possibility that they may hold stereotypes of Asian Americans' abilities
- c) exert continued pressure on potential employers to increase access into more non-traditional fields for Asian Americans and other minorities.

The Curriculum Committee has recommended to the Asian American Studies Program the following long-term development plans:

- a) a greater emphasis on improving the verbal skills of our students, particularly the foreign-born
- b) a greater emphasis on contemporary community issues in all areas of our curriculum
- c) recruitment of an Asian American counselor to our staff when resources permit us to do so, and
- d) a continual adaptation of our curriculum and supportive services to the changing educational needs of our students.

Table 1. Undergraduates of Asian Ancestry at the University of California, Berkeley, by Ethnicity, Numbers, Percentage Increase and Nativity

Ethnicity	Number in Fall 1976	Number in Fall 1980	Increase in absolute #	Increase in percentage	% U.S.-born in Fall 1980	% foreign-born in Fall 1980
Chinese	2,286	2,798	512	22.4%	50.5%	49.2%
Japanese	814	933	119	14.6%	87.2%	12.4%
Filipino	198	372	174	87.9%	50.3%	49.7%
Korean	106	372	266	250.9%	13.4%	86.6%
Vietnamese	7	113	106	1514.3%	0.0%	100.0%
Asian Indian	65	115	50	76.9%	20.0%	80.0%
Total	3,476	4,703	1,127	35.3%	52.9%	47.1%

Source: Fall 1976 and Fall 1980 S.I.S. Tapes, University of California, Berkeley.

Table 2. Undergraduates of Asian Ancestry by Ethnicity and Home Location

Ethnicity	% foreign-born who have become naturalized citizens	% foreign-born who are still immigrants	% home location in 9 Bay Area counties	% home location in other California counties	% home location in other U.S. states	% home location abroad	% stateless
Chinese	38.4%	61.6%	78.4%	13.6%	2.5%	5.5%	0.03%
Japanese	46.6%	53.4%	56.3%	34.6%	4.8%	4.3%	0%
Filipino	60.0%	40.0%	79.3%	17.2%	1.6%	1.9%	0%
Korean	22.0%	78.0%	44.9%	45.2%	4.6%	5.3%	0%
Vietnamese	5.4%	94.6%	69.9%	14.2%	3.5%	2.7%	9.7%
Asian Indian	27.2%	72.8%	75.6%	10.4%	5.2%	8.8%	0%

Source: Calculated from Fall 1980 S.I.S. Tapes.

Note: The above tables do not include 63 Asian-ancestry undergraduates of miscellaneous Asian national origins. Also not included are 16 Polynesian-ancestry undergraduates.

Table 3. Undergraduates of Asian Ancestry Reporting SAT Verbal and Math Scores—by Ethnicity and Nativity

Ethnicity and Nativity	# Reporting Scores	Verbal Score			Math Score		
		200–399	400–599	600–800	200–399	400–599	600–800
All American-born	2,007	8.8%	70.5%	20.7%	0.9%	39.3%	59.7%
Foreign-born Chinese	956	47.9%	44.9%	7.2%	1.8%	35.8%	62.4%
Foreign-born Japanese	63	23.8%	49.2%	27.0%	0%	31.7%	68.3%
Foreign-born Koreans	247	65.2%	28.3%	6.5%	0%	33.6%	66.4%
Foreign-born Filipinos	131	25.2%	65.6%	9.2%	8.4%	65.6%	26.0%
Foreign-born Vietnamese	72	69.4%	27.8%	2.8%	0%	38.9%	61.1%
Foreign-born Asian Indians	62	14.5%	61.3%	24.2%	1.6%	41.9%	56.5%

Source: Calculated from Fall 1980 S.I.S. Tapes.

Table 4. All Juniors and Seniors of Asian Ancestry at the University of California, Berkeley, by Major Fields and Citizenship/Visa Status

Major	U.S.-Born	Foreign-Born Now Citizen	Permanent Resident	Immigrant	F ₁	Others
Biological Science	14.1%	13.5%	8.5%	8.0%	6.4%	5.9%
Business Administration	6.8%	6.9%	4.4%	3.0%	6.4%	—
Engineering	17.0%	23.4%	38.6%	40.5%	40.7%	53.0%
Environmental Design	5.7%	6.1%	6.6%	6.5%	9.3%	—
Humanities	6.0%	4.1%	2.2%	3.5%	2.9%	—
Natural Resources	3.7%	1.3%	0.6%	2.0%	0.7%	—
Physical Science	10.4%	14.2%	16.8%	14.0%	11.4%	29.4%
Social Science	16.0%	11.7%	7.4%	10.5%	6.4%	—
Other	5.8%	3.6%	0.3%	1.5%	0.7%	11.8%
Undeclared	11.7%	12.4%	12.7%	6.0%	10.7%	—
Double Major	3.1%	3.0%	1.9%	5.0%	4.3%	—
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total Absolute Number	1174	394	363	200	140	17

Source: Calculated from Fall 1980 S.I.S. Tapes.

STUDENT ORIENTATION

In response to the growing needs of Asian American immigrant students, the Asian American Studies Program, in cooperation with CalSO (Cal Student Orientation), will undertake the first bilingual student orientation for incoming Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese immigrant students and their parents on September 14, a day before the regular CalSO program. The multilingual orientation will focus primarily on meeting basic skills requirements of the University, and secondarily on student life and finances, and the available campus and community services. If this initial effort proves successful, the Program plans to expand this service to other immigrant groups and to conduct more than one session in future Fall Quarters.

Faculty Activities

Amado Cabezas, lecturer and Director of Human Service Research at ASIAN, Inc. is currently completing a two-year study on early childhood development of the Asian/Pacific American population in the San Francisco Bay Area. He is also conducting a survey of social support networks as they relate to mental health among seven ethnic groups in California.

Professor Sucheng Chan was awarded a \$10,000 grant from the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company to undertake an in-depth study on the impact of Asian immigration on the Berkeley campus. Though on leave this year at UCLA to complete her research on Chinese and Japanese in California agriculture, she managed to return to the Berkeley campus monthly to chair the Curriculum Committee and to conduct a preliminary survey on Asian American students on campus. Some of her preliminary findings are in this report. She is also president of the National Association of Asian/Pacific American Studies.

Loni Ding, lecturer and producer/director of "Bean Sprouts," a series of six half-hour television programs about Chinese American children aired recently over the Public Broadcasting System, was one of five "Broadcast Preceptors" at the 30th Annual Broadcast Industry Conference on May 2 in San Francisco. The series was awarded two Emmys for outstanding animation and musical composition last month.

Professor Elaine Kim's study on Asian American literature will be published soon. The tentative title is *Literature and Self Image: Currents in Asian American Consciousness and Experience*. She is chair of the Community Advisory Board which oversees the Women's Educational Equity Act Program grant to study and impact the occupational needs of Asian American women. Her involvement in the community includes being president of the Board of Directors of the Korean Community Center of the East Bay and vice-president of the San Francisco Korean Forum.

Rodger Lum, lecturer, is Director of Asian Communities Mental Health Services in Oakland. This private, non-profit, community based organization provides multilingual and multicultural outpatient psychiatric services, mental health consultations, education

and information/referral services to Asians in Alameda county. The staff can provide these services in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, French, and several Filipino dialects.

Wei Chi Poon, librarian, is writing the chapter "Asian American Collections" for the book *Ethnic Collections in Libraries* to be published by Neal-Schuman. She is also developing the Chinese American Research Collection for the Asian American Studies Library to be "the largest and most comprehensive collection in the country."

Gaspar Sardalia, lecturer in the Program and a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Geography, is completing his dissertation titled "The Moslem-Christian Frontier in the Philippines: Historical and Contemporary."

Professor Jere Takahashi became the fifth regular professor on our faculty this quarter. He is currently completing some studies on the political styles of the Nisei generation, and is reorganizing the Community Relations Committee in the Asian American Studies Program to establish structural ties with the Bay Area Asian American community.

Don Tamaki, lecturer, is Director of the Asian Law Caucus located both in Oakland and San Francisco. The organization provides legal representation to poor and low-income primarily Asian clients in the areas of housing, labor law, immigrant rights, rights of seniors, civil rights and criminal defense.

Professor Ron Takaki became the second professor in Asian American Studies in recent years to receive the coveted award for teaching excellence. (Professor Sucheng Chan was given this recognition in 1978.) He will be honored at the next meeting of the Berkeley Academic Senate on May 26 at Wheeler Auditorium at 4 pm. In addition, he was named a recipient of the Rockefeller Foundation Humanities Fellowship which will enable him to complete his book *Plantation Life and Labor in Hawaii* next year.

Professor Shih-shan Henry Tsai, our visiting professor from the University of Arkansas has had two articles published recently. The first is "The Chinese in Arkansas" appearing in the spring issue of *Amerasia Journal* and the second is "The Comparative Experiences of the Chinese, Japanese and Koreans in the United States" published in the April issue of the *The Korean Studies*, a publication of Academia Sinica.

Professor Ling-chi Wang served as an outside reviewer for the UCLA Graduate Council now completing a six-year review of the M.A. Degree Program of Asian American Studies. He was honored by the Chinese Parent Institute of Northern California for "many years of continuous effort and leadership in advocating for quality education for the Chinese students." He is also working with some Bay Area high schools with high concentrations of college-bound immigrant students to identify ways to improve their English-language skills.

Merle Woo, lecturer, has written "Letter to Ma" which will appear in *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* published by Persephone Press available May 20. Some of her other writings will be in the forthcoming Unbound Feet Collection to be published by Isthmus Press.

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