Announcer ([00:03](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/MKE_ruaO0AFy3bxGUKLXDrEFl1RWvZ60hbsd6Li63MnTAVpi7QYniHhSUYF2mhNmhKo91wnFh3aSxqKyf4hKRpZA-HE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=3.29)):

The Missouri State Journal, a weekly program keeping you in touch with Missouri State University.

Emily Yeap ([00:10](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/MKE_ruaO0AFy3bxGUKLXDrEFl1RWvZ60hbsd6Li63MnTAVpi7QYniHhSUYF2mhNmhKo91wnFh3aSxqKyf4hKRpZA-HE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=10.3)):

Asians and Pacific Islanders make up an important part of American society. The community is diverse, comprising Chinese, Filipinos, Hawaiians, Indians, Japanese, Koreans, Samoans and more.

According to the 2020 Census, 20.6 million people identify as Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander alone (not in combination with another race). This makes up about 6% of the nation’s population.

Each May, our country celebrates Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. It’s an opportunity to explore and pay tribute to this group of people, who has not only helped to shape America’s history and culture, but also is vital in its future success. I’m Emily Yeap.

At Missouri State University, students who want to engage in a multidisciplinary study of Asia can take the [Asian Studies minor](https://www.missouristate.edu/AreaStudies/ASP/default.htm).

[Dr. Stephen Berkwitz](https://search.missouristate.edu/people/stephenberkwitz), department head of [religious studies](https://www.missouristate.edu/relst/) and program coordinator of Asian Studies at MSU, joins me today to share what this minor covers.

Stephen Berkwitz ([01:17](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/MKE_ruaO0AFy3bxGUKLXDrEFl1RWvZ60hbsd6Li63MnTAVpi7QYniHhSUYF2mhNmhKo91wnFh3aSxqKyf4hKRpZA-HE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=77.89)):

The Asian Studies minor has been in existence for quite some time now. It is a 18-hour minor. It includes one year study of an Asian language, and at Missouri State, we offer Chinese, Japanese, Korean and occasionally Hindi. And then there are 12 hours of courses spread across different disciplines that have some focus on an aspect of Asia. The minor itself is designed to be kind of an interdisciplinary introduction to Asian civilization and culture. Students gain a comprehensive understanding of Asian history, ideas and contemporary traditions.

Emily Yeap ([02:10](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/MKE_ruaO0AFy3bxGUKLXDrEFl1RWvZ60hbsd6Li63MnTAVpi7QYniHhSUYF2mhNmhKo91wnFh3aSxqKyf4hKRpZA-HE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=130.12)):

He highlights some of the courses students can take.

Stephen Berkwitz ([02:13](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/MKE_ruaO0AFy3bxGUKLXDrEFl1RWvZ60hbsd6Li63MnTAVpi7QYniHhSUYF2mhNmhKo91wnFh3aSxqKyf4hKRpZA-HE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=133.37)):

The program itself is made up of a variety of courses that are currently taught in different departments around the campus. The Asian languages, of course, are offered in the Department of World Languages and Cultures, Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Hindi.

There are other courses such as the People and Cultures of Japan, course on modern East Asia, Asian philosophy, Buddhism, Yoga and Meditation, A Survey of Asian Art, an Asian cultural studies course, Asian economies and Asian politics are just some of the courses that students can choose from when they put together their minor. And so students have an opportunity to shape the type of courses they would like to learn and kind of design or plan a course to learn more about Asia.

Emily Yeap ([03:13](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/MKE_ruaO0AFy3bxGUKLXDrEFl1RWvZ60hbsd6Li63MnTAVpi7QYniHhSUYF2mhNmhKo91wnFh3aSxqKyf4hKRpZA-HE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=193.24)):

Berkwitz identifies the types of students who should consider doing this minor.

Stephen Berkwitz ([03:17](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/MKE_ruaO0AFy3bxGUKLXDrEFl1RWvZ60hbsd6Li63MnTAVpi7QYniHhSUYF2mhNmhKo91wnFh3aSxqKyf4hKRpZA-HE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=197.5)):

The Asian Studies minor is useful for a lot of different kinds of students. It's open to any undergraduate and they can add it to pretty much any major. Students with career interests in fields related to business, to government service to education, manufacturing, technology, media all have some reason to learn about Asia, and so we hope students who have career interests as well as students who are just personally interested in Asia, would choose to do the minor.

Emily Yeap ([03:55](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/MKE_ruaO0AFy3bxGUKLXDrEFl1RWvZ60hbsd6Li63MnTAVpi7QYniHhSUYF2mhNmhKo91wnFh3aSxqKyf4hKRpZA-HE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=235.91)):

What's the benefit of knowing more about Asia?

Stephen Berkwitz ([03:59](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/MKE_ruaO0AFy3bxGUKLXDrEFl1RWvZ60hbsd6Li63MnTAVpi7QYniHhSUYF2mhNmhKo91wnFh3aSxqKyf4hKRpZA-HE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=239.51)):

A better understanding of Asia is important because the entire region is increasingly important I think in today's world. What we describe as Asia is home to over half the world's population. It's an economic powerhouse with countries like China, Japan, Korea and India, who are increasingly important in the global stage.

And it's also, I think, distinctively interesting and offers new insights and perspectives on how maybe American students view their world and themselves. So, learning about Asia has a lot of practical, as well as personal benefits.

Emily Yeap ([04:43](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/MKE_ruaO0AFy3bxGUKLXDrEFl1RWvZ60hbsd6Li63MnTAVpi7QYniHhSUYF2mhNmhKo91wnFh3aSxqKyf4hKRpZA-HE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=283.16)):

Check out more details about MSU’s [Asian Studies minor online](https://www.missouristate.edu/AreaStudies/ASP/default.htm).

Missouri State will celebrate Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month with several events and activities on campus in May. Find out more on the [Multicultural Programs’ website](https://www.missouristate.edu/MulticulturalPrograms/heritage-months.htm). I’m Emily Yeap for the Missouri State Journal.

Announcer ([05:03](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/MKE_ruaO0AFy3bxGUKLXDrEFl1RWvZ60hbsd6Li63MnTAVpi7QYniHhSUYF2mhNmhKo91wnFh3aSxqKyf4hKRpZA-HE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=303.18)):

For more information, contact the Office of Strategic Communication at 417-836-6397. The Missouri State Journal is available online at KSMU.org.