



## Barbara H. Padnos International Center

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**To:** Wendy Wenner, University College Dean  
**From:** Mark Schaub, Executive Director *MS*  
**Date:** 4 March 2005  
**Copy:** Gayle Davis, Provost  
Ron Stephens, Coordinator of African/African-American Studies  
Peimin Ni, Coordinator of East Asian Studies  
Jim Goode, Coordinator of Middle East Studies  
Russ Rhoads, Coordinator of Latin American Studies  
**Subject:** State of the Area Studies Programs

As you requested, the coordinators of each of the four international area studies programs (African/African-American Studies, East Asian Studies, Latin American Studies, and Middle East Studies) have completed an overview of the respective programs. These reports are attached here for your review.

### **Where We've Been**

Looking at the Area Studies programs as a collective, most observers would conclude that the state of the Area Studies programs is somewhat better than it was one year ago. The four programs were separated from one another by college and from Padnos International Center, resulting in relative isolation. Pathetically small budgets (EAS, for example, had a paltry \$1200 budget per year!) made growth difficult. Faculty to staff AS courses were provided by units as a favor or as the result of outright begging.

### **Where We Are Now**

Bringing together the four programs under one Dean has made communication and cooperation easier—both with one another and with PIC and other interdisciplinary units in University College. More significantly, the move has allowed critical resources to be shifted to the Area Studies budgets. This year alone, \$24,000 was re-allocated to the four programs. Lake Ontario Hall rises on the South Campus as a new “home” for the programs. Plans are underway for the creation of a Chinese Studies major and perhaps also a Global Studies major. Faculty governance has reviewed a proposal for joint appointments of full-time faculty (which will potentially aid in the staffing of interdisciplinary programs' courses). And the programming of lectures, seminars, and other events is stronger than ever.

Despite these obvious advances, many challenges remain:

*COT support.* This is the most pressing (yet most easily solved) problem. No administrative/secretarial support was allocated to the Area Studies programs in University College; the Padnos International Center Assistant took this on, in addition to the existing full-time responsibilities for PIC support (e.g., the PIC Executive Director).

*Faculty.* While joint appointments within University College for faculty to teach AS courses provides hope, a simple problem remains: there is a dearth of faculty members with expertise in critical areas related to the AS programs. For example, there are no Political Science tenure-track faculty available to teach courses related to East Asian, African, or Middle East Studies.

*Enrollment.* While enrollment in actual AS sections is relatively strong, there are not enough students actively seeking or graduating with AS minors to demonstrate strong overall enrollment in these programs. A new Global Studies major could be one option for boosting enrollment in AS programs.

### **Where We're Heading**

The reports from the AS programs themselves identify specific goals for the immediate future, as well as for years ahead. Some of these specifics include the stated objectives that A/AAS will be working on curricular improvements, MES will be boosting its outreach services, LAS will be seeking a partner institution in Central/South America, and EAS will look to solidify Japanese instruction and develop a Chinese Studies major.

One objective individual to each program and to the programs collectively is to seek external funding through grants. A global studies major, as an umbrella encompassing the AS programs, is also a collective interest.