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Asian American Studies Program: Community-Centered Commitments and Pathways in the AsAmSt Curriculum

Asian American Studies Program, University of Massachusetts Boston

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Asian American Studies Program

Community-Centered Commitments and Pathways in the AsAmSt Curriculum

Summary/Abstract

UMass Boston offers the most Asian American Studies courses, faculty, and community linkages of any university in New England. Through culturally-responsive instruction in the classroom and holistic practices of mentoring, community-building, service-learning, and advocacy, we address the social and academic needs of students as well as the critical capacity-building needs of local Asian American communities. Our alumni include teachers, social workers, health care providers, business entrepreneurs, and leaders of local Asian American community organizations where we sustain vital, long-term partnerships.

Goals and Objectives

Using Geographic Information Systems to Map Ethnic-Vietnamese Nail Salons in the Greater Boston Area
Som, Ca-Lien (somca_lam@umb.edu)

I. Introduction: When people think of nail salons, they often think of "Vietnamese" "oppressive" practices. However, in the Greater Boston Area, nail salons are a vital part of the Vietnamese American community. This research aims to map the geographic distribution of nail salons in the Greater Boston Area to better understand the community's needs and to provide a resource for future research.

III. Methods: A series of field visits to the Greater Boston Area were conducted from the 2008-2009 to 2010-2011 academic year. During these visits, the researcher conducted interviews with nail salon owners and staff, and collected data on the location, size, and type of nail salons. This data was then analyzed using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to create a map of the Greater Boston Area showing the distribution of nail salons.

IV. Results & Discussion (1): The map shows that nail salons are concentrated in the Greater Boston Area, particularly in the areas around Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville. This concentration is consistent with the high density of the Vietnamese American population in these areas. The map also shows that nail salons are often located in commercial areas, such as near shopping centers and public transit stations.

V. Results & Discussion (2): The map also shows that nail salons are often located in areas with high concentrations of Vietnamese Americans. This suggests that nail salons are an important part of the community's social and cultural life. The map also shows that nail salons are often located in areas with high concentrations of Vietnamese Americans. This suggests that nail salons are an important part of the community's social and cultural life.

By grounding our curriculum, teaching, and applied research in the complex realities of local Asian American communities and by respecting the knowledge and bilingual/bicultural skills that students bring to the classroom, the AsAmSt Program creates powerful learning environments for all students to gain critical understanding about the historical experiences, voices, contemporary issues, and contributions of diverse Asian populations in the U.S.

Results/Impacts

- AsAmSt 200 Introduction to Asian American Studies
- AsAmSt 221L Introduction to Asian American Writing
- AsAmSt 225L Southeast Asians in the US
- AsAmSt 226 Becoming South Asians
- AsAmSt 227L Multicultural Expression and Celebration
- AsAmSt 228L Asian Women in the US
- AsAmSt 238L Asian American Psychology
- AsAmSt 250G Rise Up! Asian American Leadership & Social Change
- AsAmSt 265L World War II Internment of Japanese Americans
- AsAmSt 270 Cambodian American Culture & Community
- AsAmSt 294 Resources for Vietnamese American Studies
- AsAmSt 326 Multiracial Experiences
- AsAmSt 333 Asian American Politics and Social Movements
- AsAmSt 345 Asian American Cultures and Health Practices
- AsAmSt 350L Asian American Literary Voices
- AsAmSt 355L Asian Americans and the Law
- AsAmSt 370 Asian American Media Literacy
- AsAmSt 375L Indian Cinema
- AsAmSt 397/398 Applied Research in Asian American Studies
- AsAmSt 390 Asian American Community Internship
- AsAmSt 423L Boston's Asian American Communities
- AsAmSt 497/498 Teaching & Learning in Asian American Studies

Approaches and Methods

Nearly every AsAmSt course in the curriculum includes relevant community-focused content.



The program also provides resources and opportunities for internships, service-learning, organizing and advocacy, documentation, and applied research each year.



Conclusion/Next Steps



Fall down seven times;
Get up eight times.

Ten years to grow trees;
One hundred years to grow people



Living near the water, one knows the nature of fish;
Living near mountains, one understands the sound of birds.

References and Resources

UMass Boston is funded by the U.S. Department of Education as an Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI) and is recognized by APAs for Progress as one of the ten Best Colleges for AAPI students in the U.S.

Additional Information and Contacts



UMass Boston Asian American Studies Program
Wheatley Building, 2nd floor, Room 97
www.umb.edu/asamst

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