One of the perks of running the Sigur Center is being able to provide financial support for faculty and students who want to go abroad for research or language study. Each year, the center gives out approximately two dozen grants for these purposes. This is an invaluable complement to what we do on campus. More information about these grants is available on the center’s website.

This year, we have the additional opportunity to send even more students abroad for language study. The Department of Education has awarded us Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships for the next three years. The languages included are Chinese, Japanese, and Korean. These awards total $232,500 per year, and include both full academic year and summer only fellowships.

While I take pleasure in announcing these awards, I can take no credit for them. The credit goes to Ed McCord, the center’s previous director who wrote the proposal, and to Mike Bouffard, who helped gather the info that went into the proposal.

The FLAS awards reflect both their hard work and the past accomplishments of our other faculty and students. We have a lot of talent on Asian studies at GW and the Sigur Center in particular, and we hope to continue the reputation for outstanding scholarship that has already been created.

Bruce Dickson  
Director, Sigur Center for Asian Studies  
Professor of Political Science and International Affairs

In addition to FLAS awards, the Sigur Center is pleased to announce grants for language study and field research for Summer 2015. Students with an interest in furthering their Asian language skills or conducting field research in Asia are highly encouraged to apply. All GW students are eligible for Language Grants. Asian Field Research Grants are open to MA and PhD students. Students may apply regardless of nationality.

All grant applications are due by February 27, 2015. Please find links to application materials and details for each grant on our Fellowship & Grants page.
On October 10, the Sigur Center hosted an all-day conference where scholars from many universities discussed the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) and Taiwan’s bid for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) free-trade agreement. With 2014 being the 35th anniversary of the passing of the TRA, scholars discussed the importance of the legislation from many different angles, including legal, historical, political and security. The first two panels focusing on the TRA were:

**The TRA to the Rescue: How the ROC (Taiwan) Has Fared Despite the Rupture of Diplomatic Relations with the U.S.**
- Yu-long Ling, Franklin College
- Cal Clark, Auburn University
- James C. Hsiung, New York University
- Thomas Bellows, the University of Texas at San Antonio

**Taiwan Relations Act at 35: Retrospect and Prospect**
- June Tuefeli Dreyer, University of Miami
- Edward Friedman, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- Robert Sutter, CSIS
- Vincent Wang, University of Washington
- Steven Phillips, Towson University

The third and final panel focused on the TPP and the economic and political incentives for Taiwan to join the free-trade agreement, which includes enhanced U.S.-Taiwan ties. At the same time, some of the significant obstacles Taiwan faces were examined, including the pressure China has brought to bear on Asian countries in hopes of preventing them from allowing Taiwan to join such a regional free trade agreement. Details of the panel are below:

**Open Regionalism and Taiwan’s Bid for the TPP**
- Thomas Chen, St. John’s University
- James Riedel, Johns Hopkins University
- Claude Barfield, American Enterprise Institute
- Michael Plummer, Johns Hopkins University
- Roy Lee, Chung Hwa Institution for Economic Research, Taiwan
- Peter C.Y. Chow, City University of New York

Full audio recordings of each panel can be found [here](#).

This Taiwan Conference was held in conjunction with the 56th Annual Conference of the American Association of Chinese Studies (AACS) which occurred from October 10 - 12 at the Elliott School.
**RECENT EVENTS**

**TRANSNATIONAL AND SUBNATIONAL LECTURE SERIES**

**September 8, 2014:** *US Policy on Asia: Where Do We Go From Here?*, Co-sponsored by the Institute for Communitarian Policy Studies, with Dr. Kurt Campbell, Chairman and CEO of The Asia Group, Chairman of CNAS and a Director for Standard Chartered Bank. Watch the video [here](#).

**October 22, 2014:** *The Internet, Political Participation, and Governance Reform in China*, Co-sponsored by GW's Institute for International Economic Policy, with Steven J. Balla, Associate Professor of Political Science, Public Policy and Public Administration, and International Affairs, GW. Listen to the audio [here](#).

**October 22, 2014:** *Military Comfort Women of Imperial Japan's Asia-Pacific War: Voices from China and Beyond*, Co-sponsored by the Sigur Center's Memory & Reconciliation in the Asia Pacific program, with Dr. Peipei Qiu, Louise Boyd Dale and Alfred Lichtenstein Professor of Chinese and Japanese, Vassar College.

**October 24, 2014:** *Social Ties, Resources, and Migrant Labor Contention in Contemporary China: From Peasants to Protesters*, with Jeffrey Becker, Asia Analyst, CNA's China Security Affairs Group.

**October 30, 2014:** *Political Insults: How Offenses Escalate Conflict*, Co-sponsored by the Sigur Center’s Memory & Reconciliation in the Asia Pacific program and GW’s Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies, with Karina V. Korestelina, Director, Program on History, Memory and Conflict, School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, GMU.

**November 5, 2014:** *Author Event: Last Winter We Parted*, Co-sponsored by the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures, with Nakamura Fumori, Author, *Last Winter We Parted*.

**September 10, 2014:** *Cambodia: Global Context and Contemporary Challenges*, with Dr. Pek Koon Heng, Director, ASEAN Studies Center and Assistant Professor, School of International Service, American University; Murray Hiebert, Deputy Director and Senior Fellow, Sumitro Chair for Southeast Asia Studies, CSIS; Marvin Ott, Professorial Lecturer and Visiting Scholar, Southeast Asia Studies, Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies.

**October 9, 2014:** *A Tribute to Dr. Chung-wen Shih, 1922-2014*, with film showing of *Return from Silence: China’s Revolutionary Writers*, Co-sponsored by the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures and the GW Confucius Institute. Learn more about Dr. Shih and her legacy [here](#).

**October 15, 2014:** *The Gender of Superstition: Revolutionary Modernity and the Yan’an Campaign against Spirit Mediums, 1944-1945*, with Xiaofei Kang, Associate Professor of Religion, GW.
November 19, 2014: The Imperial Frontier: Bordering and State Construction on the Afghanistan/Pakistan Frontier, with Benjamin Hopkins, Associate Professor of History and International Affairs, GW. Listen to the audio here.

November 21, 2014: The 7th Annual Conference on China's Economic Development and the U.S.-China Relationship, Co-sponsored by GW’s Institute for International Economic Policy, the GW Center for Business Education and Research, and the GW Confucius Institute. Watch the video of each session here.

November 25, 2014: Local Government Financing Vehicles in China and their Debt: The Legal Picture, with Donald Clarke, David Weaver Research Professor of Law, GW.

VISITING SCHOLAR ROUNDTABLE SERIES

August 27, 2014: Japan’s Imagined Geographies of East Asia since the 1990s, with Satoshi Nakano, Professor of History, Hitotsubashi University Graduate School of Social Sciences, Japan.

September 3, 2014: The U.S.-ROK Alliance as an Asia-Pacific Alliance? Historical and Contemporary Perspectives in U.S. Policy, with Yasuyo Sakata, Professor of International Relations, the Kanda University of International Studies, Japan.

November 14, 2014: The Role of Taiwan as a Stakeholder in Regional Security, with Tuo Liu, Section Chief of Japan Government Affairs Section, Department of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China (Taiwan).
The conference – made possible through the generous support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York and GW’s Centers and Institutes Facilitating Fund – will release additional research and reports in the coming months. Current conference reports and conference videos can be found below:

**Policy Brief** - Nationalism and Chinese Foreign Policy

**Policy Brief** - Abe and Modi: Nationalist Leaders versus Nationalist Leadership

**Video** - Views from Asia

**Video** - Views from Eurasia

On November 18, the RPI hosted a conference entitled *Worldviews of Aspiring Powers: A Resurgence of Nationalism?* The conference consisted of two panels. The first panel, “Views from Asia,” involved discussion of nationalism in Japan, India and China while the second panel, “Views from Eurasia” focused on nationalism in Russia and Iran. Panelists included:

- **Richard Samuels**, Ford International Professor of Political Science, MIT
- **Deepa Ollapally**, Research Professor of International Affairs and Associate Director, Sigur Center for Asian Studies, GW
- **David Shambaugh**, Professor of Political Science and International Affairs, GW
- **Farideh Farhi**, Affiliate Graduate of Faculty, University of Hawaii at Manoa
- **Andrew Kuchins**, Director and Senior Fellow, Russia and Eurasia Program, CSIS

The Sigur Center’s Rising Powers Initiative examines how domestic foreign policy debates and identity issues affect international relations in Asia.

More information on the Rising Powers Initiative can be found at:

Website: [http://www.risingpowersinitiative.org](http://www.risingpowersinitiative.org)

Blog: [http://www.risingpowersinitiative.org/blog](http://www.risingpowersinitiative.org/blog)

Twitter: [http://twitter.com/RisingPowers](http://twitter.com/RisingPowers)
Partnerships for International Strategies in Asia (PISA) is hosted by the Sigur Center for Asian Studies. Directed by Linda Yarr, PISA prepares leaders for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st Century and mobilizes networks of scholars, policy makers, and advocates on both sides of the Pacific to address urgent national and transnational concerns.

Established in 1984 as the Committee on International Relations Studies with the People’s Republic of China (CIRSPRC), the program has grown and morphed over the last three decades to meet the changing needs of the Asia-Pacific region. More recently, PISA has focused many of its activities on the challenges associated with climate change. It has organized leadership training institutes on the topic in Hanoi, Washington, DC, and Bangkok. In 2013, Myanmar’s Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Forestry invited PISA to help enhance its capacity for dealing with climate change.

**MYANMAR CLIMATE INITIATIVE**

PISA welcomed 14 participants from Myanmar’s next generation of civil society and government leadership to participate in the Myanmar Advanced Leadership Institute on Climate Change (MALICC). The conference was held on GW’s campus from October 31–November 15, and offered an interdisciplinary curriculum focused on a wide range of climate change topics, expert-led discussions, simulation exercises and experiential learning through off-site visits.

MALICC follows a strong legacy of previous Climate Institutes and provided a unique forum for civil society and government leaders to discuss their vision for Myanmar’s environmental future. The government participants came from seven distinct Bureaus while the civil society leaders represented six leading organizations with missions devoted to sustainable development, community participation, and knowledge dissemination. By the program’s closing session, crucial bonds were formed—future links for information sharing, collaboration, and increased understanding among a wide range of perspectives.

**CLIMATE-WISE DEVELOPMENT ROUNDTABLE SERIES**

The PISA-ASEAN Climate-wise Development Roundtable, presented thanks to generous support from the Chino Cienega Foundation, features personnel from the ASEAN member embassies in Washington, DC together with specialists from the NGO, think tank and academic communities. It convenes interested members of the public in off-the-record sessions to discuss the ways in which ASEAN nations are innovating in the realm of climate-wise or "green growth" development strategies. Recent sessions include:

October 8, 2014: *Building Urban Resilience in the Context of Climate Change: The Case of Singapore*, a talk by Ms. Nitya Menon, First Secretary (Political), Embassy of the Republic of Singapore.


**GLOBAL CITY IN WORLD AFFAIRS PROGRAM**

PISA was delighted to welcome the fifth cohort of Global Cities in World Affairs participants to campus from August 25-October 17, 2014. The ten participants were officers of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Civil Service. This two-month program introduced participants to innovative approaches to managing agencies in global cities. The curriculum covered a wide array of issues from environmental sustainability and climate change resiliency to transnational security threats and international trade issues.
Daqing Yang is Associate Professor of History and International Affairs at the Elliott School as well as director of the Asian Studies BA and MA program. A native of China, Professor Yang graduated from Nanjing University and received his Ph.D. from Harvard University. He is a founding co-director of the Memory and Reconciliation in the Asia Pacific program which is based in the Sigur Center. Focusing primarily on Japan, China and Korea, the program seeks to connect individuals and institutions across the Pacific, increase awareness about efforts at conflict resolution and confidence-building in the region, and promote cooperative endeavors through conferences, joint projects, and commissioned papers. Most recently, the program co-sponsored an event on "Military Comfort Women of Imperial Japan's Asia-Pacific War: Voices from China and Beyond," with Dr. Peipei Qiu of Vassar College.

Dr. Yang recalls first gaining a glimpse of Japan through popular culture, much like young people today. For China, he recalls, "Japan is often a distant neighbor, and vice-versa." As issues related to past conflicts began to heat up in the late 1980’s, Dr. Yang says he became "acutely aware of how little I knew about this neighbor country that has greatly impacted China in all sorts of ways in modern times. I was very fortunate to have excellent teachers of Japanese history and language ever since I started my graduate studies in the U.S., beginning with the University of Hawaii." Through many visits and extended stays in Japan, Dr. Yang deepened his understanding as well as curiosity about the country.

The Memory and Reconciliation in the Asia Pacific program can trace its roots to the early 2000s. Then, diplomatic relations among East Asian neighbors took a nose dive, to a great extent because of one leader's insistence on visiting a particular shrine commemorating the war dead. In reaction to this downturn in regional diplomacy, however, private citizens including scholars and educators launched several endeavors aimed at creating a shared version of the past. "In short," Dr. Yang says, "history and memory were becoming great forces shaping the present of the East Asian region. Professor Mike Mochizuki and I felt that there was a lack of knowledge and interest in Washington, which has had critical relations with all of the countries involved over the decades."

Having created an online database and hosted several international conferences as well as lecture series since 2003, Drs. Yang and Mochizuki are currently seeking to redefine the program’s mission by joining hands with other scholars in the DC area who work on reconciliation-related issues worldwide. A new website is also being constructed. In addition, since 2015 is the 70th anniversary of the end of WWII and the 50th anniversary of diplomatic normalization between Japan and the Republic of Korea, they are planning a lecture series devoted to examining the end of WWII in the Asia Pacific and its legacies.

Dr. Yang fully acknowledges the challenges that lingering historical animosities pose to reconciliation in the Asia Pacific. "The fact that historical issues still constitute a major source of mistrust and obstruct much needed cooperation among East Asian countries demonstrates the complexity and severity of the challenge of reconciliation in this region, long after the actual events took place. For all its benefits, the internet seems to have empowered extremist voices in all countries. However, I am always encouraged by those tireless individuals in East Asia – ordinary citizen activists, scholars, and even government officials – who have not given up hope and worked hard to overcome the negative legacies of past conflicts. I am also happy to see many members of the younger generation – including an increasing number here at GW – who fearlessly cross boundaries and build bridges over deeply entrenched divisions."
Suzie Oh is a second year graduate student in the Asian Studies program at the Elliott School. Suzie is concentrating on East Asia and Korea in particular. She came to the Elliott School with valuable and unique experiences in Korea. As a Student Ambassador at the Yeosu Expo in South Korea in 2012, Suzie had the opportunity to participate in a summer camp program for North Korean defector college students which was run by the Hana Center in Daegu, South Korea. Suzie landed an internship at the Hana Center where she assisted with the resettlement of North Korean defectors who were trying to start new lives in South Korea. This experience also led her to become an intern at the Jangdaehyun 2014 School in Busan, South Korea which is an alternative school for North Korean defector children. She assisted with the opening and set up of the school’s interior and administrative affairs as well as instructed defector children in conversational English and International Studies. More recently, Suzie interned at the Department of State’s Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Office of Public Diplomacy last fall.

Suzie was selected as a David L. Boren Fellow in 2013 and spent a year in the Korean Language Program at Kyungpook National University in South Korea. While Suzie makes clear that being a Boren Fellow entails “having to be independent and figuring out how to live in a foreign country without anyone holding your hand,” she emphasizes that it was an invaluable experience overall. “The flexibility and freedom that the Boren Fellowship gave me to pursue internships and experiences that I would not have been able to pursue in other language programs was wonderful.” In addition to her Boren fellowship, Suzie was selected as a PMF (Presidential Management Fellowship) semi-finalist this past fall. She describes the application experience as new and challenging, “having felt somewhat insecure about my experiences and how they applied to the criteria of the fellowship.” However, Suzie believes that what made her a competitive candidate was being honest about her passions and emphasizing all of her experiences and the lessons and skills learned from them.

While clearly successful in her pursuits in the area of Asian Studies, Suzie almost chose a very different path. “I was actually thinking about applying to public health programs a few weeks before applying to graduate school, as one way of preparing for medical school,” she recalls. “However, I have always felt a calling for public service and have held an interest in East Asia and international relations for a long time.” After deciding to change her graduate field of study in a matter of days, Suzie applied only to schools in Washington DC, seeing no point in applying elsewhere. “I was compelled by the central location of the Elliott School as well as its emphasis on academics as a means of career development.” Suzie will find out whether she has been chosen as a PMF finalist later this spring.
Dr. John W. Tai received an M.A. in East Asian Studies from the Elliott School and a Ph.D. from the Department of Political Science. He is currently Adjunct Professor on Taiwan Studies at the Elliott School as well as a government consultant. He is the author of the newly published book, *Building Civil Society in Authoritarian China: Importance of Leadership Connections for Establishing Effective Nongovernmental Organizations in a Non-Democracy*, which he will discuss at a book launch at the Sigur Center on February 12.

John credits the Elliott School’s location in Washington, DC as a main reason for pursuing his M.A. there. While it did not yet have its own building, the school nevertheless impressed him with the caliber of its faculty, and he recalls learning a great deal from Profs. Harry Harding, Edward McCord and Bruce Dickson. John appreciated the way in which the Elliott School allowed for students pursuing graduate degrees to also intern or work, which he took advantage of. By the time John decided to pursue his Ph.D., “the political science faculty and their research were gaining recognition in the field, and the level of expertise on China at GW was unrivaled.” With an interest in Chinese politics, and seeking rigorous training in political science, John recalls benefiting greatly from the faculty, including current Sigur Center Director Bruce Dickson, who was his dissertation director.

In tracing the origins of his interest in civil society and governance in China, John states that he always had an interest in the “society.” “Elite politics is sexy,” he says, “but I always felt that focusing on the elite somehow provides an incomplete picture of political development. In retrospect, I think the seed for my interest in civil society was planted when I worked at the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, where I had a portfolio that included China, North Korea, Vietnam, and Laos.” Monitoring religious freedom conditions in these countries increased John’s awareness of civil society developments in general. It was a research trip to China in 2006 that cemented his decision to study civil society actors and their contributions to governance in China. “The irony is that at the beginning of my dissertation project, I did not want to adopt the civil society framework because I doubted the applicability of the concept to China’s situation. However, the reality is that civil society does exist in China; it is just a function of how you define civil society.”

John cautions against relying too much on the liberal Western idea of civil society when thinking about this concept in China. While many perceive civil society as completely autonomous from the state and even as a means for overthrowing the autocratic state, John argues that the state has in fact been a major benefactor of civil society development, even in authoritarian countries like China. He believes that the general outlook for civil society and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in China is still good. At the same time, he acknowledges recent state efforts to tighten development spaces for NGOs and religious groups. Furthermore, he states that both the Chinese state and elitism are significant obstacles to the development of civil society in China. “China’s NGOs have been led by educated individuals with ties to the state,” he argues. “More genuine grassroots involvement in civil society leadership is needed to ensure that civil society groups are truly aware of and responsive to the needs of the people.”

When reflecting on the mixture of academic and non-academic experiences in his career, John says that people who are trying to decide on one path or the other must make career decisions based on an understanding of their interests. “Given that much of my non-academic work has to do with policy, I think that there is a great deal of synergy between this line of work and academia. In fact, we consistently see policymakers and analysts who have academic backgrounds and academics who are actively involved in policy issues. Right now, the most obvious person that comes to mind who fits this bill is Ashton Carter, who is likely to be confirmed as the next secretary of defense.” John also points to the Elliott School and the Sigur Center as a repository of this mixture of academic and non-academic experience. “I think that GW’s Professor Robert Sutter is the perfect embodiment of someone who has had an illustrious career as a policy/intelligence analyst at the highest level while maintaining a strong academic presence.” As an important piece of advice to students, he says “don’t be afraid to try anything,” and encourages students to “never rule out any possibility or combination of possibilities.”
FALL 2014 VISITING SCHOLARS

In Fall of 2014, the Sigur Center hosted visiting scholars from five countries. Visiting scholars continue to be a valuable part of the Sigur Center as they conduct research on a wide variety of issues, present their findings at Visiting Scholar Roundtables and participate in activities such as Sigur Center language tea times. The Sigur Center is proud of the quality and variety of its visiting scholars as they help to distinguish the Center in numerous ways. Here is a list of visiting scholars from August 2014 to January 2015:

Kum Loul HA, South Korea
Email: hakl2277@gwu.edu
Affiliation: Chief Professor, Gachon University, South Korea
Research topic: “U.S.-Korea Relations”

Jongkeon KO, South Korea
Email: kojongkeon@gwu.edu
Affiliation: Lieutenant Colonol, ROK Army
Research topic: “The Study of North Korea’s Sudden Collapse and Unification of Korea”

Hongzhong LIU, China (P.R.C)
Email: hongzhongliu@gwu.edu
Affiliation: Professor of School of International Studies, Liaoning University, China

Tuo LIU, Taiwan (R.O.C.)
Email: ryutuo@gmail.com
Affiliation: Section Chief of Japan Government Affairs Secion, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Taiwan
Research topic: “The Role of Taiwan as a Stake-holder in Regional Security”

Jung-Chul LEE, South Korea
Email: rheeplan1@gwu.edu
Affiliation: Associate Professor, Soongsil University, South Korea

Kyung Soo LEE, South Korea
Email: sky041ks@gwu.edu
Affiliation: Major, ROK Air Force
Research topic: “China’s Anti-Access/Area Denial Strategy and it’s Implications for East Asian Security”

Satoru MORI, Japan
Email: smori@gwu.edu
Affiliation: Professor, Hosei University, Japan
Research topic: “U.S. Regional Strategy in Asia since 1971”

Yasuhiro OKUDA, Japan
Email: okudayasuhiro@gmail.com
Affiliation: Associate Professor, Department of British and American Studies, Aichi Prefectural University, Japan
Research topic: “The US-UK Relationship and the Making of the Post-War Asian Order”

Michael YAHUDA, United Kingdom
Email: yahuda@gwu.edu
Affiliation: Professor Emeritus, London School of Economics
Research topic: “Sino-Japanese Relations: Bridging the Gap”

Kailei YAN, China (P.R.C.)
Email: yankailei2014@gwu.edu
Affiliation: Associate Professor, The College of Art and Communication, Tongji University, China
Research topic: “Study of Contemporary Documentary Filmmakers in China and the U.S.”
SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

JOURNAL ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS


Christina Fink. "How Real are Myanmar's Reforms?" Current History, Vol. 113 (764), September 2014.


BOOKS


GIFTS AND GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

The Sigur Center for Asian Studies is grateful for support from the individuals, foundations, and corporations for its activities. Gifts to the Sigur Center for Asian Studies support our students, our special events, and our research. Even more importantly, gifts to the Sigur Center help us carry out our mission — to increase the quality and broaden the scope of scholarly research and publications on Asian affairs, promote U.S.-Asian scholarly interaction and serve as the nexus for educating a new generation of students, scholars, analysts, and policymakers.

If you wish to make a donation to the Sigur Center for Asian Studies, please contact Deepa Ollapally at deepao@gwu.edu OR follow our donation link below:

https://www.gwu.edu/online_giving/

CONTACT US!

Give us a call or send us an email for more information about our various programs and opportunities. Also, we are always delighted to hear from our alumni and we would love to learn about the interesting things you have been up to since leaving the Sigur Center.

Please don’t be a stranger!

Sigur Center for Asian Studies
1957 E Street, N.W., Suite 503
Washington, D.C. 20052

(202) 994-5886
gsigur@gwu.edu

Visit us on the web at:
http://www.gwu.edu/~sigur

EDITED BY:
Michael Bouffard,
Sigur Center Program Coordinator