UC SANTA BARBARA

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A Major Boost

UC Santa Barbara's Department of East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies has been awarded a $428,000 grant by the Korea Foundation. The award will support the establishment of a tenure-track professorship in Korean cultural studies, a first for the department.

Sabine Frühstück, Koichi Takashima Chair in Japanese Cultural Studies and professor of modern Japanese cultural studies, said the eventual hiring will return the department to a "full-blown East Asian Studies department with specialists of Chinese, Japanese and Korean cultural studies. This is high time for such a hire since interest in Korean language and culture have tremendously increased in recent years, not only at UCSB but nationwide, resulting in Korean being one of the fastest-growing languages."

EALCS has offered first- and -second-year Korean language courses for the past several years, but hiring a Korean cultural studies scholar "would really serve as the basis for a Korean Studies Program down the line along with our current majors in Asian studies, Chinese studies and Japanese studies," said Frühstück, who is the principal investigator on the five-year grant.

"It will also allow us," she added, "to better connect to scholars in other Humanities and Fine Arts departments and beyond who don't identify as Korean studies specialists but whose scholarly expertise lies at least in part in things Korean."

The international search for such an assistant professor in Korean cultural studies is planned for this fall, Frühstück said. A successful search would mean that an assistant professor would be joining EALCS on July 1, 2022.

“Our department is very pleased with this opportunity to rebuild our Korean studies component after the sad passing away of our former colleague Professor Hyung Il Pai, who taught classes on Korean heritage, tourism and archaeology,” said Mayfair Yang, professor and chair of EALCS.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.