
**National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools
(NALSAS) Strategy**

**Scan of Studies of Asia Activities in
Pre-Service
Primary and Secondary Teacher Education**

July, 2001

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Asia Education Foundation (AEF) was commissioned to conduct a scan of studies of Asia activities in pre-service primary and secondary teacher education for the year 2000. The AEF collaborated with Professor Patrick Griffin, Assessment Research Centre, The University of Melbourne to conduct the scan. The scan also addressed issues such as future priorities and the key issues which impact on institutions' and teacher educators' capacity to deliver subjects/programs on Asia. The project required the conduct of a scan of, and report regarding:

- "Studies of Asia activities in pre-service teacher education programs in Australia, including the extent/degree of these activities;
- The number of student teachers in teacher education programs involved in these Asia-related activities;
- Future plans of Australian Universities to introduce or expand Asia-related study in their teacher education programs."

Note that the term 'Asia-related content' was used in the survey instruments.

Method of Data Collection

A number of complexities regarding the conduct of the scan were identified during the planning stage, namely:

- The AEF had conducted some initial research into the area of the studies of Asia activities in pre-service programs. This research indicated that studies of Asia is usually embedded in components of subjects rather than offered as discrete subjects. Therefore, the scan needed to include opportunities for individual teacher educators to outline the specific subject/s and content on Asia being taught.
- Many students enrolled in teacher education programs have the capacity to access subjects relating to Asia outside the education faculty.
- It was acknowledged that teacher educators, Deans of Education and institutional policy directives could influence changes in the course content of pre-service teacher education programs.

It was recommended that data be collected from individual teacher educators and Deans of Education.

To begin, the AEF sought the support of the Australian Council of Deans of Education. At their October 2000 meeting, the Council agreed to support the project.

Two instruments were then developed to collect data relating to the 2000 academic year.

Deans of Education Survey – this paper survey was distributed to 35 Australian universities seeking global responses to indicate:

- The profile of the institution (number of teacher educators, students, total number of subject taught, number of subjects directly related to studies of Asia, number of students completing subjects on Asia etc)

- The emphasis given to the studies of Asia at a departmental/ faculty/ school level
- The factors and trends that are most likely to influence the degree of emphasis given to the studies of Asia in the future

Teacher educator survey – this online survey was distributed to 1,620 pre-service teacher educators at 35 Australian universities seeking detailed individual responses to indicate:

- How many subjects include studies of Asia
- How much time was devoted to studies of Asia
- Whether the subject was core or elective
- Numbers of enrollees
- Which course the subject was taught in
- What content was being taught, and
- A profile of the teacher educator including future intentions.

Snapshot of Data Collected

Deans of Education

Total number Deans of Education surveyed	35
Total number of responses received	22*
Total number of teacher educators employed at respondents' universities	1,083
Total number of subjects taught in pre-service programs	2,782
Total number of subjects reported which directly deal with Asia	91
Total number of pre-service teacher education students enrolled	30,695
Total number of pre-service teacher education students accessing subjects on Asia outside the education faculty	1,001#
Total number of subjects on Asia accessed outside the education faculty	392#

*This response was significant.

#This data was difficult for education faculty staff to track and only represents the responses from a small number of universities.

Teacher Educators

Total number of universities from which teacher educators' responded	35
Total number of teacher educators surveyed	1,620
Total number of responses received to the survey	378
Total number of valid responses to the survey	257<
Total number of teacher educators that include Asia-related content	156
Total number of teacher educators that include 5% or less content on Asia in the subjects they teach	140
Total number of teacher educators that do not include Asia-related content	101^
Total number of subjects taught by respondents	190
Total number of subjects taught which included Asia-related content	156+
Total number of students taught by respondents	26,938
Total number of students reported accessing subjects which include Asia-related content	24,795+

<This response represents 16% of the total number of teacher educators surveyed (see # above)

^This represents 40% of the teacher educators that responded to the survey with a valid response.

+It is important to note that the sample is self-selecting and considerably biased towards those already teaching about Asia.

Summary of the Data Collected

The data collected from the two surveys represents the views of 22 Deans of education and 257 pre-service teacher educators from 35 Australian universities. Whilst the data is not statistically representative, it does provide some key insights into the views of Deans and teacher educators regarding the degree/extent of Asia-related content taught in the 2000 academic year together with their views for the future.

The following statements summarise the findings:

Availability and content of subjects

- Very few subjects directly related to the studies of Asia are taught in pre-service teacher education programs. Whilst many students access subjects that include studies of Asia content, the vast majority of the subjects taught devoted 5% or less of the class time to content on Asia.
- Studies of Asia was most commonly taught in Curriculum, SOSE / HSIE- Methods, English-Methods and Maths-Methods subjects.
- Course content on Asia was focussed on areas such as multi-culturalism/ globalisation, cultural studies, education system comparisons and LOTE and ESL.
- Students are more likely to encounter content on Asia in Year 4 of their course.

Other Asia-related activities

- The Deans indicated a range of mechanisms implemented to display an orientation towards Asia; the most common included established research links with organizations in Asia; staff research interests and twinning with

universities/faculties in Asia, and those teacher educators involved in the field.

Profile of teacher educator respondents

- 22.2 percent of the teacher educators who responded had either completed professional development on Asia, were researching about Asia and/or had completed tertiary study on Asia. It is important to note that the sample is self-selecting and considerably biased towards those already teaching about Asia.
- 28.3 percent of the teacher educators who responded planned to undertake professional development, and a smaller group wanted to increase the content taught on Asia. Few, however, wanted to undertake additional tertiary training or research in this area.

Future priorities

- Teacher educators indicated that the inclusion of additional Asia-related content was a low priority for their faculty/department.
- The Deans also indicated that the studies of Asia represented a relatively low priority for their faculty/department.

Factors and trends which influence the inclusion of studies of Asia

- The Deans believed that the key factors which would influence the degree of emphasis given to studies of Asia would be specific policy directives, inclusion of compulsory/core subjects including Asia related content, addition of skilled staff, and additional financial resources.
- The Deans also indicated factors such as an increase in the significance of studies of Asia in schools and a focus on Asia by employers of graduates would influence their programs. In addition, the Deans cited that the growing interest of undergraduate and post-graduate international students in completing on and off-shore programs at Australian universities and the delivery of LOTE, ESL and multicultural programs would have an impact.

Common Ground

Deans and teacher educators are in agreement in a number of areas. The most obvious is the lack of overall commitment by pre-service education to the inclusion of topics related to studies of Asia.

Neither the Deans of Education nor teacher educators provided adequate information about the most appropriate areas of curriculum for the exposure of studies of Asia or information about the amount of time required. Both groups made it clear that specialised staff would be needed and that professional development in some form would be required to shift the emphasis. However in a policy setting it seems important that some effort be made to identify the likely and ideal amount of exposure that pre-service teachers should receive in this area.

Implications

The overwhelming impression gained from the two surveys is that the inclusion of Asia-related content in pre-service education does not receive a high priority. It is clear that Asia-related content does not occupy a central role in pre-service teacher education programs. The Deans of Education

provided some direction in which those wishing to lift the profile of this area of the curriculum might press for change.

Given national priorities in this area it could be argued that some increased emphasis could be targeted. However, the current situation in school curriculum and in pre-service teacher education militates against this. The school curriculum currently offers no discrete or identifiable component for studies of Asia apart from those components of existing subjects (especially in SOSE/HSIE, Arts and English) that have content based on Asia. Because of this it is unlikely that pre-service teacher education will explicitly offer method or content-based education in studies of Asia apart from those areas where it is incidental to the existing pre-service curriculum.

Increasing funds for pre-service curriculum could encourage institutions to develop this area. However during periods in which enrolments are guaranteed through quotas, pre-service programs on Asia-related content are unlikely to increase enrolments. Moreover, unless there is explicit encouragement to adjust staffing structures to enable such as shift in curriculum, funding increases are unlikely to affect the curriculum.

Professional development incentives

The alternative to this is the introduction of professional development programs for teacher educators. This would be an unusual step as professional development in higher education institutions is generally recognised in the form of conferences, research training programs and self initiated professional development in the academic's field of expertise. Introduction of professional development programs could however be developed in the form of travelling scholarships enticing academic staff to develop their knowledge of Asia via direct study and placement in relevant international institutions.

Accessing subjects on Asia outside teacher education faculties/departments

Perhaps the most likely opportunity for pre-service education to expand and include Asia-related content is for education faculties to encourage students to enrol in relevant subjects outside teacher education programs, perhaps in other faculties. Faculties would however have to be supported in this approach because of the loss of Effective Full-Time Student Unit (EFTSU) and the consequent loss of funding.

Research and development grants

One further way to influence a curriculum shift relating to the studies of Asia could be a series of research and teaching development grants aimed at:

- providing opportunities for academic staff to research relevant Asian topics for their potential to be developed into curriculum units at teacher education programs and also for school use
- delivery of professional development programs for teacher educators by the local NALSAS or AEF officers and/or
- local action research projects to further support the development/consolidation of faculty-wide strategies building on existing expertise and practice.

Further research

In addition, it may be useful to build on this initial scan to collect further data to explore the issues raised in this report. This could include:

-
- a series of focus groups with teacher educators across Australia
 - further research to collect more statistically reliable data

THE SURVEYS

Introduction

The Asia Education Foundation was commissioned to conduct a scan of studies of Asia activities in pre-service primary and secondary teacher education programs and their emphasis on studies of Asia content. The project required the conduct of a scan of, and report regarding:

- “Studies of Asia activities in pre-service teacher education programs in Australia, including the extent/degree of these activities;
- The number of student teachers in teacher education programs involved in these Asia-related activities;
- Future plans of Australian Universities to introduce or expand Asia-related study in their teacher education programs.”

This project was funded by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA) under the National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools (NALSAS) Strategy.

The project was guided by the Project Steering Committee (see Appendix 1)

Methodology

This 'Scan of Studies of Asia Activities in Pre-service Teacher Education Programs' involved the development and dissemination of two survey instruments

- Survey for Deans of Education
- Survey for Teacher Educators.

22 responses of a possible 35 were received from Deans of Education, and responses covering 198 programs from teacher educators. This sample is considered representative of those universities delivering pre-service teacher education programs.

The Deans of Education survey was conducted by mailing a questionnaire to the Deans and requesting them to complete the instrument (See Appendix 2). The questionnaire addressed issues related to the proportion of staff and students involved programs with Asia-related content, the emphasis given to those studies, its importance and likely trends in research, content and emphasis in the future. The data focussed on enrolments for the academic year 2000.

The Survey of Deans of Education was undertaken to establish a broad understanding of Asia-related content initiatives conducted through pre-service teacher education programs implemented by universities across Australia. In addition, consideration was given to identifiable future plans regarding delivery of Asia-related content, and the extent to which student teachers complete Asia-related subjects within, and outside the responding Education Faculty/Department.

The Survey of Deans of Education was completed by Deans of Education from 22 universities across Australia¹. Responses relate to pre-service teacher training programs involving some 30,695 pre-service teacher education (primary and secondary) students in 2000, delivered by 1083 teacher educators. It should be acknowledged that some of the data collected from Deans could not be aggregated, particularly the data on the subjects students access outside the Education Faculty. Further study would need to be done in this regard.

The Survey of Teacher Educators was conducted using an online survey. Each pre-service educator was contacted by email and asked to enter the data directly into the web-based data capture system developed by the Multimedia Education Unit of the University of Melbourne. The data from this system was directly entered into a spreadsheet for analysis. The teacher educator survey collected data related to areas taught, research activities, enrolments, and future intentions. The e-mail addresses of pre-service teacher educators at all 35 Australian university faculties of education were obtained. A total of 1620 teacher educators received a broadcast e-mail, followed up by a further e-mail containing the URL for the online survey. The total number of responses received was 378 with 257 being valid

Of the 257 valid responses, 156 delivered subjects with Asia-related content. However, 90% delivered subjects with less than 5% Asia-related content. As can be seen from this, many of the respondents were people who were teaching something about Asia. The sample is certainly self selecting and considerably biased towards those already involved. There are no data to indicate that the sample is representative of teacher educators, generally.

The results of the two surveys are presented in the following sections.

¹ La Trobe University (Bunbury, Shepparton, Albury/Wodonga), La Trobe University (Bendigo), Murdoch, Australian Catholic University, University of New South Wales, Charles Sturt University, Wollongong University, University of Western Sydney (Nepean), University of Technology Sydney, Macquarie University, James Cook University, Deakin University, Monash University, University of Newcastle, The University of Melbourne, Central Queensland University, Curtin University, University of New England, University of Southern Queensland, The University of Queensland, and University of Canberra. The two Wollongong University responses were collapsed into one.

DEANS OF EDUCATION

Pre-Service Teacher Education Subjects

The total number of Faculty / Department of Education Subjects is some 2,782, which includes a small number (91) directly related to the studies of Asia. Almost half of this total number of subjects is accounted for by The University of Melbourne (562), the Australian Catholic University (306), Griffith University (285) and Charles Sturt University (210) with the majority (12) having 1-100 subjects. Only a small number of subjects (10) indirectly address the study of Asia.

In addition to 'Asia-related' Subjects delivered through these Faculties, a number (1,001) of students accessed subjects on Asia outside the faculty, through approximately 392 subjects². It is anticipated that the actual number is higher than that reported, as 9 out of 22 of the respondents reported that this data was unavailable.

Additional Mechanisms

In addition to the delivery of pre-service teacher education, Deans of Education identified a range of mechanisms utilised to display an orientation towards Asia during 2000.

Table 1 Mechanisms Used To Display An Orientation Towards Asia During 2000.

MECHANISM	Number of respondents
Research links with organisations in Asia	20
Staff research interests	20
Twinning with universities / faculties in Asia	15
Library resources on Asia	15
Offshore experiential learning in Asia	12
Student exchange / placement in Asia and Australia	12
Study abroad programs in Asia	9
Use of Faculty research funding	8
Use of external research funding	8
Corporate partnerships focused on Asia	7
Use of University research funding	6
Staff exchange in Asia	5
Senior position / s devoted to the study of Asia	3
Other ³	4

As noted in Table 1, the most common such mechanisms included established research links with organisations in Asia; staff research interests; twinning with universities / faculties in Asia; and the provision of library resources focussed on Asia.

² The vast majority of this total (392) comprises Monash University (100), University of New England (112) and The University of Queensland (90).

³ 'Other' included staff teaching in Asia; delivery of courses enrolling international students; and (international) post-graduate students.

Priority Allocated to the Study of Asia

Table 2 Priority Allocated to the Study of Asia.

	1 Low	2	3 Medium	4	5 High
Priority of Asia-related content	3	9	6	4	0
Significance of Asia-related content in school curriculum	0	4	10	7	0
Increase in emphasis likely to affect priorities	1	4	9	7	1
Likelihood of future higher priority to Asia-related content	1	9	12	1	0

Deans reported that Asia-related content within their respective Faculties/Departments represented a medium low, to medium priority. No respondents reported this area as a 'high' priority.

Deans reported that the level of awareness within their respective Faculties/Departments of the significance of Asia-related content in school curriculum was medium to medium high. No respondents reported a very high level of awareness.

Further, Deans indicated that the increase in emphasis in school curricula regarding Asia-related content would have some impact on their respective Faculties/Departments priorities.

When asked to consider the extent to which Asia-related content will likely receive higher priority in future, respondents indicated that this had a medium low to medium level of likelihood. In some instances, this reflected the fact that studies of Asia were already addressed in pre-service teacher education programs (eg. "The studies of Asia are already a priority due to the cultural background of our students, the obvious links X has with a campus in Malaysia, and higher degree studies in International Education") whereas in other cases, low level of provision was not anticipated to change (eg. "The curriculum is very crowded now with compulsory key learning areas").

Respondents also noted that the curriculum priorities of those employing graduating teachers impacted on the curriculum focus of pre-service teacher education programs.

When asked to consider factors and trends most likely to influence the degree of emphasis given to the studies of Asia, respondents reported that this included specific policy directives regarding delivery focussing on Asia (18); the inclusion of compulsory / core subjects including Asia-related content (14); additional skilled staff to teach Asia-related content (10); additional financial resources (7); and additional library resources (5). Respondents also suggested that competing priorities and demands prohibit the inclusion of some areas of studies and noted the impact of demographics on demand for Asian cultural studies and community language training (in schools).

Future Developments

Deans were asked to consider whether teacher educators were likely, in the future, to include Asia-related content when teaching pre-service subjects. Respondents indicated that this was potentially likely (13 respondents reported a medium level of likelihood). As noted above, this reflected the fact that in some cases teacher educators presently deliver Asia-related content ("Already on agenda as a high priority, work towards maintaining this and being proactive in terms of new directions"), whereas in other cases, low level of provision was not anticipated to change unless additional resources became available. In several instances, respondents noted requirements for changed content due to changing enrolment demographics. For example, one respondent noted that "(t)here is a growing awareness of the importance of exploring a diversity of educational and social contexts", and another noted that this focus will change "because of the increase in offshore partnerships for undergraduate and postgraduate teaching".

Finally, Deans were asked to identify new or ongoing initiatives aimed at increasing staff and students' knowledge and understanding of Asia in the next three years. Responses included the following:

- Growing interest of undergraduate and post-graduate international students in completing on and off-shore programs at Australian universities;
- Delivery of Languages Other Than English (LOTE) programs;
- Multiculturalism programs (or components of other pre-service programs);
- Student and staff exchanges (including international conference attendance);
- Collaborative research projects with international research partners;
- Commercial consultancy and contract work with international agencies; and
- Work conducted by University specific Asia centres.

PRE-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The following information is derived from responses to the teacher educator survey (see Appendix 3).

Pre-Service Exposure to Asia-related Content

Table 3 Number and percentage of subjects taught involving 'Asia-related Content'

SUBJECT	Total number of subjects taught	Percentage	Where Asia-related content taught most	Percentage
Other	45	23.7	33	21.2
Methods – SOSE / HSIE	30	15.8	23	14.7
Curriculum	22	11.6	19	12.2
Methods - English	19	10.0	18	11.5
Methods - Mathematics	17	8.9	17	10.9
Methods - Arts	12	6.3	10	6.4
Methods - Health and Physical Education	10	5.3	9	5.8
Methods - LOTE	10	5.3	3	1.9
Methods - Science	7	3.7	7	4.5
Methods - Technology	6	3.2	6	3.8
Psychology	6	3.2	5	3.2
Classroom Management	4	2.1	4	2.6
Assessment	2	1.1	2	1.3
Total	190	100.0	156	100.0

Responses cover a total of 190 subjects, of which a substantial number included Asia content. Categories where Asian content is taught most include SOSE / HSIE (14.7 percent), Curriculum (12.2 percent), Methods - English (11.5 percent) and Methods - Mathematics (10.9 percent).

Numbers of Subjects Taught by Pre-Service Teacher Educators

Respondents provided information regarding the number of subjects taught by pre-service teacher educators at participating institutions. Some 53 percent of respondents reported delivering between 2-4 subjects, with the maximum number of subjects delivered reported (in 7 cases), as 10.

Table 4 Number of subjects taught by pre-service teacher educators at participating institutions

Number of Subjects	Percentage
1	10.9
2	19.1
3	16.0
4	18.3
5	14.4
6	10.9
7	3.5
8	4.3
9	0.0
10	2.7
Total	100.0

Course Content

Respondents were asked to detail the nature of Asia-related content delivered through pre-service teacher education programs. Table 5, below, summarises results provided.

Table 5 Asia-related content by broad study area.

STUDY AREA	Number of courses	Percentage of courses
Multicultural and/or Globalisation	42	22
Cultural Studies	23	12
Comparative Education and Learning Systems (particularly mathematics)	21	11
Languages Other Than English (LOTE)	17	9
English as a Second Language (ESL)	6	3
English Language, Literacy and Numeracy	5	3
Environmental Studies	5	3
Cultural Exchange	4	2
Comparative Religious Studies	2	1
Other	30	16
No emphasis in the curriculum	35	17
TOTAL	190	100

Descriptive responses regarding the nature of Asia-related content delivered through pre-service teacher education programs suggest that these studies focus on multiculturalism and/or globalisation (22 percent), cultural studies - such as dance, literature and art (12 percent), and comparative education and learning systems - particularly mathematics (11 percent). Of the 190 subjects described, 35 (17 percent) specifically indicated that no Asia-related content was delivered.

A sample of responses is provided below

- "Cultural diversity, internationalisation, linguistic diversity, living and working in a multicultural community."
- "Analysis of how history and culture have shaped the education systems in Japan, Malaysia, and India as part of a Comparative Education elective course."
- "Asia wide coverage of culture, values, communication from perspective of improving intercultural communication and teaching."
- "Australia as a multicultural country."
- "Differences in mathematics performance of Asian countries compared to Australia, and different approaches to teaching."
- "Children's literature (eg. *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*) and factual material about Asia for the development of units of classroom work for primary schools."
- "Japanese, Vietnamese, Korean, Cambodian songs integrated into teaching activities."
- "A component of the subject is directed towards teaching LOTE & ESL with a specific focus on Indonesia and Indonesian language."
- "Incidental treatment only, arising from specific research results, or consideration of the effects of culture, ethnicity, migrant groups, and special needs."

Student Participation

The total number of students accounted for in the survey was 26,938 across the four-year program.

Table 6 Pre-service student participation in courses involving Asian Content, by core/elective and number of subjects.

SUBJECT	Percentage of students (in total)	Total number of subjects	Subjects including Asian content	Percentage of students (Asian content)
Core	70	125	102	71
Core + Elective	24	27	30	24
Elective	6	38	23	5
Total	100	190	156	100

As noted in Table 6, the vast majority (70 percent) of students covered by the survey responses were enrolled in core subjects, with an additional 24 percent enrolled in core and elective pre-service teacher education program subjects. In total, some 125 core, 38 elective, and 27 core/elective subjects were accounted for.

In addition, the vast majority of students accessing Asian content - some 24,795 - did so through participation in core subjects (71 percent of students addressing Asia-related content did so through 102 core subjects).

Fields of Study

Table 7 Pre-service student teacher participation by course

FIELD	Core + Elective	Core	Elective
Early Childhood	1	10	2
Primary / Early Childhood		14	3
Primary / Secondary / Early Childhood	5	5	3

Primary / Secondary / Gifted		1	
Primary / Secondary / Special	1	1	
Primary / Secondary	4	17	1
Primary / Special Education		1	
Primary	4	49	9
Secondary / Special Education			1
Secondary	7	27	18
Special Education	2		1
Total	27	125	38

Subjects identified by survey respondents covered the breadth of Early Childhood, Primary, Secondary and Special / Gifted / Deaf Education fields. Large numbers of Core Primary (49) and Core Secondary (27) subjects were noted, in addition to large numbers of elective Secondary subjects (18).

Students enrolled in Year 4 were more likely to participate in subjects addressing Asia content, with the majority of students studying Asia content enrolled in Primary and Secondary subjects.

Subject Content

156 respondents provided information regarding the extent of Asian Content in pre-service subjects delivered.

Table 8 Percentage of Asian Content in subjects

SUBJECT CONTENT	Percentage
Minimal content (up to 5 percent)	89.7
Other (10-90 percent)	7.7
Maximum content (95 percent)	2.6
Total	100.0

As noted in Table 8, the vast majority (89.7 percent) of subjects involved minimal amounts of Asian content (up to 5 percent of course content), with only 2.6 percent involving significant Asian content (95 percent of course content).

TEACHER EDUCATORS

Pre-Service Teacher Educators Delivering Asian Content

Of the total number of teacher educators, 156 delivered subjects involving Asia content. As noted in Table 9, below, the majority of these teachers (140, or 89.7 percent) delivered subjects involving minimal amounts of Asia content.

Table 9 Number of teacher educators, by percentage of Asian content

SUBJECT CONTENT	Number of teacher educators	Percentage of teacher educators
Minimal content (up to 5 percent)	140	89.7
15 percent	5	3.2
25 percent	2	1.3
35 percent	2	1.3
45 percent	2	1.3
75 percent	1	0.6
Maximum content (95 percent)	4	2.6
Total	156	100.0

Teacher Educators' Experience

As demonstrated in Table 10, approximately 1/5th (22.2 percent) of pre-service teacher educators had completed professional development activities relating to Asia and 18.5 percent were researching aspects of Asia content. Subject categories where teacher educators demonstrated the highest level of interest in professional development include Other (13), Methods - SOSE/HSIE (11), Methods - English (6) and Curriculum (5).

Table 10 Percentage of pre-service educators

	Percentage of pre-service educators
Completed professional development regarding Asia	22.2
Researching Asian content	18.5
Completed tertiary study in Asia	15.3
Teaching Asian content more than 5%	10.3

15.3 percent of those teacher educators delivering Asia content had completed tertiary study in Asia. Subject categories where teacher educators had completed tertiary level studies of Asia include Curriculum, Methods - English, and Other. These subject categories (plus Methods - SOSE/HSIE), whilst generally including minimal levels of Asian content, are frequently cited as pre-service teacher education subjects addressing Asian content. Only 10.3 percent deliver courses comprising more than 5 percent Asia content.

Table 11 Interest in Asian content, by course content level.

Have a personal interest and teach

	Asian content (number)
Minimal content (up to 5 percent Asian content)	38
Other (10 - 90 percent content)	2
Maximum content (95 percent Asian content)	2
Total	42 (26.9%)

The majority (73 percent) of teacher educators delivering Asian content do not have a special interest in this field of study. However, 26.9% of the teacher educators did have a particular interest in this field of study.

Table 12 Trained teacher educators, by course content level.

	Tertiary trained in Asia-related content
Minimal content (up to 5 percent Asian content)	30
Other (10 - 90 percent content)	2
Maximum content (95 percent Asian content)	-
Total	32 (20.5%)

20.5 percent of respondents delivering Asian content (largely minimal) were tertiary trained in Asia-related content. Interestingly, those respondents (4) delivering substantial Asian content were not tertiary trained in studies of Asia. However the numbers are so small that generalisations are not meaningful.

Teacher Educators Not Delivering Asian Content

As noted, 156 of the 257 educators involved in the delivery of pre-service teacher education delivered approximately 200 subjects involving Asian content. Of those not delivering subjects involving Asian content (101)

- 13 percent considered this as a future priority;
- 26 percent were disinterested in including such content; and
- 10 percent presently conduct research into Asia, and will continue to do so in the future.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Respondents were asked to consider future directions for pre-service teacher educators delivering subjects involving some Asian content.

Table 13 indicates that a not inconsiderable proportion (28.3 percent) planned to undertake professional development, and 22 percent wanted to increase their pre-service educator teaching (content) focusing on Asia in the future. Few respondents wanted to undertake additional tertiary training (14.6 percent) or research in this area (9 percent).

Table 13 Future plans for pre-service teacher educators regarding Asian content

INCREASED FOCUS	Percentage
Professional development	28.3
Teaching	22
Tertiary training	14.6
Research	9

Those teacher educators including Asia content in their teaching and wishing to undertake further professional development tended to be involved with the delivery of subjects presently involving minimal Asian content (5-15 percent of course content). Two of the four respondents delivering substantial Asian content (95 percent of course) wished to undertake further professional development.

Table 14 Future plans of teacher educators delivering Asia content for delivery

INCREASED FOCUS	Percentage 'Yes'	Percentage 'No'	Percentage 'Unsure'
Future priority of their Faculty/Department	14.8	51.6	33.6
Future priority for teacher educators	22.9	51.1	26.0
Percentage who will increase delivery	12.7	67.7	19.6
Priority in teaching	13	64	23

Approximately 15 percent of teacher educator respondents delivering some Asia Content indicated that the inclusion of additional Asian content was a future priority for their Faculty/Department. A further 33.6 percent were unsure. The majority, 51.6 per cent, reported that this was not a future priority for their Faculty/Department.

22.9 percent reported that this was a future priority for teacher educators, with an additional 26 percent unsure. The majority, 51.1 per cent, reported that this was not a future priority for teacher educators.

Of those delivering some level of Asian content, 12.7 percent reported that such delivery will increase (with a further 19.6 percent unsure). The majority, 67.7 per cent, reported that such delivery will not increase. 13 percent

reported that this was a priority in teaching, while 64 per cent reported that this was not a priority.

It appears that change in this area of teacher preparation is required because of changing enrolment demographics. This together with the other suggestions regarding future strategies indicate that the inclusion of Asia-related content could be driven by the demographics/ multiculturalism, research funds/consultancies/exchanges. It is revealing that these include nothing that relates to the need for a balanced curriculum which is inclusive of Asia. The pragmatics of this might be considered in recommending changes to the curriculum for pre-service teacher education.

CONCLUSION

Common Ground

Deans and teacher educators are in agreement in a number of areas. The most obvious is the lack of overall commitment by pre-service education to the inclusion of topics related to studies of Asia.

Neither the Deans of Education nor teacher educators provided adequate information about the most appropriate areas of curriculum for the exposure of studies of Asia or information about the amount of time required. Both groups made it clear that specialised staff would be needed and that professional development in some form would be required to shift the emphasis. However in a policy setting it seems important that some effort be made to identify the likely and ideal amount of exposure that pre-service teachers should receive in this area.

Implications

The overwhelming impression gained from the two surveys is that the inclusion of Asia-related content in pre-service education does not receive a high priority. It is clear that Asia-related content does not occupy a central role in pre-service teacher education programs. The Deans of Education provided some direction in which those wishing to lift the profile of this area of the curriculum might press for change.

Given national priorities in this area it could be argued that some increased emphasis could be targeted. However, the current situation in school curriculum and in pre-service teacher education militates against this. The school curriculum currently offers no discrete or identifiable component for studies of Asia apart from those components of existing subjects (especially in SOSE/HSIE, Arts and English) that have content based on Asia. Because of this it is unlikely that pre-service teacher education will explicitly offer method or content-based education in studies of Asia apart from those areas where it is incidental to the existing pre-service curriculum.

Increasing funds for pre-service curriculum could encourage institutions to develop this area. However during periods in which enrolments are guaranteed through quotas, pre-service programs on Asia-related content are unlikely to increase enrolments. Moreover, unless there is explicit encouragement to adjust staffing structures to enable such as shift in curriculum, funding increases are unlikely to affect the curriculum.

Professional development incentives

The alternative to this is the introduction of professional development programs for teacher educators. This would be an unusual step as professional development in higher education institutions is generally recognised in the form of conferences, research training programs and self initiated professional development in the academic's field of expertise. Introduction of professional development programs could however be developed in the form of travelling scholarships enticing academic staff to develop their knowledge of Asia via direct study and placement in relevant international institutions.

Accessing subjects on Asia outside teacher education faculties/departments

Perhaps the most likely opportunity for pre-service education to expand and include Asia-related content is for education faculties to encourage students to enrol in relevant subjects outside teacher education programs, perhaps in other faculties. Faculties would however have to be supported in this approach because of the loss of Effective Full-Time Student Unit (EFTSU) and the consequent loss of funding.

Research and development grants

One further way to influence a curriculum shift relating to the studies of Asia could be a series of research and teaching development grants aimed at:

- providing opportunities for academic staff to research relevant Asian topics for their potential to be developed into curriculum units at teacher education programs and also for school use and / or
- local action research projects to further support the development / consolidation of faculty-wide strategies building on existing expertise and practice.

Further research

In addition, it may be useful to build on this initial scan to collect further data to explore the issues raised in this report. This could include:

- a series of focus groups with teacher educators across Australia
- further research to collect more statistically reliable data

APPENDICES

1. Members of the Project Steering Committee
2. Survey of Deans of Education
3. Printout of electronic survey forwarded to Teacher Educators

Appendix 1

Members of the Project Steering Committee

Chair

Elina Raso, NALSAS Representative, Catholic Education Commission

Members

Peng Chew, Project Officer, DETYA.

Professor Brian Caldwell, Dean of Education, The University of Melbourne

Sue Ledger, Language and Literacy (Primary) Educator, Murdoch University

Dr Christine Halse, Director, Intercultural Research Centre, Faculty of Education, University of Western Sydney

Dr Deborah Henderson, SOSE Lecturer, Queensland University of Technology

John Connell, School Administration Officer, School of Education, Flinders University

Professor Patrick Griffin, Director, Assessment Research Centre, The University of Melbourne

Kathe Kirby, Manager, AEF

Maureen Welch, Project Manager, AEF

Response to
National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools
(NALSAS) Strategy
Scan of Studies of Asia Activities in Pre-Service Primary and
Secondary Teacher Education
Survey of Deans of Education

Your Institution

- 1 Please indicate the number of students enrolled in pre-service teacher education programs (primary and secondary) at your university in 2000.

- 2 Please indicate the number of teacher educators involved in delivering pre-service programs at your university in 2000.

- 3 Please indicate the total number of pre-service subjects taught in the education faculty/school/department during 2000. (Subjects taught twice should be counted twice)

- 4 Please indicate the number of pre-service subjects taught in your faculty/school/department directly related to the studies of Asia in 2000?

-
5. Please indicate, where possible, the number of students enrolled in pre-service teacher education programs undertaking subjects relating to the studies of Asia outside of the education faculty/school/department during 2000. This would include students who have completed Asian Studies subjects in the Humanities etc.

6. Please indicate how many Asia related subjects undertaken by the above students outside the education faculty/school/department in 2000 would normally be completed.

The following questions relate to the emphasis given to the studies of Asia in your faculty/school/department.

7. Besides teaching, in what other ways has your faculty/school/department displayed an orientation towards Asia during 2000? Please indicate all that apply from the following:

- Offshore experiential learning in Asia
 - Twinning with universities/faculties in Asia
 - Research links with organisations in Asia
 - Study abroad programs in Asia
 - Staff exchange in Asia
 - Staff research interests
 - Use of university research funding
 - Use of faculty research funding
 - Use of external research funding
 - Senior position/s devoted to the study of Asia
 - Corporate partnerships focused on Asia
 - Student exchange/placement in Asia and Australia
 - Library resources on Asia
 - Other – please specify:
-

-
-
-
8. On a scale of 1 – 5, where 1 signifies low priority and 5 high priority, of what priority is the studies of Asia in your faculty/school/department. Please indicate by circling a number on the line below.

low priority 1 2 3 4 5 high priority

The following questions relate to factors and trends that are most likely to influence the degree of emphasis given to the studies of Asia in your faculty/school/department in the future.

9. Students are more likely to include study of Asia if: [Please indicate all that apply]

- We have more skilled staff to teach Asia-related content
- We have compulsory/core subjects which include Asia-related content
- We have more financial resources
- Teaching about Asia becomes university / faculty / school / department policy
- We have more library resources
- Other – please specify:

10. Teacher Educators in my faculty/school/department are aware of the significance of studies of Asia in school curricula. Please indicate by circling a number on the line below.

unaware 1 2 3 4 5 very aware

11. The increase in emphasis in school curricula regarding studies of Asia is likely to affect faculty/school/department priorities in this area. Please indicate by circling a number on the line below.

not likely 1 2 3 4 5 very likely

-
12. In the future, studies of Asia is likely to receive higher priority in our faculty/school/department. Please indicate by circling a number on the line below.

not likely 1 2 3 4 5 very likely

Why? Please specify:

13. In the future, teacher educators will be more likely to include Asia-related content when teaching pre-service subjects. Please indicate by circling a number on the line below.

not likely 1 2 3 4 5 very likely

Why? Please specify:

Select Your Tertiary Institution:

[Return to Home Page](#)

If the subjects you taught in 2000 **did not include** any content on Asia, please continue to the next section, by [clicking here](#).

Please complete the following section for each subject taught during 2000 that included some Asia-related content or was focussed on the study of Asia.

Indicate broad category of subject taught:

Hours per week per semester:

What percentage of time is devoted to content on Asia per semester?

Please enter approximate number of students enrolled, Semester 1, 2000:

Please enter approximate number of students enrolled, Semester 2, 2000:

In which year level/s of the course was the subject taught? Please indicate all that apply.

1

2

3

4

Was the subject taught as a core or elective subject?

Indicate which course the subject was taught in?

Primary

Secondary

Early Childhood

Special Education

Gifted

Deaf Education

Indicate which course/s students are usually completing when taking the subject. Please indicate all that apply.

Describe the Asia-related content; indicate any country/region focus and the topic.

Enter a 20 word description of Asia-related content indicating any specific focus on a country/ies/regions of Asia and broad theme/s.

Enter Another Subject

Go to Final Questions

Reset this form

Final Questions

Please respond to the following statements by selecting Yes/No/Unsure from the drop-down menu associated with each statement:

- I teach about Asia:
- I have completed tertiary study relating to Asia:
- Teaching about Asia is an important personal interest:
- My research interest/s are linked with studying about Asia:
- I have undertaken professional development relating to Asia:
- Including content on Asia is a priority for my university/ faculty/department:
- In the future:**
- I do intend to teach about Asia:
- I am interested in pursuing further professional development relating to Asia:
- I am interested in pursuing further tertiary study relating to Asia:
- Teaching about Asia will increase in importance at my university/faculty/department:
- I intend to increase the focus on Asia in my teaching:
- I intend to increase the focus on Asia in my research:
- What was the total number of preservice subjects you taught during 2000?

Submit Survey

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