

Sigur Center  
for Asian Studies

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

# ASIAN CONNECTIONS

2024



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Dear supporters,

The 2023-2024 academic year was another excellent year for the Sigur Center for Asian Studies. In addition to sponsoring **dozens of events**, the Center awarded **thousands of dollars in research and language-study grants** to students and faculty, including, for the first time, **summer support for Uyghur Studies**.

The Center hosted a number of excellent and widely attended events over the course of the year. A highlight was the **Gaston Sigur Memorial Lecture** on “The Future of American Policy Towards Southeast Asia,” given by retired Singaporean academic and diplomat **Bilahari Kausikan**. Ambassador Kausikan argued that true neutrality means “knowing your own interests, taking positions based on your own interests, and not allowing others to define your interests for you by default.” He further warned of the danger of passivity in relation to the US-China split, saying “there is no ‘sweet spot’ to keep both the Chinese and Americans ‘happy.’” Other notable events included a conversation with Chinese-American writer **Yan Geling**, and a program on linguistic and cultural approaches to elections in Southeast Asia.

Our Taiwan programming continued to expand and improve. A roundtable that the Center sponsored in the fall focused on Taiwan’s presidential and legislative elections. This spring, the Center hosted a discussion on the **Taiwan Relations Act** at 45 years and counting. The sold-out event filled the Lindner Commons and featured opening remarks from TECRO’s Representative to the United States, **Alexander Tah-ray Yui**, who stayed for the entire program. A photo exhibition portraying the 45 years of the Taiwan Relations Act filled the second-floor gallery of the Elliott School and attracted **significant media coverage**.

The Center has expanded its reach into Southeast Asian studies, partnering with the Washington DC-based **Southeast Asia Forum** and co-sponsoring three events on policy issues in Southeast Asia this past spring. We look forward to further collaborations with the Forum, as well as with the Sigur Center’s new partner, the **New York Southeast Asia Network (NYSEAN)**, in Spring 2025.

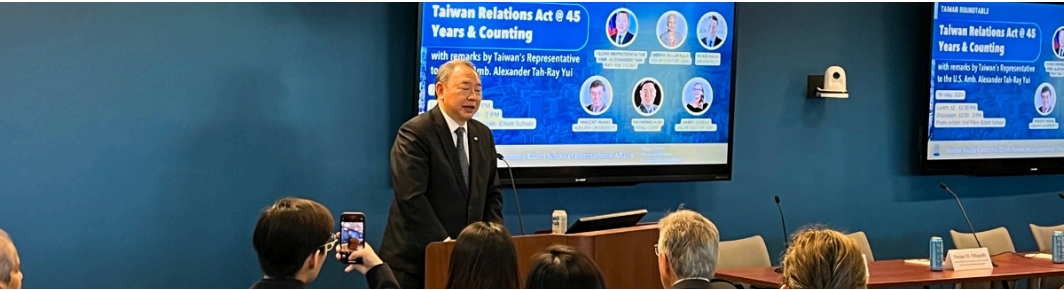
I am grateful to **Associate Director Deepa Ollapally**, the Sigur Center **Advisory Council**, and the Center’s more than **60 affiliated faculty** for their help and support during my year as Interim Director. Deepa will be stepping down as Associate Director at the end of this term but will continue to be very much physically at the Sigur Center and ESIA as Research Professor and Director of the Rising Powers Initiative, in addition to teaching and running her own grant projects. Starting in July 2024, the Center will be in the able hands of **Eric Schluessel**, a social historian of China and Central Asia, and one of the leading experts on Uyghur Studies. Described by his students as “**a brilliant and devoted teacher**,” I am confident that, with Eric at the helm, the Center will not only continue to thrive but will also move on to even greater achievements.

### **Dr. Janet E. Steele, PhD**

Interim Director of the Sigur Center for Asian Studies  
Professor of Media and Public Affairs and International Affairs



# The Taiwan Relations Act at 45 Years & Counting



The 45th anniversary of the **Taiwan Relations Act (TRA)** was celebrated with a roundtable organized by the Sigur Center and moderated by Associate Director Dr. Deepa Ollapally, where experts assessed the **evolving significance** and **interpretation** of the TRA over time. Vincent Wang delved into the **historical shifts** in understanding the TRA's implications, while Ryan Hass shed light on the varied perspectives within the US Congress and executive branch regarding the Act. Additionally, Raymond Kuo explored the TRA's role in the complex dynamics of **cross-Strait relations**. Notably, Alexander Yui, Representative for the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the US, introduced the discussion. With a diverse panel of experts and guests invited to tour the **photography collection**, the event provided a **comprehensive examination** of the TRA's enduring **impact on US-Taiwan relations**.



**Vincent Wei-Cheng Wang**

Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences & Professor of Political Science at Adelphi University



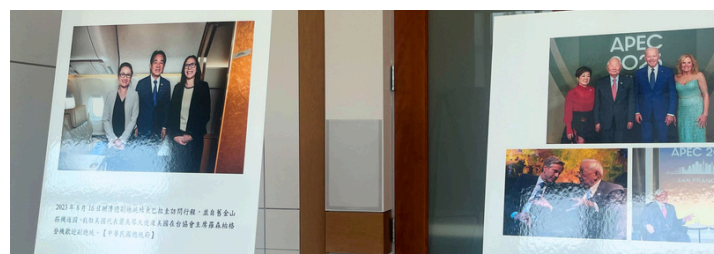
**Ryan Hass**

Director of the John L. Thornton China Center & Chen-Fu & Cecilia Yen Koo Chair in Taiwan Studies, Brookings; Former Director for China, Taiwan, & Mongolia, US National Security Council; Former Foreign Service Officer; Foreign policy author



**Raymond Kuo**

Inaugural Director of the Taiwan Policy Initiative & Senior Political Scientist at RAND





## The Future of American Policy Towards Southeast Asia

In a captivating lecture, Bilahari Kausikan, a distinguished Singaporean academic and retired diplomat, delivered an insightful analysis of broad trends in the **US approach towards Southeast Asia**. Drawing on his extensive experience, Kausikan explored the complex drivers shaping these trends against the backdrop of global and regional developments, including the **intensifying US-China strategic competition**. His compelling narrative suggested that American policy towards Southeast Asia, and the region's responses, might hold the key to understanding the **evolution of the broader Indo-Pacific dynamics**.

As Chairman of the Middle East Institute at the National University of Singapore and with a distinguished career spanning over three decades in Singapore's foreign relations, Kausikan's perspective was **eagerly awaited and richly informative**.

Moderated by Dr. Janet Steele, Director of the Sigur Center, the event not only provided **invaluable insights** but also fostered a sense of pride in the depth of knowledge and expertise showcased by both speakers.

### Bilahari Kausikan

Bilahari Kausikan is a distinguished Singaporean academic and retired diplomat who served as **Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs** and as **Ambassador to the United Nations and Russia**. With a career spanning **37 years** in Singapore's foreign relations, Kausikan is known for his outspokenness and insightful analysis of regional and global affairs. He currently holds the position of Chairman of the **Middle East Institute** at the **National University of Singapore**. Kausikan's expertise and **candid perspectives** have made him a **highly respected** figure in diplomatic circles, and he continues to contribute to the discourse on international relations.





## A Conversation with Geling Yan

The event at the Sigur Center with Geling Yan was a **thrilling journey** through the life and works of this acclaimed novelist and screenwriter. Yan's **vivid storytelling** took us from her experiences in the People's Liberation Army to her literary triumphs, including her latest book, *Milati*.

Joined by discussant Director Janet Steele, the event sparked **lively discussions** on **copyright, creative expression, and the power of media**. It was an unforgettable evening that left attendees inspired by Yan's **resilience** and **captivated** by her **literary genius**.



### Geling Yan

Geling Yan is a **celebrated novelist** and **screenwriter** renowned for her **captivating storytelling**. Born in Shanghai and with a background serving in the People's Liberation Army during the Cultural Revolution, Yan's literary journey has spanned decades, producing **acclaimed works** such as *The Secret Talker* and *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*. Her novels have been **adapted into films** by renowned directors like Zhang Yimou and Ang Lee, solidifying her status as a **literary luminary**. Despite facing censorship in her native China, Yan's **unwavering spirit** and **prolific output** continue to **inspire audiences worldwide**.





## Assessing Taiwan's Security Dynamics in a Competitive International Environment

The Sigur Center electrified the Elliott School with an **invigorating conference** on **Taiwan's security relations** with allies and adversaries. The high-stakes event convened **top experts** to dissect the pressing issues impacting Taiwan's security and political economy amid **global supply chain upheavals** and **intensifying tensions** in the Taiwan Strait. Attendees were treated to two compelling panels that delved deep into strategic defenses and dynamic partnerships, **promising new insights** and **strategies**.

### Strategies for Security

The first panel was a riveting discussion on fortifying Taiwan against **increasing Chinese pressure**. Lonnie Henley captivated the audience with his insights on Taiwan's **defense** and **deterrence strategies**, while Bonnie Glaser provided a masterclass on the intricate dance of **alliance politics**. David Sacks then illuminated the room with his analysis of **strategic signaling** and the **critical US posture** in the region. Moderated by Robert Sutter, the panel was a powerful exploration of the **multifaceted approaches** needed to safeguard Taiwan's future.

### Building Partnerships for Resiliency

The second panel continued the momentum with a focus on forging **robust regional alliances**. Shihoko Goto's examination of Indo-Pacific partnerships and regional viewpoints was both enlightening and inspiring. Adnan Rasool's deep dive into the **New Southbound Policy's** impact highlighted the innovative strategies at play, while Barbara Weisel's discussion on the US role in building economic security was both informative and thought-provoking. Guided by Dr. Deepa Ollapally, this panel underscored the critical importance of **collaboration** and **strategic partnerships** in ensuring Taiwan's resilience and stability on the global stage.

#### Lonnie Henley

Professional Lecturer, GW; Lieutenant Colonel, Retired, US Army



#### Bonnie Glaser

Managing Director, Indo-Pacific Program, German Marshall Fund



#### David Sacks

Research Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations



#### Robert Sutter

Professor of Practice of International Affairs, GW



#### Shihoko Goto

Director, Asia Program and Geoeconomics and Indo-Pacific Enterprise, Wilson Center



#### Adnan Rasool

Hardy Graham Distinguished Faculty Professor of Political Science, University of Tennessee



#### Barbara Weisel

Managing Director, Rock Creek Global Advisors; Former Assistant US Trade Representative



#### Deepa Ollapally

Associate Director, Sigur Center; Research Professor of International Affairs





## Humanizing the Conflict Across the Taiwan Strait: Lessons from the Strait Talk Dialogue Movement

In a gripping convergence of political tension and proactive dialogue, the **Taiwan Strait** remains a **hotbed of uncertainty** as Beijing intensifies its push for reunification, Taiwan braces for **pivotal elections**, and **US-China rivalry** sharpens. Against this backdrop, the **non-partisan initiative Strait Talk**, founded in 2005, brought together **dynamic young leaders** from Taiwan, China, and the United States for a **crucial dialogue on conflict resolution**.

Participants delved into the roots of the tensions, crafted actionable peace plans, and forged lasting connections. This initiative, **spanning six cities** and boasting an alumni network of **over 1,000 influencers** in various sectors, showcased its transformative power through a panel discussion. The panel illuminated Strait Talk's mission, its **historical journey**, and its **unique methodologies**, highlighting participant experiences and the initiative's role in humanizing the high-stakes discourse of cross-Strait relations. They revealed insights from **two decades of action research**, shedding light on evolving perceptions and **fostering hope** for peaceful resolution amidst **escalating geopolitical challenges**.



### Ava Shen

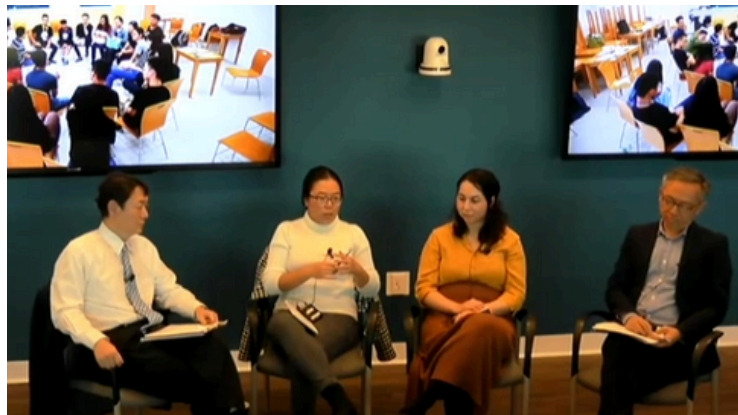
Ava Shen covers Taiwan and Chinese foreign policy at Eurasia Group. She has interned at Rhodium Group and the Stimson Center, focusing on China. Ava holds a Master's from Johns Hopkins and a Bachelor's from Boston University. Fluent in Mandarin, English, and French, she enjoys historical fiction, art museums, running, and tennis. She is a Strait Talk alumna and board member.



### Tatsushi Arai

Dr. Tatsushi (Tats) Arai is an Associate Professor at Kent State University's School of Peace and Conflict Studies.

With 25 years in conflict resolution, he has led initiatives globally and served as a UN Senior Mediation Advisor. He holds a PhD from George Mason University and is the founding Interactive Conflict Resolution Facilitator of Strait Talk.



### Adrienne Chih-fang Wu

Adrienne Chih-fang Wu is a Research Associate at the Global Taiwan Institute and hosts the "Taiwan Salon" podcast. She holds dual Master's degrees from Ritsumeikan and Kyunghee Universities and a BA from McGill University. Adrienne has lived and worked extensively in East Asia and is involved in the UC Berkeley US-Taiwan Next Generation Working Group. She is a Strait Talk alumna.



### Daqing Yang

Professor Daqing Yang specializes in modern Japan's history and WWII legacies in East Asia. He earned his

PhD from Harvard University and has served as a historical consultant at the US National Archives. A Co-Director of the Memory and Reconciliation in the Asia Pacific program, he has authored several books and held the Edwin O. Reischauer Visiting Professorship at Harvard.





## Taiwan's Upcoming Elections & Foreign Policy Stakes

With the **Taiwanese presidential elections** fast approaching in January 2024, the political landscape was buzzing with anticipation. Taiwan's **vibrant democracy** guaranteed an unpredictable electoral outcome, and the **stakes were sky-high**. Which parties and players should we have watched, and what were the critical foreign policy implications? The Sigur Center invited everyone to an exhilarating discussion to explore these pivotal questions. The event promised to be a must-attend for anyone keen on the future of Taiwan and the region.



**Deepa Ollapally**  
Associate Director, Sigur Center; Research Professor of International Affairs

**Kevin Sheives**  
Deputy Director, International Forum for Democratic Studies, National Endowment for Democracy

**Shirley Lin**  
Chair, Center for Asia-Pacific Resilience & Innovation

**Riley Walters**  
Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute



The star-studded lineup included **Syaru Shirley Lin**, Founder and Chair of the **Center for Asia-Pacific Resilience and Innovation**, who delved into "Cross-Strait Relations and Policy Debates." **Kevin Sheives**, Deputy Director for the International Forum for Democratic Studies at the **National Endowment for Democracy**, tackled "Responding to China's Rising Threats to Information Integrity in Taiwan and Elsewhere." Finally, **Riley Walters**, a Senior Fellow at the **Hudson Institute**, offered his expertise on "Perspectives on Economic Strategies and Foreign Policy Implications." Moderated by the esteemed **Deepa Ollapally**, the discussion brought sharp insights and lively debate on Taiwan's critical issues.

It was an **enlightening** and **thought-provoking** session as these experts unpacked the complexities of Taiwan's political scene and its broader impact on global affairs. The event offered **deep dives** into strategic discussions, making it an unmissable opportunity for policymakers, scholars, and anyone interested in Taiwan's dynamic future. It was a **thrilling conversation** on the forces shaping Taiwan and the region at large.

## Taiwan's Elections & Reflections: What Does the Transition Path to May 2024 Tell Us?

On May 2, 2024, the Sigur Center hosted a **pivotal discussion** on Taiwan's political landscape following the **Democratic Progressive Party's** (DPP) unprecedented third-term victory in January. The event, focusing on both **domestic** and **international policy implications**, featured leading experts who provided in-depth analyses as **President-elect Lai Ching-te** prepared for his May 20 inauguration.

In the morning session, **Yaqiu Wang** from **Freedom House** highlighted the influence of Chinese tactics on Taiwan's election integrity, while **Chiaoning Su** of **Oakland University** explored the changing dynamics of party politics. **Shelley Rigger** from **Davidson College** delved into the complexities of identity politics and voter behavior.



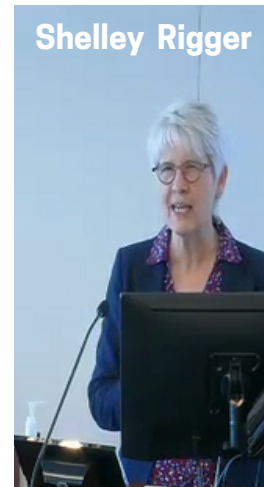
**Yaqiu Wang**

Yaqiu Wang is Freedom House's Research Director for China, Hong Kong, & Taiwan. She specializes in human rights issues, particularly internet censorship & rights violations in China.



**Chiaoning Su**

Chiaoning Su is a Professor of Communication, Journalism, & Public Relations at Oakland University. She focuses on crisis journalism & media's role during democratic erosion, with extensive experience in media strategy.

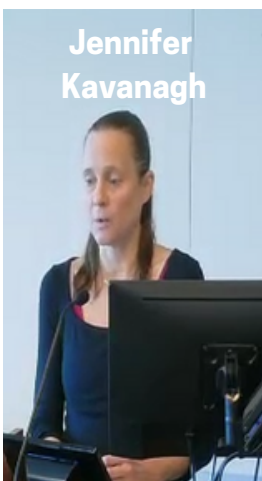


**Shelley Rigger**

Shelley Rigger is the Brown Professor of Asian Studies at Davidson College, known for her research on Taiwanese politics & US-China-Taiwan relations. She frequently advises US policymakers & is an accomplished author.

The afternoon session shifted focus to **foreign policy**, with **Jennifer Kavanagh** of the **Carnegie Endowment** offering insights on cross-Strait relations, and **James Lee** of **Academia Sinica** discussing the evolving US-Taiwan ties. **Jacques deLisle** from the **University of Pennsylvania** examined Taiwan's prospects for expanding its international presence. Moderated by **Alexa Alice Joubin** and **Deepa Ollapally**, the event underscored the urgent need for Taiwan to strengthen its democratic resilience and enhance its global standing amidst rising geopolitical challenges.

Jennifer Kavanagh is a Senior Fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Her research focuses on national security threats and their implications for US foreign policy, particularly major power dynamics.



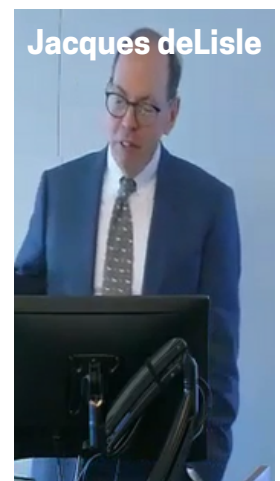
**Jennifer Kavanagh**

James Lee is a Professor at Academia Sinica. He specializes in US foreign policy, with research published in leading academic journals. He also works on the "American Portrait" project, surveying public opinion on US-Taiwan relations.



**James Lee**

Jacques deLisle is the Stephen A. Cozen Professor of Law at the University of Pennsylvania. He focuses on Chinese law & politics & US-China relations, & directs the Asia Program at the Foreign Policy Research Institute.



**Jacques deLisle**



## Historical, Cultural, & Linguistic Approaches to Elections in Southeast Asia

**Benedict Anderson** once remarked that “normal voting is in many ways a peculiar activity.” People join a queue of strangers, enter a solitary space to pull levers or mark pieces of paper, and leave discreetly. This symbolic act of voting has come under increased scrutiny amidst concerns about democracy’s decline. This event sought to answer a critical question: How revealing are elections?

The Sigur Special panel explored the historical, linguistic, and cultural contexts shaping electoral practices in **Southeast Asia**. Experts presented case studies from **Myanmar, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Cambodia**, examining how elections reflect the **future** while being **rooted in past cultural assumptions**.



Sheila Coronel shared her journey from reporting during the **Marcos era** to founding the **Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism**. Khin Lay discussed **challenges for women** in Myanmar, with Christina Fink offering insights into Myanmar's elections. Sebastian Strangio reviewed Cambodia's **electoral history**, Andrew Wells-Dang highlighted **public participation** in Vietnam, Janet Steele examined Malaysia's **1969 race riots**, and Joel Kuipers explored **language's impact** on voter experience in Indonesia.

This event provided **strategic discussions**, making it essential for policymakers, scholars, and anyone interested in Southeast Asia's political landscape. The panelists' expertise and engaging presentations offered a **thought-provoking** session on the **complexities** and **cultural nuances** of elections in this **diverse region**.



**Sheila Coronel**

Investigative Journalist; Journalism Professor & Former Academic Dean, Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University; Co-Founder, Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism



**Sebastian Strangio**

Southeast Asia Editor, *The Diplomat*



**Christina Fink**

Professor of International Affairs, GW



**Andrew Wells-Dang**

Senior Expert on Southeast Asia & director of the Vietnam War Legacies & Reconciliation Initiative at the US Institute of Peace



**Khin Lay**

Women's Rights Activist; Director, Triangle Women Organization



**Joel C. Kuipers**

Professor of Anthropology & International Affairs, GW



View of the Uyghur village of Tuyog with a mosque and mountains in the background

## Uyghur Studies Initiative

In March 2023, the Sigur Center received an **almost million-dollar endowment** to support the Uyghur Studies Initiative, which then moved to **Sigur** from its former home in the Central Asia Program.

The **Uyghurs** are a **Turkic-speaking, Muslim-majority** people whose homeland is in **modern Xinjiang, China**. Despite the Uyghurs' recent **prominence in the media**, Uyghurs remain **underrepresented** in American studies of China and Xinjiang and **poorly understood**. The Uyghur Studies Initiative aims to **correct the gap** by supporting humanities, arts, and social science research on Uyghur issues both in Xinjiang and in its **diaspora**, which in America is centered in Washington, DC.

In Fall 2023 and Spring 2024, the Uyghur Studies Initiative and the **East Asia National Resource Center** supported language teaching, speakers, and graduate research. Thanks to the East Asia NRC, which supports Uyghur-related programming, GW was able to offer **Beginning Uyghur Language I and II**. These classes achieved **record-high enrollments** with **students from across GW and DC**. The Initiative hosted two speakers on GW's campus: Uyghur linguist **Dr. Mirshad Ghalip**, who spoke at an NRC event on diversity in Asia and **Dr. Rachel Harris** (SOAS, University of London) who addressed the politics of Uyghur dance in modern China.

This summer, three graduate students will receive funding from the Initiative. One is traveling to libraries across the country to pursue **groundbreaking research** on the **intellectual history** of the **first East Turkestan Republic** (1933–1934), which was the **world's first Islamic republic** and is now thought of as the **first independent Uyghur state**. Two more grantees are developing advanced Uyghur language skills for their future careers at top language training programs.

The Initiative is led by **Dr. Eric Schluessel**, Professor of History and International Affairs. Dr. Schluessel is a social historian specializing in Xinjiang's (East Turkestan) history during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. His first book, *Land of Strangers*, examines the Qing Empire's efforts to transform Xinjiang's Turkic-speaking Muslims into **Chinese-speaking Confucians**. He's currently researching the economic history of the Uyghur region in *Saints and Sojourners*, and exploring **Han Chinese settler culture** and **religion** in *Exiled Gods*. Schluessel is also working on a translation of the *Tārīkh-i Ḥamīdī* and has previously taught at the University of Montana and served as a **Mellon Fellow** at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, NJ.



Thanks to the Uyghur Studies Initiative's generous endowment, support of the NRC and 14 prior years of stewardship in the Central Asia Program, the George Washington University is becoming the **country's leading center for Uyghur studies**.





## East Asia National Resource Center

The East Asia National Resource Center is supported by the Title VI provision of the **1965 Higher Education Act**, and is **jointly managed** by the **Sigur Center** and the **GW Institute for Korean Studies**. Housed at the **Elliott School**. The NRC enhances GW's ability to **engage the broader public community**, including students, K-12 educators, Minority Serving Institutions, policymakers, and the public on issues of importance in East Asia. Its mission is to provide **learning resources** on East Asia that empower educators and future leaders to better **engage contemporary global issues**.

### Events & Seminars

#### China Peripheries Seminar

The China Peripheries Seminar showcased a **diverse** array of **perspectives** on **contested regions** and **transformations** within **China**, featuring speakers such as Ho-Fung Hung on **grassroots protests** in **Hong Kong**, Wei-Ting Yen on **democracy** in **Taiwan**, Emily Yeh on development and the environment in **Tibet**, Guldana Salimjan on **ecology** and **settler colonialism** in **Xinjiang**, David Stroup on the **Sinicization of Islam**, and Tsering Topgyal on **security** and **Tibet** policy, with **over 250 participants** registering for the event.

#### Diversity in Asia Studies

The Diversity in Asian Studies panel explored **linguistic diversity**, with Henning Klöter discussing **Taiwan's** audible and visual language diversity, Uzawa Kanako tackling **preservation challenges** of **Ainu** language and culture while highlighting Ainu women's stories in museum exhibits, and Patrick Heinrich delving into **Ryukyu Island** languages' classification, showcasing research suggesting that learning **endangered languages** boosts **speaker well-being**. You can find recordings of these illuminating discussions on the NRC's YouTube channel.

#### East Asian Intersections

The East Asian Intersections events showcased **interdisciplinary research** across a range of compelling topics. Levi McLaughlin analyzed public discourse in **Japan** pertaining to **Shinzo Abe's** assassination and the **Unification Church**. Ruth Mostern introduced her **innovative research** integrating **historical records** with **ecological data** to construct a comprehensive history of the **Yellow River**. Seo Young Park explored the relationship between **workers** and **creativity** within Seoul's **fast fashion** industry, and Stephen Dyson offered his interpretation of Cixin Liu's ***The Three-Body Problem*** from the perspective of **international relations theory**.

### Outreach to Minority Serving Institutions

In February, NRC staff visited **Spelman** and **Morehouse Colleges**, leading discussions on GW's **graduate programs** in foreign affairs and Asian studies while delivering guest lectures. Then, in March, five Spelman students, accompanied by faculty adviser Tinaz Pavri, journeyed to GW for the NRC's flagship **professional development** program. The group attended lectures and presentations, and made site visits to **esteemed institutions**, engaging with **influential figures** like Lakeisha Harrison and Elliott School Dean Alyssa Ayres to gain **invaluable insights** into career and educational paths.



Tinaz Pavri



Lakeisha Harrison



Alyssa Ayres



### K-16 Outreach

The NRC was actively involved in promoting **Japanese** language and culture through events like the **Jr. Japan Bowl (J2B)** and the **J.LIVE** speech contest. It co-hosted **engaging curriculum workshops** for **over 100 teachers** from **Montgomery County Public Schools** and **Fairfax County Public Schools**, featuring **dynamic speakers** from GW faculty and other universities. Collaborating with the **K-12 Advisory Council**, the NRC developed instructional materials aimed at integrating **East Asia** into the **local curriculum standards**, providing **valuable resources** for teachers on the NRC website.



## TAIWAN EDUCATION & RESEARCH PROGRAM

The **Taiwan Education and Research Program (TERP)** was established in 2004 to promote and support both academic and policy-related study and research on the **history**, **international relations**, and the **contemporary political, economic and social development** of **Taiwan**. TERP's mission is to build **DC's first comprehensive Taiwan Studies academic program** to prepare students, researchers, and policymakers to better engage in Taiwan-related issues globally. Its mission is especially relevant as **US-Taiwan educational and cultural exchange** continues to progress, and security challenges between the US, China, and Taiwan persist.

### In support of its long-term goals, TERP conducted the following activities:

- Hosted two Taiwan Humanities Lectures
  - Taiwan Humanities Lecture on June 10, 2023 on the topic of "Chinese Opera in Contemporary Taiwan: Wei Hai Min 魏海敏 and Her Personae" with Wei Hai Min
  - Taiwan Humanities Lecture on November 2, 2023 on the topic of "Humanizing the Conflict Across the Taiwan Strait: Lessons From the Strait Talk Dialogue Movement" with Dr. Daqing Yang, Adrienne Wu, Ava Shen, and Dr. Tatsushi Arai
- Co-sponsored three public events on Taiwan studies
- Supported the graduate-undergraduate cross-listed seminar on "Women in Asia," taught by professorial lecturer Dr. Kuniko Ashizawa
- Selected five students as this year's Taiwan Studies Research Fellows
- Hosted the third iteration of the Strait Talk GW Symposium on May 24-26
  - Young professionals, scholars, and policymakers were guided by three professional facilitators for a three-day weekend of interactive conflict resolution training that tied together professional development, cross-Strait relations, and peace studies

## TAIWAN STUDIES RESEARCH FELLOWS

Each academic year, TERP selects a small cohort of **graduate and undergraduate students** from a **competitive University-wide** application pool to be **Taiwan Studies Research Fellows**. Fellows work with a **faculty mentor** to produce an **original research** contribution on any aspect of **Taiwan Studies**. Fellows then present on their respective research topics in an **interactive roundtable** with GW faculty, staff, and students, as well as friends and family. **The 2023-2024 Taiwan Studies Research Fellows:**



### Tappy Lung

- **Research Project:** "Taiwan's Public Diplomacy Through Academic Exchange Programs"
- **Faculty Advisor:** Dr. Chris Teal



### Simran Dali

- **Research Project:** "The Dual Effects of Language Barriers on Economic and Social Integration of Foreign Brides in Taiwan"
- **Faculty Advisor:** Dr. Kuniko Ashizawa



### Hong-Lun Tiunn

- **Research Project:** "Addressing Nurse Brain Drain: An Investigation of Taiwanese Nurses' Migration to the United States"
- **Faculty Advisor:** Dr. Patricia Pittman



### Alex Wan & Aidan Boyle

- **Research Project:** "Linguistic Legacies in Taiwan's Age of Reconciliation"
- **Faculty Advisor:** Dr. James Evans





## Terryl Boxley, MA '24

Terryl Boxley, a **dynamic professional** with a passion for learning and **cultural exchange**, found her way to the Elliott School's **Asian Studies Program** after completing her undergraduate studies on China at the **University of Tulsa**.

Intrigued by the opportunity to utilize her Mandarin language skills in a professional capacity, Terryl was drawn to the program to deepen her understanding of US-China relations from a political and economic perspective. Additionally, being in **Washington, DC**, provided her with **unique opportunities** to interact with individuals from **diverse fields** and **backgrounds**, further enriching her educational and professional experience.

Since coming to DC and the Elliott School for her schooling and career, one of Terryl's favorite memories from her time at the **George Washington University** is the appreciation she developed for the **diversity** on campus and around the city compared to her hometown. She values the opportunity to hear **different languages** and interact with people from **various backgrounds**, which has **enriched** her **experience** both academically and personally.

Terryl's journey to her current position as a **security contractor** with the **Department of State** underscores the significance of **interpersonal connections** and the **ample opportunities** for them in the city. This path began with a chance meeting with a representative of the **Overseas Security Advisory Council** during a trip to DC with **American Councils for International Education** scholars, who not only assisted her with her resume but also played a pivotal role in securing her a job at a contracting company. Terryl values the **flexibility** of her work schedule, which allows her to balance her professional responsibilities with her studies, even as she acknowledges that her current field may not be her long-term career path. Despite facing challenges such as **culture shock**, being away from her local community, and **balancing full-time work** and **school**, Terryl remains **motivated** by her **educational goals** and the **opportunity to learn** from **diverse experiences**.

For current and prospective GW Asian Studies students, Terryl offers **valuable advice**. She emphasizes the importance of **keeping an open mind** and not feeling pressured to know exactly what career path to pursue. She encourages students to **build connections** and take advantage of the **diverse perspectives** and **experiences** of their peers. Terryl believes that the connections made during this time are **invaluable for future opportunities** and **personal growth**.



## Jayden Thomas, MA '24

Jayden Thomas, inspired by his undergraduate studies in **Political Science** and **International Affairs**, pursued his passion for **East Asia**, particularly **Japan**, at GW's **Asian Studies Program**. His language studies enhanced his understanding of **Japanese politics** and **governance**, bolstering his **career prospects** in **government** and **policy analysis**.

Despite **life challenges**, Jayden's **exchange experiences** enriched his academic journey. As he nears completion of his **Master's program** in **Japan**, he advises students to seek funding opportunities for grad school and strategically leverage experiences to achieve their goals. Jayden's journey underscores the **importance of resilience** and **strategic planning** in **pursuing passions**.



### What drew you to GW's Asian Studies Program after undergrad?

I studied Political Science and International Affairs at Western Kentucky University, focusing on East Asia, especially Japan. Always keen on learning Japanese and experiencing Japan first-hand, I seized the opportunity to study abroad in two different locations during the "coronavirus era." This experience enriched my regional knowledge and inspired me to pursue further studies at GW. Being in DC not only offers invaluable opportunities and networks for international studies but also aligns perfectly with my interests. I chose GW's Asian Studies Program for its rigorous language requirement, which holds me accountable for improving my Japanese skills. I appreciate the program's specialized classes on Japan and the abundance of practitioner professors it offers.

### How does language learning impact your life?

I'm currently in Japan, enrolled in the Inter-University Center program. It's renowned as the most prestigious language program in Japan, with a strong history of producing well-known Japan scholars. I've always dreamt of studying here, and I'm thrilled to have this opportunity. My Japanese language skills have not only improved in general readings but have also been tailored to specific topics, such as learning about the Japanese political and government systems in Japanese. This proficiency gives me a significant advantage when pursuing certain jobs in government or policy. Speaking the language and having experience in the region adds credibility and value. I often emphasize to others that the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs always posts policies in both Japanese and English. The nuances between the two versions can be subtle, but you won't grasp them unless you're proficient in the language and can differentiate between the kanji characters. Therefore, if you aspire to be a policy analyst, having these language skills is essential.

### What have been the biggest challenges you've faced? Are there any silver linings?

Dealing with life-related hurdles has been my greatest challenge. After graduating from undergrad in 2021, my plans to return to Japan were disrupted by the pandemic, leaving me feeling disheartened about my degree's value and struggling to find employment. Eventually, I relocated from Kentucky, secured a job, and decided to pursue graduate school in Washington, DC. Working at the American Councils for International Education on an exchange program broadened my horizons, revealing that employers value qualities like adaptability and attention to detail over specific academic backgrounds. As I approach the completion of my Master's program in Japan, I'm uncertain about what lies ahead, but I've learned to trust that things will fall into place in due time.

### Are there any special memories from your experiences you would like to share?

One of my favorite memories happened in spring 2023 during a Japanese class with just five students. As DC is renowned for its Cherry Blossom season, our teacher planned to take us to see the blossoms. It was a delightful experience turned adventure when my friend and I, riding with the Sensei, missed the turn to Virginia due to traffic, getting lost momentarily before finding our way back. Though our teacher had to return for another class, she had prepared handmade sushi for us. So, she dropped us off near the cherry blossoms, and we improvised our own Cherry Blossom viewing party, creating a special and memorable moment together.

### Any advice for applicants to this program?

Avoid paying full price. Many funding and scholarship opportunities exist through external organizations and institutions like the Elliott School. Look for schools that waive application fees, as I did with the Elliott School. If you don't get the funding you hoped for, reconsider your approach. Seek out experiences that enhance your profile, such as gaining international exposure. For GW's Asian Program, language proficiency is often essential for admission. Focus on acquiring language skills to increase your chances of success.





## Christopher Bates, BA '77

The George Washington University proudly celebrates the achievements of its alumni, and, in this newsletter, we shine a spotlight on **Christopher Bates**, a graduate of the **Asian Studies Program** whose **illustrious career** and **personal passions** reflect the **foundational experiences** he gained at GW.

Christopher Bates graduated from the Asian Studies Program in 1977. His academic journey was uniquely enriched by spending his senior year at **Tunghai University in Taiwan**. This experience ignited his **passion for Asian culture and martial arts**, setting the stage for a **distinguished career in Asia**.

Eager to build on his GW education, Bates pursued a Masters of International Management and, in 1979, joined **Thermadyne Industries** as the **Regional Manager for the Far East**. Relocating to **Singapore** with his Taiwanese wife, he began to visit China for business in 1982 and eventually joined the board of an **early joint venture in Shanghai**. During his **12-year tenure** with Thermadyne, Bates also authored his first novel, **The Wave Man**, a **thrilling tale of mistaken identity** set in Thailand and Japan, published in 1993.

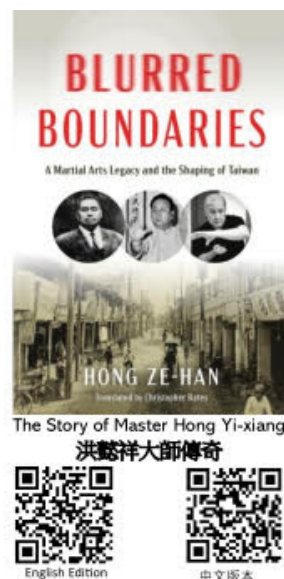
Bates's career took a turn toward **consulting** when he joined **Frog Design's** founder, Hartmut Esslinger, as **Managing Director of FrogAsia**. Later, he **established his own business intelligence consulting firm**, conducting **market research** across various industries in Asia and China. His extensive travels and research into primary, secondary, and tertiary markets included sectors such as **soft drinks, mechanical leisure craft, pharmaceuticals, and specialty gases**.

Recognized for his expertise and cultural insights, **Times Editions** commissioned Bates to write **Culture Shock! Taiwan**, a guidebook that has reached its fourth revised edition. In 2006, Bates transitioned into **executive search**, earning accolades at **MRI** and **Korn Ferry Futurestep** before retiring in 2016 as a **Partner** in charge of **Taiwan** at **Heidrick & Struggles**.

Christopher's journey from GW to a **successful international career** underscores the impact of his education and the experiences he gained. His story is a **testament to the opportunities and growth fostered by GW**, where a **strong academic foundation** can lead to a **lifetime of achievements and adventures**.

Christopher's **new literary translation**, *Blurred Boundaries*, is now available for purchase. *Blurred Boundaries* sees the events in Taiwan from 1946 until the '80s through the eyes of a local Taiwanese Dihua Street merchant who welcomed **destitute Mainland Chinese refugee martial arts masters** to stay and work in his factory and train his sons in rare styles of Northern Chinese martial arts. The sons all became skilled, and Hong Yi-xiang in particular became **internationally renowned for his prowess**. This true story includes the relationship of the Hong's with **Robert W. Smith, the CIA agent sent to Taiwan in the late 1950s** who trained with Master Hong and later profiled him in several books. Hong's efforts to tailor his training for **US GIs destined to fight in Vietnam**, and their subsequent thanks to him for helping them survive are brought to life. The challenges he accepted in Japan, **the filming of the BBC documentary about him and his arts**, and the stories of the rise and decline of his school are eloquently depicted.

For more information about Christopher Bates's **latest work**, ***Blurred Boundaries: A Martial Arts Legacy and the Shaping of Taiwan***, visit [YMAA.com](http://YMAA.com).





## CHINA POLICY PROGRAM (CPP)

The China Policy Program was created to build upon the Elliott School's longstanding expertise and involvement in **US-China relations** and **contemporary Chinese affairs**. It primarily serves as an **outreach program** to the policy community in Washington, officials, and China specialists around the world, the media, and the public.

**David Shambaugh**  
shambaug@gwu.edu



## RISING POWERS INITIATIVE (RPI)

The Rising Powers Initiative is a **multi-year, cross-national research effort** that examines the **role of domestic identities** and **foreign policy debates of aspiring powers** in Asia. The RPI brings together an **internationally recognized team of scholars** from both the **United States** and **across the globe** to analyze and compare the foreign policy thinking in today's rising powers.

**Deepa Ollapally**  
deepao@gwu.edu



## PARTNERSHIPS FOR INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIES IN ASIA (PISA)

Since 1984, PISA has worked with partner organizations in Asia to **enhance capacity** at the **national** and **regional** levels to **address emerging concerns** in the **Asia Pacific region**. PISA works with its global network of experts to **develop issue-specific programs** in areas of mutual interest between the United States and Asia, specializing in **transnational issues** such as **climate change, human security, and international governance**.

**Linda Yarr**  
lyarr@gwu.edu



**Alexa Alice Joubin**  
ajoubin@gwu.edu



**Liana Chen**  
liachen@gwu.edu

## TAIWAN EDUCATION AND RESEARCH PROGRAM (TERP)

The Taiwan Education and Research Program was established in 2004 to **promote** and **support academic and policy-related study** and research on the **history, international relations, and the contemporary political, economic, and social development of Taiwan**. It has been the primary goal of the Taiwan Education and Research Program to **create** and **support** the **Taiwan Resource Center** at GW's **Gelman Library**.

## TIBET GOVERNANCE PROJECT

The Tibet Governance Project advances **scholarship, research, and new perspectives** around key issues related to **governance** and **public policy in contemporary Tibet**. Research initiatives and program activities in the program produce **fresh insights, analyses, and approaches** towards understanding the **social, economic, and institutional challenges faced by Tibetans** in the region.

**Tashi Rabgey**  
trabgey@gwu.edu



## MEMORY AND RECONCILIATION IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC (MRIAP)

The Memory and Reconciliation in the Asia-Pacific (MRIAP) program promotes the study of the **ongoing "memory wars"** as well as **reconciliation efforts** in the region. MRIAP's **cataloging of official statements, scholarly works, and news articles** on the subject will make it easier for people to become more aware of **conflict resolution** and **confidence-building efforts** in the region.

**Daqing Yang**  
yanghist@gwu.edu



**Mike Mochizuki**  
mochizuk@gwu.edu





## Young C. Kim, Inaugural Director, Sigur Center for Asian Studies

Dr. Young C. Kim was Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the George Washington University and founding Director and Senior Counselor of the Sigur Center for Asian Studies. He received a PhD in Political Science at the University of Pennsylvania and held teaching positions at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Boston College, and Vanderbilt University. He served as a visiting professor at Seoul University, Korea University, and Keio University



in Tokyo. He taught courses at SAIS and Defense Intelligence College, and gave a series of lectures at other American universities such as Columbia University and Georgetown University, and at numerous institutes of the Social Science Academy of Sciences of the USSR and the institutes of the Social Science Academy of China. He participated in numerous academic and policy seminars held in Moscow, Beijing, Shanghai, Seoul and Pyongyang.

On behalf of the George Washington University, he served as Director of the US-DPRK academic and cultural exchange program for the period 1986-1996. The North Korean counterpart was the Institute of Disarmament and Peace of the Foreign Ministry. Moreover, as a faculty member of the Sino-Soviet Institute of GW, he participated for about 10 years in annual exchange programs which the Sino-Soviet Institute had with the Institute of Far Eastern Studies of the Soviet Academy of Social Sciences and the Chinese Institute of International Relations.

Dr. Kim wrote extensively about international relations involving the US and Asia. He was the author or editor of 10 books and monographs and published about 70 articles in professional journals including *American Political Science Review*, *World Politics*, and *The Journal of Politics*. He contributed about 100 articles to newspapers in the US, Japan, and Korea. One of his latest works was the book chapter titled, "The US Policy of Rebalance: Japanese and South Korean Perspectives," in *Origins and Evolution of the US Rebalance Toward Asia*, published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2015.

His accomplishments went well beyond academic fields. He served as a consultant to US government agencies for a number of years, directing and participating in numerous policy studies in the area of Asian affairs. He was one of the influential "Asia hands" in Washington's foreign policy circles for several decades and was greatly respected by policymakers as well as academics in capitals across Asia, particularly in Tokyo, Seoul, Beijing, Moscow, and Pyongyang.



## David Shambaugh: In Memorium

The George Washington University, the Elliott School of International Affairs, and the Department of Political Science recently lost one of its longest-serving faculty members. Dr. Young C. Kim served with dedication and distinction on the GW faculty from 1970-2000. He taught many courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels, while training a considerable number of PhD students in Political Science. He was a senior faculty member of GW's Institute of Sino-Soviet Studies (ISS) and served as the inaugural Director of the Sigur Center (when it morphed out of the ISS) until his retirement in 1996. Professor Kim was instrumental in forging strong institutional ties between GW and Keio University in Tokyo, and he been a visiting scholar at Keio, Seoul National University, and other institutions in Japan, South and North Korea. He had also been a visiting scholar at both the Soviet Academy of Sciences and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

Dr. Kim's own research was wide-ranging—but he specialized in both the domestic politics and foreign relations of Japan and South Korea. He worked hard as an entrepreneurial academic to bridge the historical divides between South Korea and Japan, between North and South Korea, and between North Korea and the United States (from 1986-1996 he served as director of a US-DPRK academic and cultural exchange program). He also studied the international relations of East Asia, Soviet and Russian policy in Asia, and US relations with its East Asian allies. During his distinguished career, Dr. Kim published ten books and monographs, and about seventy articles in leading academic journals such as *World Politics*, *The Journal of Politics*, the *American Political Science Review*, *Asian Affairs*, and *Asian Survey*. He was also an active contributor of over 100 "op-ed" articles to newspapers in the United States, Japan, and South Korea.

Young C. Kim received his MA from Vanderbilt University in 1956 and PhD from the University of Pennsylvania in 1958. Prior to joining the GW faculty, he taught at Hobart and William Smith College, Boston College, and Vanderbilt University. He also taught occasional courses at Johns Hopkins SAIS and the US Defense Intelligence College and lectured at universities such as Columbia and Georgetown Universities. Young C. Kim will be remembered for his decades of service to the George Washington University, and by his former colleagues and students.

— **David Shambaugh**, Gaston Sigur Professor of Asian Studies & International Affairs & China Policy Program Director, GW

## Robert Sutter: A Note of Praise

An important contribution of Professor Young C. Kim in many years of service was his making available for policy use a remarkable range of contacts at the highest level among South Korean government, business and academic elites, remarkable senior contacts with the North Korean government, and close and trusted contacts with the US government.

I personally participated in a small group of US government senior specialists led by Professor Kim to assess South Korean reactions during the 1994 nuclear proliferation standoff crisis with North Korea. Professor Kim led us in meetings with the top leader of one of Korea's largest Chaebols and with a variety of very senior government, academic and media leaders, all of whom he knew well and who held him in high regard.

Professor Kim later was instrumental in arranging trips to North Korea by notable Americans, seeking to keep channels of communication open even amid major tension. During the crisis in US-North Korean relations in 2017 featuring unprecedented US pressure on North Korea and unprecedented threats from North Korea targeting the United States, I personally participated in Professor Kim's use of his important contacts with the North Korean government, the South Korean government, and reportedly with the support of at least some senior officials in the US government, to arrange a trip to North Korea by American Asian affairs specialists. The visit was proposed and accepted by North Korean officials serving as intermediaries but eventually became overtaken by the rising tensions and did not take place.

The above episodes just scratch the surface of the important activities of this key intermediary on very important policy matters. History will eventually remove the barriers to the full understanding of a very talented specialist pursuing initiatives of great importance by working behind the scenes rather than seeking public prominence.

— **Robert Sutter**, Professor of Practice of International Affairs, GW





**Jisoo M. Kim**  
Radcliffe Institute for  
Advanced Study  
Fellowship, Harvard  
University



**Robert Sutter**  
Michael E. Brown  
Research Prize, GW; Life-  
Term Service Award,  
National Cheng Chi  
University



**David Shambaugh**  
Distinguished Fellowship,  
Woodrow Wilson Center;  
Distinguished Visiting  
Fellowship, Hoover  
Institution



**Yoshie Tomozumi  
Nakamura**  
Washington Research  
Library Consortium Award;  
Summer Faculty Research  
Award, Sigur Center



**Janet Steele**  
Fulbright Senior Specialist

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Fellowship, Collegium Lyon;  
Foreign Research Directorship,  
École Pratique des Hautes Études



**Jeffrey Ding**  
Templeton Fellowship,  
Foreign Policy Research  
Institute



**Kavita Daiya**  
Summer Faculty Research  
Award, Sigur Center



**Maggie X. Chen**  
Summer Faculty Research  
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**Jihae Cha**  
Summer Faculty Research  
Award, Sigur Center



**Gregg A. Brazinsky**  
Hoover Institution  
Research Grant



**Celeste Arrington**  
Distinguished Article  
Award, Asian Law &  
Society Association

# FALL 2023 - SUMMER 2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

**Countries where Sigur Summer Faculty Grant Awardees Conducted Research:**  
Indonesia, India, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan

**Countries where Sigur Summer Student Grant Awardees Studied:**  
India, Thailand, Taiwan, Japan, Pakistan



## 27

Total GW Study Abroad Programs in IPR\*



## 7

Elliott School Partnerships in IPR



## 13

Total Countries in GW-IPR Exchanges



## 459

IPR International Students to GW: Bachelor's



## 168

IPR International Students to the Elliott School



## 1,635

IPR International Students to GW: Graduate



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## CONTACT US

1957 E St. NW, Suite 503

Washington, DC 20052

[sigur.elliott.gwu.edu](http://sigur.elliott.gwu.edu)

(202) 994-5886 | [gsigur@gwu.edu](mailto:gsigur@gwu.edu)



# Sigur Center for Asian Studies

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

## **Editors**

**Adam Bubanich, Program Coordinator**

**Francis M. García Fernández, Communications Assistant**

## **Designer**

**Francis M. García Fernández, Communications Assistant**

## **Contributors**

**Francis M. García Fernández, Communications Assistant**

**Selina Lam, Project Assistant**

**Mark Sheehan, Events Assistant**