## Review of Area Studies: Full Text of non-confidential Submissions made in response to the Discussion Paper

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*Confidentiality requested*
Hi there,

Just a quick comment on the area studies review. I can see the potential for something significant on the Asia & Pacific area, and perhaps also Europe, given that these are the key areas Australia interacts with (other than North America). The US Studies centre is our first example of the possibilities – a research centre and a centre that has a PG teaching program. I think it makes sense that new centres would take on both research and teaching (at least at the PG level).

However my thoughts are that we should bring in one research centre at a time, and that each one should be considered strategically and that the best possible personnel should be sought to work in the centre (rather than a collection of academics situated in various buildings and departments around campus).

Best wishes,

Kathryn

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Treasurer, Higher Education Research & Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA)
Dear Stephen and panel,

I am writing to voice strong support for an area studies initiative at the University of Sydney. As a recently appointed academic with a strong background in inter-disciplinary area studies research and education, it makes absolute sense that a structure should be put in place to enable:

1. informed cross disciplinary conversations and networks for scholarly development and research project building 2. teaching portfolios that easily stretch across institutional boundaries and allow for a flow of students and lecturers to the courses and research training clusters that need them most 3. a more strategic approach to building USyd's profile as a hub of area studies expertise, resulting in benefits for all staff involved - specifically in terms of international visibility, national relevance, and the development of individual careers and collective scholarly endeavor 4. increased capacity to manage large grant applications beyond and including the ARC, the EU-Asia initiatives and so forth 5. developmental opportunities for junior and senior staff to work in appropriate teams 6. a voice on campus to manage common problems (such as the ethics and risk management systems)

In setting up such an initiative it would be important to:

1. investigate and understand the possibility for conflicting interests between departmental and cross faculty structures such as an area studies network might entail 2. ensure that appropriate workload policies and related funding flowed to the areas affected

and that

3. clear channels of communication be set up to explain the initiative to all departments so as to encourage their buy-in and support for the program

I hope this is of use

Best
Stephi

Professor Stephanie Donald (Professor of Chinese Media Studies, Media and Communication) 
Received 06 May 2009

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Area Studies are already being researched and taught within the language departments as well as European and Asian Studies. There is no complete understanding of a culture and no appropriate understanding and usage of a language without notion of the facts summarised by 'area'. Of course it would be reasonable for a highly ranked university to have a systematic coverage of the world in order to prepare our students for intercultural, linguistic, economical, health, research you name it challenges anywhere in the world.

Kind regards

Andreas

Dr Andreas Jaeger
Germanic Studies
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Dear Stephen

I am preparing a submission, which I will send in the next week or two. I thought it might also interest you and the review team to know that the SE Asia-oriented postgraduate seminar class that I run focused on the discussion paper last week, and the postgrads have some useful points to make. I attach a dot-point summary of the issues raised. I would like to encourage the review team to meet with these postgrads as a group at some point in the process. We have 15 higher degree by research students in Geography working on SE Asia, 11 of whom are from the region. My own view, which will be reflected and elaborated in my submission, is that support for area studies should take advantage of, and facilitate the bringing together of, disciplinary strengths applied to particular regions rather than be seen as in competition with them.

Kind regards

Phil

Philip Hirsch
Professor of Human Geography

and

Professor Philip Hirsch (Director, Australian Mekong Resource Centre) – notes from a postgraduate seminar

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Postgraduate Seminar: Review of Area Studies
15/5/09

- Place of area studies has always been fraught: you can not theorise a place as such, can only theorise a place around disciplines e.g. anthropology, history etc.
- Can universities organise around place and around disciplines? Cornell University and the University of London are good examples of universities where Southeast Asian studies (i.e. areas studies) works well. In Australia, RSAPS at ANU would be a good example. Without an area studies program at a University, expertise tends to be hidden.
- The University of Sydney is currently undertaking a review of area studies at the University to determine a) whether to proceed with an area studies program, b) if it does proceed, how best to do this?
- Input to this review from postgraduate students is particularly relevant. Phil’s postgraduate seminar class is probably the only gathering of postgraduate students in the University with place (i.e. Southeast Asia) as the theme. It might therefore be useful for the postgrad seminar group to provide feedback to the area studies review team about what area studies does (or doesn’t) bring to our studies.
- In terms of future career options, is it better to be known as an area specialist or to be known for your field?
- Phil highlighted the necessity to maintain a disciplinary foundation in any area studies program. How is a discipline component maintained within an area studies program?
- Could have an area studies program that insists upon a certain number of disciplines within it (e.g. minimum four disciplines covered, maximum 10 etc). Another possibility could be to have an area studies program that has area studies at the top of the hierarchy and then themes within the program.
- One of the key strengths of area studies is its interdisciplinary nature. Historically the University of Sydney does not cater well to interdisciplinary work. An area studies program could provide a forum in which to do this.
- There are currently structural problems with area studies at the University. It has been assumed that area studies is located with language studies – but language studies at the University are underfunded and not integrated with other disciplines.
- The University needs to make sure that it does not just create another level of bureaucracy by creating an area studies program.
- Is the University merely undertaking a branding exercise in promoting area studies at the University? Or could this be seen more as creating a reputation instead. By locating the University of Sydney as a specialist in, say, Southeast Asian studies, the University might be more successful in attracting top academics, postgraduates and research funding towards area studies.
- Area studies is very marketable, particularly to undergraduates and coursework Masters students.
- Would our own postgraduate studies be enhanced through an area studies program at the University? If nothing else maybe it would bring postgraduate students from different disciplines together. This in itself could be an advantage.
- There are several ways that the postgraduate seminar class could have input into the University’s Area Studies review: a) these notes could be submitted as is to the review team; b) these notes could be used as the basis for a more formal submission to the review team; c) we could alert the review team of our existence and say we are happy to meet them face to face to discuss the review.
Dear Stephen,

I am relatively new to The University of Sydney but I thought a response to your email may be warranted, if merely to highlight my interest and research program in South Asia. I have been developing a program of research on South Asia over the last few years, and I thought I might mention a few ideas in terms of potential area studies foci. I find the idea of developing a centre/theme of India Studies appealing in terms of any University Area Studies program you might develop (or South Asia, although that can be too broad in some ways). With an ageing Indian population combined with increasing global presence, I think the idea has potential. Please find attached a few ideas and some existing linkages I have in my research program. My colleagues and I were successful in the recent AUSAID Australian Development Research Awards, and our program in the study of health from a social science perspective in India is expanding quite dramatically. Some selected South Asian focused publications follow to give you an idea of my work:

Publications:

Broom, A., Doron, A. & Tovey, P. (in press) The inequalities of pluralism: Gender, social value and the economies of care in Indian oncology. Social Science and Medicine
Broom, A. & Tovey, P. (2007) Inter-professional conflict and strategic alliance between traditional healers and oncologists in Pakistan. Asian Journal of Social Science Vol. 35, No. 4 pp. 488-420
Tovey, P., Broom, A., Chatwin, J., Hafeez, M., Ahmad, S. (2005) Use of traditional, complementary and allopathic medicines in Pakistan by cancer patients. Rural and Remote Health Vol. 5 No. 4, 447.

Best wishes,
Alex

Dr Alex Broom
Senior Lecturer,
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Australia
Proposed Centre: Centre of Contemporary India Studies

Author: Dr Alex Broom, Senior Lecturer in Health Sociology, Faculty of Health Sciences, The University of Sydney

Objective:
India is hugely significant economically and politically on the global stage, yet Australian research has focused primarily on China and South East Asia. India is now recognised as a key nation in shaping current and future global economic, political and security trajectories, yet there is currently no centre for the advanced study of India in Australia. As such, the aim of the proposed Centre will be to bring together and foster an international network of researchers interested in India studies and position The University of Sydney as the key player internationally in the study of contemporary India. This would be a multi-disciplinary Centre, incorporating scholars working in sociology, anthropology, political science, health services research, education, history, social work and so on. This Centre will extend on Dr Broom and his current collaborators’ existing and past projects in India, developing the first research centre in Australia to focus exclusively upon Indian issues. The Centre will be guided by five distinct yet interrelated aims:

• To promote and conduct critical inter-disciplinary research that contributes to our understanding of the range of issues facing India;
• To improve the livelihood of Indian populations through the strategic development of high quality research on key issues such as health, welfare, and security, with a focus on the transfer of research findings to practice;
• To generate external research income to develop Sydney University’s and Australia’s position at being at the forefront of the advanced study of India;
• To build leadership potential in early career researchers and develop research capacity in India studies;
• To promote the University of Sydney, through high quality research, as a University of choice for international students from (and interested in) India.

Potential collaboration/research capacity at Sydney University
• Faculty of Health Sciences (Social Science & International Health)
• Faculty of Medicine (Basic, Clinical and Public Health)
• Faculty of Arts (Civil Conflict, Development and Public Policy)
• Faculty of Economic and Business, Centre for International Security Studies
• The George Institute, Menzies Centre for Health Policy and so on

Existing International Collaborating Institutions (in Dr Broom’s research program)
• Jawaharlal Nehru University, Social Medicine and Community Health, Delhi, India
• University of Sri Jayewardenepura, School of Community Medicine, Sri Lanka
• University of the Punjab, Department of Sociology, Lahore Pakistan
• The Australian National University, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies
• The University of Queensland, School of Population Health, Brisbane, Australia
• RMIT, School of Management, Melbourne, Australia
Dear Review of Area Studies

The Sydney Centre for International Law in the Faculty of Law is not area-specific in that it self-evidently has a global focus on international law research, policy and teaching. That said, members of the Centre have special expertise in the research and technical assistance (particularly in development/foreign aid) in the Asia-Pacific region, and some of the students in our Master of International Law Program are AusAID funded students from the region. Centre members have worked on a range of international law projects in the region, including in Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Indonesia, China, Vietnam, Vanuatu, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, India, Hong Kong, Pakistan, Iraq and Kuwait. Centre members have consulted to various United Nations bodies in the region, as well as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and numerous governments (including public officials, diplomats, military, police, lawyers and judges) and non-government aid and donor agencies.

We would welcome any university-wide initiatives which would strengthen our international law expertise in the Asia-Pacific region, without wanting to dilute our broader global focus and responsibility to deal with international law in all regions.

Best wishes
Ben

Dr Ben Saul
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Dear Professor Garton

Please find my response attached

Regards
Adrian

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Response to the Review of Area Studies Discussion Paper
Adrian Vickers
Professor of Southeast Asian Studies

Before addressing the questions outlined in the Discussion Paper, I offer my own assessment of the basic principles. I write this as someone who has been engaged with the question of area studies in Southeast Asia both as a practical and theoretical issue, and my comments are not necessarily relevant to other areas. Australian universities are uniquely placed as leaders in the study of Southeast Asia—particularly because this is a field in which there are so many questions not yet answered, or even posed. Our competitive position has slipped in recent years however, particularly in relation to Singapore.

Principles and models
The underlying goal of any area studies program should be improvement in the quality of research (including research PhDs), and gaining international recognition as a leader in the study of the area.

In the case of Southeast Asian Studies, there are a number of Centres that currently or previously provided benchmarks. The most famous was probably Cornell University, although SOAS, and the universities of Leiden, Ann Arbor Michigan, Madison Wisconsin, Monash, NUS and possibly the ANU (although it has never had a ‘Southeast Asia Centre’) would also be high on the lists of leading institutions within the field. In most of these cases there are a number of key features of successful centres that spring to mind: having a number of ‘stars’; running language programs that include “smaller” languages; producing PhD students who have gone on to be leaders in the field; having Library collections that researchers need to visit; and (but not always) producing journals and book series.

It is unlikely that all of these elements can be replicated in a twenty-first century Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, as most of the other centres are finding. Few of these centres are currently as strong as they were in the past, and there is greater recognition in most countries of the need to link together scholars who might otherwise be working in isolation (for example Cambridge recently hosted a conference on Southeast Asia that affirmed the need to stronger links between scholars in the UK1). Few universities can afford the editorial staff needed to run journals and book series; most countries have funding formulae that threaten language programs with small enrolments; and libraries are expensive to build up. Nevertheless, having major scholars in the field is essential, as is strong output of PhD students.

The situation at the University of Sydney
The University of Sydney has a long history of Southeast Asian Studies, although it has never had a Southeast Asian Studies Centre. It currently has four professors who are recognised as leading scholars in the study of Southeast Asia, and has researchers in most Faculties who also have a strong Southeast Asian focus in their work. Scholars working on Southeast Asia have strong records of grant success, for example the Indonesian Department has more ARC grants than it has members of staff. The Southeast Asia Network that has been running since 2007 has 110 addresses on its email list in all faculties. It includes a number of honorary fellows, but also including 30-40 students, mainly PhD candidates. The Library has good

1 And it should be noted that some of the best papers in the conference came from Australian scholars, including those from the University of Sydney.
holdings on Southeast Asia, with some gaps. The Conservatorium has one Balinese gamelan, and there are two other gamelan that operate out of the university, both housed in the Darlington School. RIAP has run a number of successful programs in Southeast Asia, including in Education, Development, Human Resources and Museum Studies, and the EU-funded Masters in Human Rights program has a strong Southeast Asian component.

The countries for which we have strongest coverage are Indonesia and Cambodia, although we also have good individual expertise in most of the other countries of Southeast Asia, especially Thailand and Vietnam. Indonesian language has been taught for 50 years, Thai was taught but this year will see the last student complete, Vietnamese is no longer taught, and Khmer has been taught informally.

Besides language teaching, members of the Southeast Asia network regularly offer at least 8-10 specialised Southeast Asia subjects each year and teach into other subjects. The ability to maintain this level of teaching has to be balanced against the high rate of grant successes, which involve teaching buy-outs and are stretching the workloads of many of the researchers.

In-country programs are an important part of any Areas Studies program. Geography has run successful field-schools, and the Indonesian department sends students to Indonesia both for one-semester courses under the ACICIS program, and for summer-session intensive studies. There are number of barriers to further in-country studies, including the need for more flexibility of structures for crediting such studies (for example we have a large number of ‘exchange’ subjects, but cannot use them for ‘in-country’ studies such as the ACICIS program, so the Indonesian Department has had to create a set of ‘in-country’ subjects, but these are not found in other areas). Going through the Summer School means that the costs are prohibitive for trying to send students to do in-country courses, since it operates on a full-fee basis, and would require a minimum of 20 students per unit of study to make an overseas subject pay for itself. We also do not existing units of study that would allow for the study of other Southeast Asian languages (Thai and Vietnamese having been dropped from the books in recent years).

What elements are needed to boost Southeast Asian Studies?
The most immediate way to boost Southeast Asian Studies is to have more permanent staff on the ground, especially in areas where there is only one academic. Fields or countries that spring to mind are: economics, human rights, geography, Islam, media studies, museum and heritage studies, Vietnam and Malaysia. These should be members of staff who can teach into undergraduate and postgraduate courses, and offer supervision of PhD and honours students. Casual teaching buy-outs for existing members of staff are already stretching teaching programs thinly, so these are not a major priority at the moment. Additional post-doctoral or other temporary fellowships would contribute to the research quantum and research culture. Such positions need not be extra-budgetary: if they are built into Faculty appointments (and hence planning), or earmarked in the university’s fellowship and scholarship processes, then they can achieve optimum results with minimum outlay.

We also need ways to provide languages, first to ensure that the Indonesian program remains strong, and then to reintroduce Thai and Vietnamese, and find ways of providing Khmer and Burmese. These should be provided as languages for all faculties: at present employers such as the Commonwealth Bank have a strong demand for “bi-lingual and bi-cultural graduates in Indonesian with a background in economics.” This language provision is also needed for the transition from undergraduate to postgraduate studies, because we are

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2 Chris Barnes, Commonwealth Bank Executive and President of the Australia-Indonesia Business Council.
having to knock back prospective PhD students who do not have the language skills required for Southeast Asian topics that they are proposing. More flexibility is needed in the provision for in-country and summer-session subjects, especially in terms of the provision of administrative support for these.

Southeast Asian Studies does not necessarily need a major source of research funding, since the ARC should remain the primary vehicle for large projects. Nevertheless, greater funding could be provided for areas that support ARC projects, such as holding conferences and workshops, general research and administrative assistance, and hosting visiting academics. Much academic time is taken up with minor administrative tasks, publicity (including web site creation and maintenance), and application for small amounts of funding from different sources to cobble together money for individual activities; a regular source of base funding would be more efficient. The current Southeast Asia network has no administrative assistance, so has not been able to further develop the cross-faculty networking and PhD support programs that it began in 2007. In particular the network has proposed joint post-graduate seminars with partner universities in Southeast Asia, namely Gadjah Mada University, Universiti Sains Malaysia, and the National University of Singapore. It would be relatively easy to extend such activities to Chulalongkorn and a number of other key universities.

**Would a Centre for Southeast Asian Studies achieve these ends?**

Most likely: a certain basic level of administrative and discretionary funding would increase the profile and output of scholars working on Southeast Asia. A physical ‘Centre’ (ie an office) would also be useful as a device for coordinating activities across different Schools, Centres and Faculties. While a virtual centre (ie a web-site) is useful, an actual centre with staff attached to is always going to make a stronger internal and external impact. The university would have to provide some kind of long-term commitment to make such a centre worthwhile; the formula of “we’ll fund you for three years and then you have to be self-funding” that is generally applied in Australian universities creates an administrative and money-seeking burden that usually undermines research activities.

Such a Centre for Southeast Asian Studies could not be in competition with existing units, rather it would have to link, coordinate and add value to the activities of relevant Departments and Schools, and the research centres (Australian Mekong Resource Centre, Australian Cambodia Research Initiative, Centre for Asian and Pacific Law, the Australian Centre for Asian Art and Archaeology). Present university funding is not conducive to such large-scale collaboration, since there are not strong mechanisms for sharing EFTSU and other basic funding across faculties, and “line-of-sight” budgeting has been particularly divisive in this respect. The existence of the Institute for Social Sciences and the Research Institute for the Asia-Pacific adds further layers of complication. Any Centre for Southeast Asian Studies would be wider in scope than the Social Sciences. RIAP provides very valuable support for funding and other outreach activities, but has always been hamstrung in achieving the ‘Research’ objective because administrations have demanded that it seek out money as its primary objective. If RIAP were to become a ‘Research Institute’ (with the appointment of a number of full-time research professors, for example), then it could become an umbrella body of a number of centres working on Asia and the Pacific. An alternative would be to redefine RIAP as a training institute (TIAP), and to establish a new Asian Studies umbrella body.

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3 I was a post-graduate participant in the very active Asian Studies Centre that was absorbed into RIAP, and that subsequently died off because RIAP at that stage did not have a strong connection to the pure research activities of regular academics.
There is a danger here of adding further layers of bureaucracy, that is of application for funding and of reporting. At present there is no coordination between reporting and publicising (including websites) of research and other activities between Schools, Faculties, Postgraduate, Research, Alumni, Media, International and other units of the university. Creating another body that asks academics for the same information in another form would not do much to advance research in the University.

On an intellectual level, area studies always have to balance themselves against disciplinary studies. There is a danger for graduates of area studies programs that they will not be ‘employable’ in disciplinary units. So any area studies unit, such as Southeast Asian Studies, would have to have strong mechanisms to ensure that there is a disciplinary identity for students, ie that they can effectively have two ‘homes’. Again the University of Sydney’s formal structures do not facilitate such arrangements, not just because of the issue of sharing EFTSU, but also because there is no formal recognition of co-supervision. If postgraduates can have one area and one discipline supervisor, then they will find it easier to find academic employment.

Question 1 What is the current extent and state of Area Studies at the University of Sydney?
Some areas are better covered than others, but generally the University has strong Centres in areas such as US Studies, and hidden (and historical) strengths in others, such as Southeast Asian Studies, with potential to develop in Chinese Studies, although in competition with UTS (unless a means can be found to combine resources with UTS).

Question 2a What are our Area Studies strengths and weaknesses, and where do we want our future strengths to be? and
Question 2b Which cultural or geographical areas should the University focus on and on what grounds should such decisions be made?
We have good strengths in US Studies and Asian Studies, particularly Southeast Asia. Any decision on areas of focus should be based on existing strengths, and competitive advantage on the international scene. It is not worth trying to create new area studies from scratch.

Question 3 What relationship should there be between the University’s development of any strategies for Area Studies and its broader strategic planning process?
If the University decides to opt for Area Studies, then it should be made a research priority area, ie incorporated into the strategic planning, particularly under the DVC Research, but with implications for other areas such as International. This would mean that the designated area would receive priority for internal resource allocation, including post-doctoral fellowships and PhD scholarships.

Question 4 What factors will be critical to the success of any Area Studies strategy?
Long-term commitment, assured infrastructure and critical mass.

Question 5 What kinds of activities should be pursued through Area Studies centres?
Visiting fellows, post-doctoral positions, masterclasses and other support for post-graduate research, support for research grants, seminars, workshops and conferences. Publications if possible.
Question 6a What are the options for organisational, administrative and governance models for Area Studies? And

Question 6b Which operating model, or models, are preferred for this University and why?

A Southeast Asia Centre with an academic director who also teaches into undergraduate programs, administrative staff, post-doctoral fellows (who could also be regular staff members on semester research projects), as actual staff of the Centre, combined with a mechanism for making members of staff simultaneously Centre members and members of their regular units.

The Centre needs to have a coordinating role in linking up Areas Studies and disciplinary teaching and research training. This will require a mechanism for sharing EFTSU and other forms of income between Faculties, and the creation of a proper provision for co-supervision of PhD, so that workload and benefits can be shared equally between units.

If the University opts for an Asian Studies Institute that is an umbrella for a set of smaller nested Centres (in China Studies, Southeast Asian Studies etc), then a similar, but multi-level arrangement would be required.

Question 7 What level of funding will be required to create and sustain internationally competitive Area Studies centres and where will this funding come from?

This is a “how long is a piece of string” question: Ideally the levels of funding that support the US Studies Centre; at a minimum a separate Southeast Asia Centre director on professorial-level salary ($200,000 pa with on-costs), admin staff ($100,000), 3-4 post-doc/fellowship funds ($200,000), so $500,000 pa, not including running costs, seminar, travel, seed funding, post-graduate support etc budget, which would run to at least $150,000 pa. A budget to support the study of languages, especially smaller-enrolment languages, is also essential. This would consist of funding for outside teachers to run specialist programs at the University of Sydney ($100,000 pa, including administrative support) and a set of scholarship and other support mechanisms to facilitate in-country programs ($50,000 pa starting funding). A higher profile would be achieved by taking over a journal or publication series, which would require funding of editorial and publishing staff.

The funding would have to be a regular university budget item. If the Centre shares in (or at least gets acknowledgement of) EFTSU, fee income, RTS and research funding (Quantum plus RIBG), then part of this investment would be returned, but such an arrangement would mean that Faculties would feel that they are losing potential income, and so would work against the centre.

Question 8 What role should the University’s International portfolio play in the establishment and operation of Area Studies centres?

The International portfolio doesn’t have a clear role in the establishment of centres, since any decisions about research strengths should come from the Research portfolio. The International portfolio can provide support for international linkages and exchanges that maintain centres.

Question 9 What lessons can be learnt for the establishment of university-wide
mechanisms for Area Studies from experiences at Sydney and elsewhere in supporting crossdisciplinary activities organised around thematic areas of study and vice versa?

RIAP demonstrated that an Institute that is set up to be income-generating is quickly divorced from scholarship. My previous experiences have otherwise been with the Centre for Southeast Asian Social Transformation Studies (CAPSTRANS) at the University of Wollongong, and ARC Key Centre. While this was successful in terms of building up its international profile, and had a very good series of directors, the funding was never adequate to carry out all the planned projects, and CAPSTRANS could not have continued without the decision by the University of Wollongong to make it a research priority, so that it was given priority in appointments and deployment of internal research funding, including PhD scholarships. CAPSTRANS staff spent most of their time applying for external funding or pursuing other activities that were not necessarily core research. Expecting a Centre to operate on minimal funding usually sets it up for failure.

Question 10 Other issues?
DEAR STEPHEN,

Thanks for this opportunity to respond to what I believe to be a substantial and welcome, if somewhat overdue, initiative. As a comparativist by training, I need no persuading of the virtue of Area Studies programmes and Centres. To which should be added the pragmatic recognition that, in light of changes in the international context over the past decade or so, there is an admitted worldwide need for area study specialists, well-versed in languages and cultures of particular regions, and societies. In Australia, for example, Foreign Affairs, Defence, and Intelligence are only three areas that have expressed the need for such specialists, and the proposed initiative would better position the University of Sydney to respond to such demand, nationally and internationally. Business too, is another destination for graduates with Area Studies skills and knowledge.

Broadly speaking, I support the regions designated as priorities: SE Asia is an obvious candidate, to which RIAP, especially through its BICA series, has been a major contributor. Indeed, the BICA series was something of a model, revealing successful collaboration across several Faculties, in producing a range of reports of real interest to the Japan Ministry of Finance. A further lesson that this instance underlines, is the importance of continuity of funding, now sadly ended. But wider benefits also ensued from the BICA series, including substantial publications beyond the Reports themselves (inter alia, Welch and Jarvis 2009, and Welch, 2010).*

China, too, is a major priority, and it is to be hoped that further appointments in contemporary aspects of China policy and practice will ensue, both in the Chinese Dept., as well as areas such as Economics, Business, Law, Government, Sociology, Education etc. Equally, the appointment of a mainland Chinese Director of the Confucius Institute, who is also a recognised scholar of contemporary China, would both signal that the University is taking the CI seriously, and would also contribute to deepening and widening the China focus within the University.

The link to the university’s internationalisation strategy is hard to overestimate, in terms of importance. Let me select just two potential benefits.

- It would underline the importance of, as well as providing a more integrated institutional response to, Understanding our Region, (articulated in the Fourth of the ARC national research priorities).
- Building in residential periods within the region/culture/society to Area Studies programmes is desirable on two counts – it would not merely deepen considerably our students knowledge of and engagement with that region/culture/society, but would go some way to redress the fundamental inequality that continues to dog Australian internationalisation: the profound and longstanding mismatch between our capacity to attract legions of international students to our universities; and our evident failure to induce many of our domestic students to spend time abroad, engaged in the studies of other cultures and languages.

Professor David Hensher (Director and Head of Discipline, Institute of Transport and Logistics Studies)
Received 22 May 2009

I offer the attached comments

David

Professor David A. Hensher FASSA
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Review of Area Studies

Discussion questions

Response by Professor David Hensher
Institute of Transport and Logistics Studies (ITLS) - A Commonwealth Key Centre
Faculty of Economics and Business
D.Hensher@itls.usyd.edu.au

(emanated to areastudies.review@usyd.edu.au)

22 May 2009

Note: My comments are based on my experience as Director of ITLS and as an
Associate Dean in FEB 2002-2009. Some commentary is also based on perceptions.

Question 1 What is the current extent and state of Area Studies at the University of
Sydney?

Apart from RIAP, US Studies Centre and a few small units (not sure if they are
approved ‘Centres’), I have little knowledge of what we have. Clearly a first step is to
identify the existing situation and map it into relevance and impact. Importantly
however, Institutes like ITLS and the George Institute are active in many countries
and have a recognised reputation in such geographical jurisdictions without having to
be known as an Area Studies Centre.

Question 2a What are our Area Studies strengths and weaknesses, and where do we
want our future strengths to be? and
Question 2b Which cultural or geographical areas should the University focus on and
on what grounds should such decisions be made?

Perceptually, one would say an explicit focus on China; however I see great
opportunities in Latin America (Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Columbia in particular). The
quality of graduate students from these countries suggests there is a real opportunity.
ITLS for example, has already developed important networks in Chile and is part of a
consortia in the final short-list round of a Volvo Research Centre Proposal on Bus
Rapid Transit (head office will be in Chile at Universidad de Catolica Pontifica). Also
worth noting that ITLS has set up ITLS-Africa (signed an MoU between USyd and
Uni of Johannesburg in February 2008) – see

“ITLS (Africa) has partnered with the Institute for Transport and Logistics Studies at the University of Sydney, as
part of a plan to maximize the research potential of each institute and ensure a high level of collaboration and the
best of both worlds in terms of cutting edge research.”

ITLS also has strong connections in Europe especially, but also in the US. With the
latest COST project collaboration possibility (A European Collaboration), we are
clearly further establishing ties into Europe. There is the current work we are doing in
Ohio USA. ITLS, like many Centres, attracts visiting academics from the UK, elsewhere in Europe, and North America. These are but examples of what is already happening across many geographical jurisdictions and indeed the interactions across the world are extremely valuable, and maybe a slight weakness of limitations via an area definition.

**Question 3** What relationship should there be between the University’s development of any strategies for Area Studies and its broader strategic planning process?

The test must relate to research and teaching impacts in particular, but also as a way of promoting its global reputation – best measured by number of international students from parts of the world where we are lacking (e.g., Africa and South America), as well as research activity that is joint. To be able to state that we have strong links via Alumni is powerful. ITLS can claim this now in Chile and South America for example.

**Question 4** What factors will be critical to the success of any Area Studies strategy?

Three essential elements – quality of academic staff at USyd, funds to develop and maintain networks in specific locations, and the ability to train the next generation of academic and industry leaders in these partner countries. Crucially it only takes one or two key people at each location to make it work.

**Question 5** What kinds of activities should be pursued through Area Studies centres?

This should be totally open but with a view to growing niches which will facilitate early and strong reputation. For example ITLS has a global reputation in choice modelling, survey methods, transport planning (especially GIS/GPS systems), value chain management, and traveller behaviour research; and so while we contribute to a wider front, it is essential to maintain the comparative advantage is specific areas. Also developing a major international conference series, as ITLS has done since 1989 in ‘competition and ownership of land passenger transport’, gives a clear global signal of strength. This series is now heavily influential in South America in particular in policy reform (see [http://www.thredbo.itls.usyd.edu.au/](http://www.thredbo.itls.usyd.edu.au/)).

**Question 6a** What are the options for organisational, administrative and governance models for Area Studies? and

**Question 6b** Which operating model, or models, are preferred for this University and why?

I am a total fan of the ITLS model (which I designed) in the sense of its connections to a graduate program as well as a strong research base that is multi-disciplinary. Academics and Research Staff in ITLS have backgrounds in economics, engineering, computer science, physics, geography, marketing, logistics, econometrics and planning. One can achieve this in any context where the focus is on incentives to deliver. FEB has provided this environment. I wonder if it can really work if it is University-wide. Too many masters maybe? Not my ideal model.
Crucially our success is also guided by a Board of Advice, a Constitution and an Annual Report (the latter has to go to Canberra as part of Key centre obligations – see http://www.itls.usyd.edu.au/about/annual_reports.html).

*Question 7* What level of funding will be required to create and sustain internationally competitive Area Studies centres and where will this funding come from?

Depends on the size of the enterprise. If you want a stand alone Centre for say South America, then I would start small and appoint two very able persons (1 academic, 1 entrepreneurial) with impeccable networks in the country (location) of interest. Provide also a project manager (HEO 8), an office manager (HEO 7), and two RA's (HEO7). The salaries, and maybe an additional sum for overheads, should be covered for 3 years, but successful centres are ones that can stand on their own feet after 5 years and source at least 50% of fund externally. If not they should be closed.

*Question 8* What role should the University's International portfolio play in the establishment and operation of Area Studies centres?

It has been my experience that the key element to make these centres work is the one-on-one of particular people who have a common academic agenda. The International portfolio can help only to the extent of supporting the individual’s and ensuring the Centre is supported through the approval processes locally and internationally. Relying too much on the Centre will not work, since the success must be demonstrated from the bottom up by those actively engaged daily in the centre’s ambition.

*Question 9* What lessons can be learnt for the establishment of university-wide mechanisms for Area Studies from experiences at Sydney and elsewhere in supporting cross-disciplinary activities organised around thematic areas of study and vice versa?

I have focussed on an Institute within FEB but I regard it as a contribution to the University as a whole. When we have tried to build formal connections to other Faculty in other Faculties, the push-pull between the home Faculty and the Institute more often that not simply does not work. It is a nightmare to coordinate and gain credits. The solution in my view is that every academic in a Centre should be full time in the Centre (shared allegiances simply do not work for the majority of academics and researchers, and administration). Call me old-fashioned, but ITLS is I believe a very good example of what works. We celebrate 20 years next year of solid success. Professor Peter Stopher in ITLS has stated: “Having spent some 20 years of my career in Centres (e.g., Northwestern University in USA) where I had a part appointment in the Centre and part in a Discipline, I agree wholeheartedly with this view. Full-time assignment to the Centre is the best way to go.”

*Question 10* Other issues?

Success must be driven by incentives and entrepreneurship. Without this, it is not worth promoting.
**ITLS Focus:**

The Institute of Transport and Logistics Studies (ITLS) in the Faculty of Economics and Business is recognised as a National Key Centre of Excellence by the Australian Federal Government and is ranked amongst the top five institutes in the world in transportation and logistics research and education. It is home to some of Australia’s and the world’s leading academics in transportation, logistics and supply chain management. Our Institute enjoys frequent visits from internationally renowned scholars and practitioners who come to teach in our programs and work with us on collaborative research projects. In addition to our industry program (including bus and coach operator accreditation) and executive courses, we offer a fully integrated and articulated coursework and research program for graduates and non-graduates with industry experience. Our alumni serve in senior management and advisory positions, within Australia and internationally, for prestigious organisations and as senior executives in national and state governments.

We enjoy a high level of research success both in terms of winning highly competitive grant and contract funding from government and industry and in our influence on policy and practice by the dissemination of our research outcomes through: publication in prestige international journals and our extensive working paper series; presentations and workshops at global conferences; our active engagement with industry and government; and through our highly successful leadership and policy seminar series which draws speakers of renown from around the world to talk about their latest cutting edge research and attracts audiences from academia, industry and government. We have extensive links to leading transport and logistics institutes around the world and in Australia we are proud of the quality partnerships that we have forged with government and industry. Our Board of Advice actively supports the continued development and utilisation of ITLS as a centre of excellence adding value to the community. The academic and commercial membership of the Board gives a broad network for the sharing of expertise and experience.

For further information on ITLS please see our website: [www.itls.usyd.edu.au](http://www.itls.usyd.edu.au)
Professor David Goodman (Director, Institute of Social Sciences)  
Received 24 May 2009  

Area Studies Review  
Submission  
David S G Goodman, Professor of Chinese Politics  

Do we need an Area Studies structure?  

Most definitely. There are three key reasons.  

1. To provide profile outside the University to area studies work undertaken.  
2. To provide a focus for activities in and concerned with each country or region of specialisation (for which an area studies structure is established) within the University.  
3. To meet the increasing demands for research and research training in area studies nationally and internationally, especially with respect to the countries and regions of the Asia-Pacific.  

Almost all the University of Sydney’s international comparator institutions have some kind of area studies structure. The University of Sydney’s disadvantage is clear if one considers its activities in Southeast Asian Studies. The University currently has one of the largest number of Southeast Asian specialists at a university anywhere in the world. They are largely unidentified as such. It is consequently that much harder to attract good quality PhD students and develop research and outreach opportunities.  

What kinds of activities should properly belong to an Area Studies structure?  

1. To act as a focal point and coordinative centre for the development of academic and outreach relations in, with and about specific countries or regions within the University and between the University and external business, government and ethnic communities.  
2. To provide a centre for cross disciplinary research related to a specific country or region within the University.  
3. To provide programs of research training and postgraduate coursework on and about a specific country or region.  

Although sometimes the Anglophone higher education world tries to pretend otherwise, Area Studies are a specific form of cross disciplinary activity. In particular, a student in an area studies program, and indeed an academic practitioner, is required to have both a discipline and the appropriate language for the country or region of the area studies. Area Studies undertaken without adequate disciplinary training lose perspective and the capacity to have depth of analysis. Area Studies undertaken without exposure to the language of the specific country or region would almost certainly fail to engage with the culture of the area in significant regards.  

In terms of teaching and learning these strictures should direct attention to the postgraduate as the focus of attention for the development of area studies. Students without adequate language training will need to acquire that, and students without an adequate disciplinary background would need to ensure their depth of understanding. In both cases there is a need to study further the application of the discipline to the specific country or region. This model of postgraduate education
in area studies is particularly important for candidates contemplating a PhD and should probably be compulsory.

**What kind of Area Studies organisational structure should we have?**

Some universities have established Area Studies operations as departments or schools, others have attempted to embed area studies in discipline-based departments with no immediate coordinative structure save the goodwill of the academics involved. Both of these models are undesirable. The former leads to the isolation of the area studies from involvement in disciplinary-based knowledge and inevitably leads to intellectual sterility. The latter usually results in touches of area studies being taught or researched in disciplines, but no consolidated engagement with the country or region in question.

The obvious solution is to try and establish Area Studies Centres with a separate organisational existence but that interact regularly with disciplines. The key to this would be a system of joint academic appointments across the University. The members of each Area Studies Centre would be academics from across the University appointed to both a regular academic unit (school, department or discipline are terms variously applied at the University of Sydney) and a specific Area Studies Centre. The system would work best were additional funding provided for part or all of an area studies position by the University or from an external source, but conceivably it could also work with positions generated by student load and teaching. The establishment of an academic appointment (or its replacement) in an area studies-associated position would be a matter of negotiation between the head of the academic unit and the director of the area studies centre in question. Appointments would similarly be handled jointly. In the period of establishment of new Area Studies Centres there will be a need to identify which current positions are to be identified as linked to specific Area Studies Centres.

Each Area Studies Centre would have a director, responsible for directing academic activities, organising research training and supervision arrangements, coordinating the development of postgraduate programs of teaching and learning, and representing the specific area study to the University and the world. The range of activities within these parameters, and even beyond research and research training would depend on the budget available to the Area Studies Centre. Area Studies Centres would be encouraged to raise external funds.

Each Area Studies Centre would require office space on campus and a meeting area. A most important technology for encouraging cross disciplinary interaction is a common room or meeting place.

**How should Area Studies structures be administratively supported?**

This question raises concerns about governance as well as of administrative capacity. The arguments presented in the previous sections suggests that any Area Studies Centres to be established should be University-level operations to maximise both relations with external communities and interactions within the University. Each Area Studies Centre should then have a monitoring Management Committee with representatives from each sponsoring Faculty, as well as its Director, and a Chair appointed by the DVC Research (assuming each Area Studies Centre as a cross disciplinary institute will report to that portfolio.)

The administrative capacity of each Area Studies Centre is likely to be extremely limited, and if each is required to establish its own structures, likely to be relatively resource intensive with few
opportunities for economies of scale. There are two ways in which these inefficiencies may be offset. All Area Studies Centres can not only share the same administrative structures but administrative services can be provided through the administration of a Faculty. The Faculty of Arts would seem to be the obvious administrative home for this exercise given that the largest number of area studies specialists is likely to be based in that Faculty.

**How should Area Studies structures be funded?**

The system of Area Studies Centres proposed here presupposes additional University funds beyond the normal teaching load funds being provided to support their development. Each will require financial support to support the appointment of a director, possible administrative support and any other activities the University thought to support. At a low level of activity the minimum required would be to provide teaching relief to permit an academic to be seconded to an Area Studies Centre as a part-time director. Beyond the minimum there is the possibility of University-supported research and research training appointments to Centres.

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Dr Luke Nottage (Associate Professor, Faculty of Law and Co-Director, Australian Network for Japanese Law (ANJeL))

Received 24 May 2009

Please confirm receipt of the attached.

Regards

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Dr Luke Nottage

Associate Professor & Co-Director, Australian Network for Japanese Law (ANJeL) Sydney Law School

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New book on corporate governance:
http://www.e-elgar-asia.com/bookentry_main.lasso?id=13151
Selected papers: http://ssrn.com/author=488525
USydney's Review of Area Studies: Discussion Paper

I am on Carer’s and Annual Leave until at least 3 June but have found some moments to comment on this important Paper, and I would like to be consulted again in future.

Re:
Q1. I serve on the Management Committee of the Centre for Asian and Pacific Law (CAPLUS) as well as the Sydney Centre for International Law (SCIL), both within the Faculty of Law. I was on an ad hoc committee several years ago, led by Professor Mark Findlay, which rehashed several of the broad issues raised in this Paper and concluded that there remained a clear and growing need for “regional” expertise and engagement with the legal systems of the Asia-Pacific – initiated by CAPLUS already 15 years ago. This was despite the establishment of Centres with broader mandates like SCIL (or “thematic” ones like environmental law and climate change), and RIAP (at University level). Subsequent experience confirms that there is much synergy in combining regional and broader or thematic focal points for socio-legal research, teaching and community engagement. Recently, for example, CAPLUS and SCIL have combined to secure Faculty and external support for major international conferences on Human Rights in Asia (November 2009) and International Investment Law (February 2010).

The Human Rights conference is also supported by the Australian Network for Japanese Law (ANJeL, www.law.usyd.edu.au/anjel), for which I have been Co-director since its formal establishment in 2003. ANJeL adds a quite unique approach to generating further synergies and critical mass in promoting Japanese Law related research (eg a recently concluded ARC DP), learning (eg the Kyoto and Tokyo Seminars in Japanese Law) and other initiatives (eg the ANJeL Judge-in-Residence program, collaborating with the Supreme Court of Japan and UMelbourne’s Asian Law Centre). It was created by agreement among the Law Deans of USydney, UNSW and ANU, based on the governance structure for Centres at USydney, but it is a broader network now including over 360 individual academics, practitioners, policymakers and others worldwide. ANJeL’s success inspired the creation of the Australian Research Network for the Japanese Economy. Based on the ANU, it too is an open network that (like ANJeL) has received significant outside funding for example from the Australia-Japan Foundation.

Q2a and Q2b. Based on the positive experience of ANJeL, and the Centres it works closely with, I therefore encourage USydney to develop a “building block” or modular approach to further developing area studies in this University. That is, I would suggest:
(a) major support for Centres covering broader regions, such as East Asia rather than South East Asia, but
(b) incorporating Programmes within such Centres that have a somewhat narrower regional and/or thematic focus (as we have for SCIL); and
(c) support also for more specialized groupings, not necessarily Centres (but with some shared modus operandi), reaching out beyond USydney (to other universities, thinktanks etc) to maximize synergies and achieve critical mass.

Q3. This development should also draw on the strategic plans developed by Faculties, such as Law, with extensive experience in balancing area and thematic studies.

Q4. Especially for Programmes within such broader Centres and even more specialized groupings, this requires thinking about the quality of national linkages, not just international ones. For the last five years I have been involved in two ARC Networks (the Asia-Pacific Futures Research Network, and Govnet) that
have received considerable funding to develop capacity shared among Australian universities. ANJeL has applied successfully for funding for various projects precisely because it shares a similar philosophy. I realize that in other respects Australian universities are also being led into viewing each other more and more as “competitors”, but my experience shows that there is ample scope for win-win collaboration. It has enabled ANJeL, in turn, to develop high-quality “international linkages” that put all our institutions on the global map, such as an affiliate relationship with the 600-strong German-Japan Association of Jurists (and their leading *Journal of Japanese Law*).

Q5. Area Studies Centres focusing on broader regions probably have the greatest advantages when it comes to promoting research, and related consultancy/policy/media or development activities (eg with the Asian Development Bank). More specific Programmes within them will be needed to maximize opportunities for outreach to (local) communities, and some outside bodies. But many outside funding bodies remain country-specific, which reinforces the need for more focused and sometimes cross-institutional networks (such as ANJeL).

Larger Area Studies Centres would also be useful in coordinating some undergraduate, as well as postgraduate, learning opportunities. Most law students do a conjoint degree, or else an LLB after another discipline, and stronger backup for Asian Studies could help in developing our LLB (as well as LLM) offerings both in Sydney and offshore (in Shanghai, as well as Kyoto/Tokyo). The ANU has been particularly successfully in this respect.

Q6a and Q6b. Whatever model is proposed for the Centres, thought should be given not only to establishing and effectively running specialist Programs within them, but also into building into the model a capacity for cross-institutional structures and linkages in even narrower fields.

Q7 and Q8. The latter structures, like ANJeL, not only generate critical mass - they can dominate the field when it comes to applying for outside funding and support. Direct costs to USydney have been minimal since its establishment – far less than for larger Centres, and with a high proportion of external funding (eg also from the Japan Foundation). On the other hand, it is essential that USydney properly funds larger Centres, and the “International Portfolio”, so they can work with the smaller networks and present broader credibility to outside partners.

Q9. As mentioned at the outset, experiences within the Law Faculty see no contradiction between increased support for both regional studies and thematic issues. On the contrary, having more of each creates additional synergies. Area Studies Centres need to apply skills and knowledge in comparing developments over geographical or cultural areas by focusing on specific problems or fields. But Centres focused on broad themes need to apply not only interdisciplinary perspectives. Now and for the foreseeable future, they must work out how things can and could work in specific, often regional contexts.
Tim and David

I just realised that I missed the deadline for submissions, but attached are some hastily put together arguments for why we should keep China front and centre in our area studies development, from a Government Relations perspective.

Cheers

David

China

China is one of the key international actors with which Australia and Australians will increasingly engage in the future, with its re-emergence as a great economic power. Arguably, China will become the world’s largest economy within the next decade or decade and a half. It is already Australia’s largest trading partner. It is also a significant source of Australia’s migrants and a growing people-to-people relationship+. As a major Asian power, China is also a key influence on our other regional partners.

The Australian Government is committed to increasing the “Asia literacy” of Australians and China should be a critical element of any program to improve Asia literacy at the University of Sydney.

Sydney leads Australia as the destination of the largest number of Chinese students, Chinese migrants and a centre of Australia-China economic and cultural relations. The University of Sydney can and should capitalise on these factors.

At the undergraduate level, it might be expected that demand for courses of study related to China would grow over time across the social sciences, in particular.

The research agenda includes what could be termed some of the critical public policy issues of this generation and could be phrased as below.

What are the implications for Australia of the re-emergence of China as a great power for:
- the economy
- international business practices and relationships
- trade and investment policy
- energy policy
- health and medical research
- urban design, planning and construction
- Australian defence and strategic policy and posture
- Australian foreign policy
- Australian politics
- international education
- Australian education
• the cultural and people-to-people links

An interdisciplinary approach to developing understanding of these and other research questions is likely to make the greatest community contribution and generate the most original discovery and understanding.

An area studies focus on China would complement the work of the Confucius Institute, but a different model for an interdisciplinary centre might better leverage resources.

There are numerous potential sources of funding for an interdisciplinary Australia-China Centre, including Chinese and Australian business and the Australian and NSW Governments. These sources are likely to wish to fund both research and outreach activities. Government will have a particular interest in building the capacity of the education profession to develop language and cultural literacy in the broader population.

Opportunities to engage key target funders include the upcoming celebrations of the 30th anniversary of the NSW-Guangdong Sister State relationship, including visits by the Governor to NSW and by the Premier to Guangdong. The Australian and NSW presence at Shanghai World Expo will be a further major opportunity to build the University’s reputation and relationships.

It might even benefit such a project, in profile and fund-raising capacity, to provide naming rights to the political leader who established the modern Australia-China relationship, Gough Whitlam.
Mr Richard Ouvrier (Postgraduate Student)
Received 25 May 2009

Dear Tim,
I will give it some thought. In a nutshell, I aver that all space should be used wisely and economically. All areas currently allocated to the Office of General Counsel and the Faculty of Medicine should be razed, or annihilated better, and used for more important priorities, moreover, such as multidisciplinarity and geomorphological imaginings and schumpeterian innovations.
Yours sincerely
Richard Ouvrier
rouv4990@uni.sydney.edu.au

Received 14 June 2009

Dear Mr Payne,
now that I have established that your email wasn't some vexacious BS, I have given the subject some, little admittedly, thought as I promised to. I don't really have much to offer you in a sensible vein......or is that vane or vain?; my orthography is still poor.

Garton seems sound enough in his musings (recent Uni News Q @ A). I agree with him, largely, with possible reservations contingent. A good, tho' by no means exclusive approach to the "global" is regional!
My priorities: 1. East Asia, esp the inscrutable Middle Kingdom, a threat and opportunity, a good and venerable friend and a potential enemy and major source of corruption, esp wrt CCP, a total toad and fraudster! 2. USA 3. definitely not Africa despite rapid recent growth. Europe buggered it and should fix it, too remote culturally and geographically. There's plenty of poverty to be alleviated in East Asia anyway. SU shouldn't be too parochial about anything tho'. 4. Oceania is pretty negligible. I was fortunate enough to meet Fuji police chief's son at SU recently. We discussed Fijian constit probs. I think he'd just discovered Fanon and Said. I warned him about China's corrupting influence and to consider that if he thinks Australia a patronising hegemon, he ought to be a bit more sceptical about China with its postcolonial rhetoric and CCP of Drs, lawyers, business men and other assorted hipocrites.

Received 14 June

Dear Mr Payne,
I apologise for the disutility of my previous comments. My priorities in ordinal response to Garton (recent Uni News interview):
1. China
2. East Asia
3. USA
3. not Africa, not our mess
4. not Oceania, too much ocean and trivial  That's all. I don't really care. Why ask me? It all sounds pretty absurd to me, actually. Berkeley attempts sounded like multi-kulti mumbo-jumbo, yet again. Hopefully this is a more helpful comment. Who wants to be a global citizen anyway, if you don't get a global vote? Vive parochialism and political subsidiarity!
Prof. Helen Dunstan would be more worth plumming; a wise head!

Received 14 June 2009

Dear Mr Payne,

1. China and the "Confucian" Area
2. USA and El Norte.

Ceteris paribus, inter-disciplinarity is neither good nor bad per se. SU should make its endeavours in this direction as good as possible. Quality over quantity, I say. I just saw a TV programme describing a collaboration between an archaeologist and an archea-astronomer. Seemed good. The archaeologist curator of Lascaux Caves, M. Geneste "jv"ed with an astronomeratrix to investigate if Lascaux paintings weren't a prehistoric steller map. No firm conclusions yet. Caves closed for conservation purposes leaving results pendent. At first I dismissed hypothesis as French merde. On second thought, it was plausible and meritorious of investigation and necessary funds. Because he wore an obstreperous Hawaiian shirt, I rashly presumed he was just another communiss fraudulently trying to elevate savage Neanderthals above the truth, ascribing culture and knowledge to them which they didn't actually possess, even tho' I sometimes wear such loud shirts. Communism or whatever his private choice settings notwithstanding, he was quite good quality, even in French. Lesson: we should not be too small minded wrt area studies at SU.

yours sincerely
R Ouvrier
Mr William Sutton (Postgraduate Student)  
Received 26 May 2009

Thank you for including me in this survey. I do not have any particular interest in Area Studies and do not feel that my opinion would add any value.

My "off the top of the head" reaction is that the University would be better advised spending its money elsewhere, while ensuring that all faculties remain outward aware.

Best Regards

(William) Guy Sutton  
309291550  
wsut8535@uni.sydney.edu.au
Hi,

My name is Robbie Reid.

I am a postgraduate student.

My field of study is Strategic Public Relations.

I am providing my comments on an open basis.

I do not feel that there is a need for an area studies program because it seems to general.

Regards

rrei1423@uni.sydney.edu.au
Mr Peter Smith (Postgraduate Student, Centre for Developmental Disability Studies)  
Received 26 May 2009

I am currently studying the specialist masters in developmental disabilities, which is delivered online. From my perspective, one of the strengths of this program is its relationship with the CDDS. [Centre for Developmental Disability Studies] Certainly when I talk with fellow students from other courses at other institutions, I find that they would all like to be linked to a specialist school or area of interest.

For me, I wholly agree with the concept, having obtained my undergrad degree from a specialist school.

Kind Regards,

Peter Smith
Afternoon Tim,

I like these 10 questions; it covered various aspects of Area Studies strategy.

I feel that university of Sydney try very hard to improve the quality of education at all times.

I think it a great honour for me to be encouraged to provide feedback for this paper.

1. I am a coursework student,
2. My major is MCom/Acct.
3. I don't mind my comments on an open or confidential basis. I am happy with both of them.

Be Best regards

N Name: Lijuan Tang (Sophie)
S SID: 307274705
Thanks for asking. Frankly I think it is better to do a few things really well than even more things in a half baked way. My perception is that the university has a serious style v substance problem to resolve before it widens the array of things it does without much depth.

cheers

Chris
Dear Colleagues,

A few thoughts, at a slight angle from what might be the current direction of your discussion.

The history of Area Studies should be borne in mind. The Discussion Paper notes that the concept developed in the US in the post-war era, but overlooks that it was specifically a Cold War strategy for mobilizing academic knowledge around the military and diplomatic needs of the new superpower. Big funds flowed for that reason, and a neocolonialist knowledge structure developed - which has been subject to criticism ever since the 1960s. It seems to be happening again as the American state tries to mobilize academic expertise about the Muslim world.

Australia hasn't been and won't be a superpower (even in the South Pacific), and there won't be big funds flowing from Canberra for this purpose; perhaps we should be grateful. There was of course funding for development of Asian Studies (notably the Research School at ANU) back when the Australian government realized the British Empire was gone. Money flowed more recently from a rich expatriate for a sort of Area Studies, but we don't think of the United States as an Area usually; and the US is not going to take much intellectual leadership from Australia.

What I am wondering is whether Area Studies as such is a dead paradigm now. If so, the University might be well advised not to put organizational resources into setting up general frameworks and mechanisms for Area Studies, as that will invite more development of an unsustainable kind. Maybe letting a hundred flowers bloom without an attempt to discipline them is the way to go, and we can be ahead of this postmodern curve.

What we certainly want to be encouraging is more intellectual connection with regions of the world beyond our traditional points of reference in the US and UK. (A research project for the Review: what are the sabbatical destinations of U Syd staff? - my impression is that they are still at least 90% US/UK.)

This would suggest putting fresh resources and fresh thinking into language programmes. Given the decline of second language teaching in Australia generally, this won't be easy; and because English is the language of the Internet, it's easy to shrug and be complacent. I would like to see an in-service language programme specifically for our academic staff. There may be useful models in Canada, where Anglophone universities did such things for staff to learn French (I understand), maybe in New Zealand too, and it would be interesting to look to other countries whose university systems were dominated by the languages of the colonizers but now need to become relevant to large indigenous populations (Bolivia, Peru, South Africa...). Our problem is not exactly that, but we could probably learn from their efforts.

We should also try to create nodes of connection with researchers and public intellectuals in Africa, the Arab world, south and east Asia, Oceanea and Latin America. The point here would not be 'area studies' in the sense of studies OF those areas, but connection with scholars IN those areas who are working in parallel to scholars in Australia, and who usually don't connect with us nor we with them, because we are all looking fondly towards the global metropole. This would happen WITHIN existing disciplines, or groups of disciplines. I give a brief rationale for this kind of thing in Ch 10 of "Southern Theory", for the social sciences. An example is the Jan 2009 meeting of three social science research institutes, from sub-saharan Africa, south-east Asia, and Latin America. It happened in Kuala Lumpur; would have been marvellous to host it at U Syd. (There's a report on it at www.southernperspectives.net/conference.) I'm not sure what resources would be needed for such an initiative, or even how you would organize it, but it shouldn't require major new structures, since we already have disciplinary departments, centres and faculties.

Good luck!
Raewyn Connell
University Professor
Submission on Area Studies

I write in my personal capacity as Professor of European Studies, but also with some reference to the work of the Department of History in my capacity as Chair.

In that connection, my first comment relates to the introduction to the discussion paper and to the omission of history among the fields enumerated in the first paragraph under the second sub-heading. History has traditionally been one of the foundations of area studies, and colleagues will know that the Department of History currently has some twelve members teaching and carrying out research on Europe, at least half a dozen working largely on American history, two specialists of Chinese history, and two research fellows particularly interested in Latin American history, as well as those working in Australian history. This undoubtedly comprises one of the largest collections of area studies academics at the University.

Question 1:

Area studies, as the discussion paper points out, are of mixed strength at the University. Efforts to promote area studies have met with mixed success. I myself was involved with setting up the Centre for European Studies in the 1980s; the Centre received seed-funding from the University and from the Delegation of the European Communities in Australia. It had a public programme, introduced and coordinated undergraduate units and a postgraduate Master’s degree, and hosted a number of other activities; the teaching programme continues, though the other activities do not in a formal sense continue. This is partly because of the lack of commitment to continuing funding at a sustainable level, either by the University or by other donors – perhaps a salutary warning for other area studies centres.

Question 2:

The University is particularly strong in certain areas of Asian Studies, European Studies and American Studies, though there are clearly lacunae in these areas – to my knowledge, for instance, there are very few specialists of eastern Europe and Russia among those who work in European Studies, and there is limited expertise in the University on certain countries (e.g., Vietnam) in the Asian region.

In my own opinion, it is particularly lamentable that the University has so little interest and provides so little support for studies of South Asia given the cultural, commercial and geopolitical importance of that region. Indian Studies was once a thriving field (with three specialists in the Department of History, for instance), but over the past years, there has seemingly been little commitment to the development of expertise in such an important area.

There is limited expertise, I believe, on Latin America and Africa, though somewhat more on the Middle East.

In terms of future development, among geographical areas, the European and Asian area would seem to be priorities, though I would also argue, as a crucial aspect of any area studies programme, for the development of studies of South Asia. American Studies seems to be
well established despite a somewhat difficult relationship between the United States Studies Centre and various departments with specialists of American studies.

There is one glaring omission in the discussion paper: studies of the Pacific island region. The University of Sydney has long had and continues to have considerable expertise in this region (in History, Geosciences, Anthropology and Law, for instance, as well as in the excellent resources of the Macleay Museum and Fisher Library), and yet there is not a single mention of this region in the coverage of Question 2 in the discussion paper. Members of the panel may or may not be aware of the publication earlier this year by the Australian Association for the Advancement of Pacific Studies of a 200-page report on ‘Australia and its Pacific Islands Neighbours: A National Strategy for the Study of the Pacific in Australia’. That report notes, in passing, the lack of institutionalisation of Pacific studies at Sydney, and one of its main recommendations is that each major university in Australia set up some sort of centre or cluster of Pacific studies (and that Government funding be made available for this effort). The significance of the Pacific and the troubles in the region, and the impact on Australia, would suggest that the University of Sydney might give some further acknowledgement and attention to that area of the world.

In relation to Question 2, I might note a certain anomaly in the discussion paper (and perhaps in the project under consideration) between ‘area’ studies of specific countries (China, Japan and Korea, for example, are listed on p. 7) and area studies of multi-national regions (Europe and Latin America). Though this is understandable, it is intellectually important that regions be carefully delineated and that it not be assumed that proximity necessarily provides a rationale for grouping countries together. Any Europeanist, of course, would underline the vast differences in a continent stretching from the arctic to the sub-tropics, and I am sure that Asianists would also voice some concerns about the assumption that an ‘Asian Studies’ (or even ‘Southeast Asian Studies’) area can easily cover all of the disparate histories and cultures of such a huge portion of the world.

In some instances, might there not be discussion about setting up ‘area studies’ areas that do not correspond to geographically proximate areas? A number of other universities, for instance, have centres of Arabic or Islamic studies, and I know of at least one university that has a centre of island studies; centres of Commonwealth studies also exist. ‘Atlantic’ history is now a well-developed field, and there is growing interest in links between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific. Centres of colonial and post-colonial studies, spanning various geographical regions, now exist at a number of universities (e.g., Leeds, Southampton, Tasmania). Perhaps some more innovative divisions of the world than the traditional geographical ones (Europe, Asia, America) could make Sydney’s proposed area studies groupings into a particularly pioneering and unique brand. Should ‘area studies’ necessarily be neatly circumscribed areas of the map?

**Question 3:**

No particular comment. It might be useful to discuss the possibilities of joint master’s or PhD programmes with other universities, on a limited and clearly defined basis. For instance, a postgraduate master’s programme in European studies that provided the possibilities for a student to spend a semester at Sydney and one at a European university (with the financial support necessary) would no doubt be attractive; this might be arranged with one of the European partners (Leeds, Bristol, Utrecht, Bergen) in the World Universities Network. Facilitation of easier *co-tutelle* arrangements for thesis supervision would also have benefits.
Participating students here would have the chance to experience different learning environments while being firmly anchored in the Australian educational system, while overseas students might find such a link with Sydney interesting while still fulfilling the expectations of their national university and professional qualification bodies.

**Question 4:**

I think that it is crucial that the University provide a commitment for at least five years of funding, at the very minimum, for any centre or area group to ensure its ability to establish its presence, pursue a coherent programme of work, attract outside funding and recruit students. A ten-year funding with a ‘sunset clause’, however, would seem to be preferable.

Though encouraging groups to seek outside funding, the University should recognize that in some cases possibilities will be limited. My own experience in European Studies was that the various national governments – an obvious source of funding - were reluctant to contribute because, they argued, their priorities lay with their national institutes (Alliance Française, Goethe Institute, etc.). The centres or groups must not be considered as money-making institutes, but as purveyors of quality teaching and research.

Linkages with other groups will also be significant in the success of the Sydney centres. The World Universities Network (WUN) provides a good framework for international cooperation, especially as it expands its membership and as Sydney’s Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International) becomes chief executive of the network.

Crucial, too, will be the University’s willingness to develop further local expertise through the appointment of new or replacement academics in key areas. To be somewhat parochial about my own area of European history: my department now has no specialist in eastern European and Russian history, though European history is now one of our three major areas of research and teaching. If we are to have truly first-class area studies groupings, then we need to enhance our strengths.

If Sydney is to be made into a leading institution for area studies, there also needs to be sufficient support to attract students (through scholarships and bursaries, as well as adequate work space and other necessities) and to promote academic interchange (for example, with exchange of teaching and research staff).

**Question 5:**

The discussion paper outlines well the range of activities that could be provided, although the actual undertakings would depend, of course, on individual members of staff and on the support provided.

**Question 6:**

It is important that the integrity and coherence of departmental and disciplinary fields be maintained; area studies specialists are (or should be) firmly rooted in a particular discipline, its methodology and its network of professional organizations, publications and collegiate links. Their primary administrative attachment should be to established departments. Facile
'interdisciplinarity' serves little real purpose, intellectually or administratively, and 'area studies' should not be primarily an administrative convenience.

My own preference would be for the establishment of area studies groups/centres/clusters in which members are themselves dedicated staff of particular departments, perhaps – as the discussion paper moots – with the secondment of staff to the centres. (A slight caveat from my perspective as chair: the increasing secondment of staff to administrative positions, and the laudable success of colleagues in gaining teaching relief creates certain major problems in the provision of teaching units, especially by some of our most outstanding colleagues, and the dangers of casualization.) The question, of course, is whether such centres are simply collocations of all staff working on a particular area – departments and staff with some link to Europe, for example – or whether they have a particular configuration and brief. This is not a simple issue; as a historian of late modern France and colonialism, I might have more obvious linked interests with specialists of modern Asia than with specialists of medieval French literature. One of the never resolved difficulties of the Centre for European Studies was whether ‘European Studies’ covered the period from Antiquity to the present… There is also the risk of ‘ghettoization’ of all staff into one or another impermeable group.

Although I do not have a particular model to propose, I would not favour, among those outlined in the discussion paper, either a distinct Institute for Area Studies or centres necessarily linked to a particular single department.

**Question 7:**

As mentioned previously, five years of initial funding would seem to be necessary, though the amount would depend on precise activities (and especially whether scholarships for students are offered). It would seem that this funding should come from the University’s central budget rather than charged to particular departments or faculties.

**Question 8:**

The international portfolio could serve as an umbrella unit for the various groups, which could report to the PVC. This would promote international links with partner universities, and could facilitate approaches to governmental entities and funding bodies. It might also promote inclusiveness across faculty boundaries.

**Question 9:**

One example from my own experience: The Nation-Empire-Globe Research Cluster, hosted by the Department of History, was established with initial funding from the RIHSS. This allowed the cluster to hold a number of conferences and host international visitors (from Germany, the UK and the US). The Cluster and Department of History linked with a centre for colonial and post-colonial studies at the University of Leeds; also with Leeds, we have had several video seminars for postgraduate students and several visits of both students and staff. This year, in July, we will hold our third postgraduate masterclass – students from Leeds have participated, as have students from Birmingham, Peking and Harvard universities, as well as a number of universities in Australia. In December, we are holding an international conference, with support from the Institute for Social Sciences, that will further develop links with WUN universities and other universities. In the next few weeks, a group of our postgraduate students, working with students from Leeds and Bristol, will launch an
on-line journal, *Ex Plus Ultra*. The Acting CEO of the WUN was so impressed with the students’ plan for the journal when she visited Sydney earlier this year that she flew two students to London to present the project at the WUN AGM in May (a series of meetings in which I also participated).

This example suggests that a ‘grass-roots’ approach involving staff with connected interests, supported by a certain level of sustained funding, and *most definitely* designed to offer real benefits for postgraduate students through masterclasses, seminars and conferences, as well as international links, provides some useful experience for similar projects.

Robert Aldrich  
Professor of European History  
Chair, Department of History  
Co-Director, Nation-Empire-Globe Research Cluster  

29 May 2009
Ms Caroline Franks (Postgraduate Student)
Received 31 May 2009

From: cfra5038@uni.sydney.edu.au [mailto:cfra5038@uni.sydney.edu.au]
Sent: Sunday, 31 May 2009 12:40 PM
To: VCC Area Studies Review
Subject: REVIEW

It seems like an important review but you are more likely to get responses from post grad students after the exam period don't you think? If you could extend the timeframe for feedback that would be better. sincerely Caroline Franks
Dr Michael Paton (Teaching Quality Fellow, Office of Learning and Teaching in Economics and Business)
Received 31 May 2009

Comments on Area Studies Review Paper
Dr Michael John Paton
Faculty of Economics & Business

I welcome the chance to express my opinion on the development of Area Studies in the University. My experience of coming to the University of Sydney to study Chinese a decade after graduating as a geologist has been so fruitful both intellectually and experientially that I would recommend it to anyone. Disciplinary study is certainly necessary but is sorely lacking without an understanding of what I argue is its geographical basis, and this can be best achieved through a fruitful co-existence with Area Studies. Various comments addressing the review questions follow.

From my history and philosophy of science perspective, knowledge, language and culture are geographically filtered, and until this is more fully realised, Area Studies should have an equal footing with disciplines in university teaching and research structures. The disciplines of science and the knowledge systems that northern hemisphere people brought to Australia were powerful but northern-hemisphere-centric, and the past 200 years of Australian history holds a litany of environmental mistakes due to this blinkered view, including but not limited to the devastation wrought by the early introduction of exotic species, the felling of the red cedar forests in the mistaken belief that they would grow back as they do in Europe, the misguided development of irrigation systems causing widespread salinisation and even the more recent ‘scientific’ introduction of cane toads. Even the ubiquitous terms East and West are absurdly northern-hemisphere-centric. In addition, our calendrical systems, whether solar or lunar, are also centred on the northern hemisphere. When we in Australia celebrate the New Year, it is a celebration of the waning of life towards winter rather than the beginning of the rebirth of spring as surely intended by the developers of the calendars in the north. Area Studies help to see through such ritualisations of knowledge, which still occur within disciplinary studies.

Thus, Area Studies should focus on our region in the first instance, i.e. South East & East Asia, and to a lesser extent South Asia, because these areas have been comparatively neglected in the past and Australia’s future would seem to be becoming more and more closely intertwined with them. Moreover, because Australia is a leading ‘southern’ culture, other southern cultures and geographic regions such as those of the Pacific Islands, New Zealand, South America and Southern Africa should be the University’s focus.

Whilst research into Northern America and Europe would seem to be easier due to linguistic and cultural history as well as useful because of the power of the knowledge systems stemming from these continents, much disciplinary research has arisen from and tends to be still focused on the ‘developed’ countries within these areas, and so Area Studies would seem to be somewhat superfluous.


Critical to the success of any Area Studies strategy is the negation of political interference by either the Australian Government and its agencies, or those of any other government. The major criticism of previous attempts at Area Studies has been their subversion by political machinations mainly through the funding process.  

A major aspect of Area Studies that should not be overlooked is the study of the language/s of a particular area. Area Studies programs need to have a language learning component because language enables greater insights into culture, history, science and geography. However, it should be noted that in-depth language study for beginners at the university level can be very onerous. An example from my experience at the University of Sydney is that of the cohort of 39 students who commenced the pre-semesterised one year Chinese 1B (Chinese for non-background speakers) unit of study in 1983, only 11 sat the final examination reportedly due to the much greater workload of Chinese 1B as compared to other 1st year units of study.

Another example from my own experience of the usefulness of Area Studies has been my ability to add to the knowledge in a variety of disciplines. I have had favorable comments on my papers from luminaries such as Nathan Sivin in history and philosophy of science, Peter Singer in philosophy, Mayfair Yang in anthropology and Michael Halliday in linguistics, specifically because of my Area Studies experience added both breadth and nuance to the disciplinary understanding. For similar reasons I have co-authored papers with scholars in the fields of accounting and marketing, and am a reviewer for the Journal of Business Ethics even though I am not a business scholar per se.

In relation to how Area Studies might be structured, the Asia Research Centre (ARC) in the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) is instructive. The LSE in general is structured on a disciplinary basis, but the ARC is very much interdisciplinary, attracting social scientists from various disciplines from across the spectrum of Asian countries. Moreover, because the leading academic in the ARC is Nicholas Stern, research into the various facets of sustainability has become a focus of the Centre.

As a final comment, my experience teaching the history and philosophy of science and social science coursework component of the Faculty of Economics and Business doctoral program has given me insight into how the quality of higher degree by research training at Sydney might be enhanced through the pursuit of concerted cross-disciplinary approaches. The students in this course came from disciplines as disparate as econometrics and finance at one end of the spectrum and political science and political economy at the other. Initially there was some resistance to acceptance of knowledge outside the students’ disciplinary frameworks and paradigms, but specifically because a great deal of small group discussion was used in the teaching and learning process, and because the course was focused on how and why there are such disciplinary boundaries, the students came to accept and better understand the part their research played in the matrix of the continuum that is knowledge. This became obvious to me as the teacher because a reflective learning journal was used as the major assessment task. I suggest that such coursework programs, properly managed and taught, would enable the University to produce even better scholars than it does at present.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinion.

Yours truly,

Michael Paton

On sabbatical at the Indira Gandhi Institute for Development Research, Mumbai and the London School of Economics

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http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/cumings2.htm (sighted 16/5/2009)
Dear Professor Stephen Garton

I read your recent UniNews article on ‘Area Studies’ with intrigue and being a third time student at USyd, I would just like to share a couple of personal thoughts with you as research is underway. (I am an Arts/ Law alumna).

I have an interest in regional/international affairs and am currently pursuing another degree here in International Studies, I am quite keen on the idea of ‘Area Studies’ – especially if some of this can potentially be incorporated into the post-graduate programs for International Studies students as well. Furthermore, I am finding the current program rather limited in regions to choose from – mainly Asia and America, so it would be great if we can include more regions to make the program more international. (I already completed a BA majoring in Asian Studies, focusing on China and Japan, and was an exchange student in Japan.)

I recognise that ‘Area Studies’ is a complex project to undertake and would require identifying the relevant expertise to make it work, therefore, I am more than happy to cover Searches for any staff expansion plans to fill the gaps for ‘Area Studies’ – if/when we proceed. I took up the newly-created role of Researcher/ Candidate Manager for Senior Academic Appointments here in January 2009 and I am enjoying the opportunity to apply some of my previous experience with global firms in strategy consulting, succession planning and executive search, in hiring level E+ academics at USyd. (Most recently I have been covering Director/ Chair Searches for the Confucius Institute, Medicine and now Economics & Business. I am currently also helping the very encouraging Professor Don Nutbeam on Dean Searches.)

I look forward to hearing more about the progress and findings of your Review in due course. (Perhaps USyd could be an intersection of several approaches...)

Best regards

Anita

Anita Chan  BA MLLR
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To the Review committee:

Please excuse a brief response as I am currently on fieldwork in Cambodia

1) An Area Studies is essential for the University
2) Each Area Studies program must be managed by an independent agency and not be embedded in an existing or future Faculty.
3) Except in very specific circumstances and perhaps for temporary secondments all academic staff should remain in their current Dept or Faculty or institution.
4) The Area Studies programs should therefore be virtual and be designed to facilitate student from anywhere in the University having access to being taught and assessed by staff from anywhere in the University in a frictionless (from their point of view) administrative milieu.
5) Prerequisites for entry to UOS to be kept to an absolute minimum.
6) A regional language requirement to be explicitly EXCLUDED from the program and explicitly NOT to be a requirement for entry to graduate research. (Note: not one graduate or researcher in the Angkor Research Program, including the Directors, speaks the local language and all PhDs so far completed have not involved a local language competency).
7) Language acquisition to be rigorously specified for specific senior level UOS only and be specified on an case by case basis for research degrees.
8) An in-field teaching program is essential
9) The University has to systematically develop a program for teaching abroad that can enable foreign students, who will never necessarily visit the University, to obtain a USyd qualification in some form. Perhaps this can be done in conjunction with appropriate regional universities.
10) The University should not institutionalise a habitual policy that foreign students should do their degrees through residence at the University.

A University wide Asian Studies program will provide a synergy between the numerous and comprehensively fragmented pools of regional expertise in the University.

Roland Fletcher.
7.7.2009
Response to the **Review of Area Studies: Discussion Paper**

**Representing Six Departments of Asian Studies, School of Languages & Cultures**

The academic staff members of various Asian language and cultural studies Departments in the School of Languages & Cultures have met to formulate a response to the Review of Area Studies: Discussion Paper distributed by the Office of the Vice Chancellor on 30 April 2009. We are the Asian Studies Program, Department of Chinese Studies, Department of Indian Sub-Continental Studies, Department of Indonesian Studies, Department of Japanese Studies, and Department of Korean Studies.

We would like to applaud this initiative to institute a university-wide strategy for Area Studies. We believe that Area Studies has been neglected at this university, so we are firmly and enthusiastically in support of this timely initiative, particularly where it concerns Asia, and hope that the following comments will assist in the deliberations concerning the establishment of university-wide Area Studies institutions.

The University of Sydney has extensive Asia-related expertise, found in disciplines as diverse as public health, agriculture, geography and the fine arts. In fact, it may well have the largest number of Asia researchers of any university in the country. Yet despite this, and despite the high profile of many individuals working in and on Asia at the university, this institution is not recognised in Australia – let alone in the region or globally – as a major centre for Asian studies. Given the importance of Asia to Australia strategically, economically and culturally, this state of affairs represents a lost opportunity of enormous significance.

If a university-wide Centre for the Study of Asia were established, the full campus-wide strength of Asia research could become immediately visible both to members of our own
university community and to the world. Such a centre would provide a home for, and encourage inter-regional dialogue between, more specific centres concerned with current areas of cross-campus Asia strength, such as an Institute of China Studies and an Institute of Southeast Asian Studies. In addition, it would provide an umbrella for new areas of campus-wide Asia-related research strength to emerge and be nurtured. Along with similar centres focusing on other regions, a Centre for the Study of Asia would thus provide a practical and efficient means through which to realise the university-wide effort to integrate Area Studies more cohesively across the campus.

Below, we address the questions posed by the *Review of Area Studies Discussion Paper*.

**Question 1**

In addition to language training, the Asian Studies program and Asia-related departments contribute specialist knowledge concerning the very ancient cultures of most Asian societies, the complexities of their colonial and postcolonial histories, and the rapidity of changes in Asia’s modern rural and urban societies. We have many highly qualified scholars who are experts on diverse aspects of Asian cultures: ancient Buddhist cultures and their modern social forms; transnational labour migration; Asian literatures, popular cultures, and media; colonial and postcolonial formations; nationalisms and revolutions; gender, kinship, and sexual cultures; ancient states and archaeologies; Asian linguistics; Asian religions and philosophies; pre-modern commerce and contemporary globalization. Collectively, we represent an important concentration of Area Studies expertise and are ready to be tapped for new Area Studies research projects or teaching needs.

What distinguishes the University of Sydney from other universities in Australia, however, is the large number of experts of Asia scattered across other schools and faculties. No comprehensive list of Asia scholars exists, but in the Faculty of Arts, there are also scholars of Asia in the Departments of Anthropology, Art History and Film Studies, Archaeology, Gender & Cultural Studies, Media and Communications, Sociology, History, and Government and International Relations, among others, as well as in the Sydney College of Arts and the Conservatorium. There are also real areas of Asia strength in other faculties in areas including law, geography (including environmental studies), agriculture, public health and medicine. Several Asia-focused Centres, as noted in the *Review of Area Studies: Discussion Paper*, already exist.

There have already been some cross-campus initiatives, such as the *Asian Studies Lecture Series*, started by the School of Languages & Cultures in 2008. In addition to speakers from other universities in Australia and overseas, this Series has featured speakers from departments within the Faculty of Arts (Art History & Film Studies, Archaeology, Government, and Media & Communications) as well as from other Faculties, such as the Faculties of Science (School of Geosciences), Architecture, Law, Pharmacy, and Economics & Business. There is also a *Southeast Asian Studies Lecture Series* with a range of interdisciplinary speakers.

However, academics currently lack knowledge about other Asia scholars’ existence, and there are very few opportunities to bring disparate people studying different areas of Asia together. As suggested in the preamble, a university-wide Asia Centre would provide a structure through which this could be redressed and the visibility of the University’s Asia strength dramatically enhanced both internally and externally.
Question 2a

Regarding existing strengths, we agree that the areas where the University of Sydney currently has strength across the campus are those of Southeast Asia, Europe, and the USA and that it would be wise for the university to continue to build on these strengths. In addition, there are research strengths in Japanese Studies in the areas of art history, architecture and law, and particularly concentrated in the Department of Japanese Studies, which has a staff of eleven full-time academics and among the highest undergraduate enrolments in Australia. In fact, the Department is unique in Australia in having specialists in premodern, early modern, and modern history and the largest number of Japanese literature specialists in the country. Currently there is some strength in China Studies, with academic staff especially concentrated in the School of Languages & Cultures, and dispersed in such Faculty of Arts Departments as History, Media & Communications, Sociology & Social Policy, Government & International Relations, Art History & Film Studies, and Archaeology. Some China specialists can also be found in the Sydney Law School, and the Faculties of Economics & Business, Architecture, and Education & Social Work. Korean Studies also has a presence at the University of Sydney. In addition to three academics in the Department of Korean Studies, there are a dozen academics on campus whose research is related to Korea, specializing in history and religion, literature, linguistics, media and communication, economics and business, sociology, gender and film studies, architecture, and government and international relations.

A major challenge for the University of Sydney is to change the current low visibility of our academic expertise and research strengths in Asian Studies so that we can attract the best students and researchers nationally and internationally. Some of the best students nationally make the decision not to come to the University of Sydney on these grounds alone. It is not uncommon, for example, for students to express surprise when they learn that the Asia-related departments within the School of Languages and Cultures alone probably have more staff than the entire Faculty of Asian Studies at the Australian National University. The establishment of an Asia Centre, which sat alongside centres focused on other key areas, would immediately redress this situation.

Question 2b

The advantage of establishing an Asia Centre as an umbrella for more specific regional institutes, such as an Institute for China Studies or Southeast Asia Studies – rather than establishing stand-alone centres dealing with a single country or sub-region – lies not only in this potential strength in numbers at the Asia-wide level, but also in its flexibility. In addition to providing support for existing areas of Asia strength, such an arrangement can provide structural support for new areas of strength.

We believe that the university needs to boost the numbers of specialists in other areas of Asia, and in particular South Asia, China/Taiwan/Hong Kong and Korea. The need to strengthen our emphasis on Chinese societies has already been widely recognised across the university. Given the long term economic and strategic importance of China to Australia, we definitely agree that there should be future expansion of an interdisciplinary China Studies at the University of Sydney.

At the same time, we cannot emphasise too strongly that India is also an emerging economic and political force and that South Asia as a whole is a region of growing academic interest.
on a number of fronts, including security and environmental issues. The University of Sydney is currently a world leader on some aspects of ancient South Asian civilisations but, given the relative paucity of South Asia expertise in Australia, there is a real opportunity for the University of Sydney to build its strength in the contemporary study of South Asia. Similarly, Korea is of both academic and national interest in the areas of economic and security issues.

Another advantage of the Asia Centre would be to encourage inter-regional studies, fostering interaction between experts who focus on different parts of Asia. Worldwide, transnational studies have suffered from a tendency to engage at only a surface level with the different regions or countries upon which they focus. By contrast, a weakness in Area Studies has been the tendency to develop deep expertise on a relatively narrow range of issues within a single country or sub-region and ignore broader contexts. A successful Asia Centre has the potential to provide structured opportunities through which to bring together scholars with a deep understanding of particular societies in ways that create new kinds of trans-border knowledge and thus position the University at the frontier of Area Studies.

**Question 4**

We fully agree that all the factors listed in the Area Studies Discussion Paper will be critical to the success of a university-wide strategy for Area Studies. We especially support the idea that the strategy be academic-led and that adequate start-up funding be assured for Area Studies Centres. We would also like to add a few points of our own.

While Australians are fortunate in living in an English-speaking country in a world where English is a global language, it is clear that Australia’s long-term future will be tied in with Asia, where large populations do not speak English. We believe that a key to the success of Area Studies is a deep knowledge of the area’s languages, and an academic body who can interact with and read the writings of native scholars from the area being studied. Competence and versatility with the languages and scripts of the relevant area will enable Area Studies at the University of Sydney to get past simplistic categories of thought in approaching the Area concerned, and increase the opportunities for truly international engagement with native scholars from the Area of specialization. We suggest that future hirings of Asia specialists and the preparation of postgraduate research students pay special attention to the applicant’s language capabilities in their Area of study.

Our emphasis on language skills supports the recommendations of the Report of the Working Group on Generic Graduate Attributes and the Sydney Experience (January 2008), and the subsequent Implementation Plan of the Working Party on ‘Second Language’ Acquisition and the Student Experience at the University of Sydney. We refer in particular to recommendations relating to the creation of language courses and pathways that are accessible and attractive to students in all degree programs, both UG and PG, and that can be available in tandem with other study commitments. These would include Certificate/Diploma of Language programs, Summer/Winter School immersion courses, ‘in-country’ study and language courses for professional purposes associated with internships, etc. We also support the recommendations in these Reports regarding the importance of acknowledging, both at the point of entry to the University and on graduation, the many other ways in which students acquire language proficiency. We suggest that Area Studies Centres, working in close collaboration with Faculties and Schools, could become key facilitators of these initiatives. The Asia Centre would focus in particular on facilitating acquisition of Asian
languages for research students and academics.

The facilitating of Asian language acquisition would also add value to the University as a whole in aligning its goals with that of the Federal government’s education plans to increase the Asian language competence of Australians. A key recommendation of the Australia 2020 Summit held in 2008 was the need to strengthen Australians’ knowledge and understanding of Asian languages and cultures, which has fallen behind in recent decades. Increasing numbers of people and institutions have voiced this concern for building an “Asia-Literate Australia.” Griffith University’s Asia Institute just released a recommendation: “An Australian Strategy for Asian Language Proficiency” (May 2009)


Another report based on research among Australian businesses operating in China found that, due to lack of adequate education in Chinese language and culture, these businesses relied on native Chinese interpreters and translators for their knowledge of the Chinese market and law. Yet these businesses are increasingly in competition with Chinese businesses whose personnel are bilingual and bicultural.

Question 5

We believe that Area Studies Centres at Sydney University should be primarily involved in promoting academic research and the education of Ph.D. and M.A. research students. To these two ends, we propose the following activities for the Centre for the Study of Asia:

1) Organizing occasional lectures (at least one per semester) by high profile, internationally recognized scholars on interdisciplinary and cross-cultural issues
2) Hosting visiting scholars who would engage in collaborative transnational research projects with University of Sydney academics;
3) Attracting externally funded research fellows, such as ARC Laureate Fellows and APDs;
4) Organizing and coordinating one biennial international conference;
5) Offering one to two internationally competitive postdoctoral fellowships per year for each Area Studies Centre. Postdoctoral fellows will be affiliated with the Centre and will be expected to contribute to its activities, including the organization of the conference and occasional lectures.
6) Offering one to two competitive Ph.D. doctoral fellowships per year for the Area concerned, open to any discipline, but in particular academic Departments rather than the Centre;
7) Organizing and assisting with collaborative research proposals for funding by international agencies such as the Japan Foundation, the Korea Foundation, and the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange, as well as Asia-related private sources of funding;
8) Attracting postgraduate and honours students and linking them up with appropriate supervisors, and coordinating a series of student work-in-progress presentations;
9) Establishing an online publication series for each Studies Centre, to ensure the

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7 “Future Depends on Asian Languages”, in Higher Education Section of the Australian, 11 June 2009, p. 33.
dissemination of conference proceedings, lectures, and working papers;
10) Acting as a liaison with universities and research institutions in various Asian countries, expanding on the existing connections of the Departments such as student and scholar exchange programs, to further the international cooperation of the University of Sydney.

We also support an outreach mission for each Area Studies Centre, where each Centre plays a public educational role for the larger community and provides informed opinion when required. This role may be performed in several ways:

1) Organizing a campus film series open to the general public for each Area, accompanied by an expert discussion leader for each screening;
2) Organizing special events, debates, or lectures open to the general public, with invited media representatives, on major questions or issues concerning the Area in current affairs;
3) Producing occasional position papers addressed to these issues that are sent to media and public information outlets;
4) Facilitating contact of its members with organizations such as the media and governmental bodies that require informed opinion.

**Question 6**

We prefer an organisational and governing model for Area Studies in which a few Area Studies centres would be established at the university level, with membership and participation drawing from across Faculties. Each centre would have a distinct entity and identity, with joint appointments of staff from the different Faculties. We suggest that, given the current composition of Area Studies expertise on campus, the following three Area Studies Centres would make sense: 1) Centre for the Study of Asia (CSA); 2) Centre for European Studies; 3) U.S. Studies Centre

We propose establishing a Centre for the Study of Asia (CSA), with an overarching board of selected Asia experts drawn from across the university. Underneath this Centre would be a number of more specialized Area Studies Institutes: 1) Institute of Southeast Asian Studies; 2) Institute of Japan and Korea Studies; 3) Institute of China Studies; and 4) Institute of South Asian Studies. (see graph below)
The coordinators of each Institute would all sit on the board of the Centre for the Study of Asia, and report to the administrative head of the Centre. Each of the Institutes would be responsible for organizing lectures, providing for the needs of PG research students, and administering any collaborative research projects for their studies of their particular area.

For its part, the overarching Centre would seek to foster and coordinate *inter-area lectures, research and outreach activities* on Asia. Lectures would focus on cross-cultural and transnational processes and collaborative research projects, for example, projects taking a comparative or intra-Asia approach to economic development, environmental sustainability, public health, media and popular culture, democratisation and civil society, or religious transformations.

It would be at the Centre level that decisions on postdoctoral and doctoral fellowships and visiting academic appointments would take place. The Centre would also organize the biennial conferences and publication series, addressing themes that cut across national and geographic boundaries and encourage cross-disciplinary research.

The Centre would initiate and coordinate efforts of its various Institutes to establish and develop links with overseas universities and research institutes.

**Question 7**

The international success of a number of Area Studies centres elsewhere (e.g. the Fairbank Centre at Harvard University, the International Institute for Asian Studies at Leiden in the Netherlands, the East Asian Institute at the National University of Singapore) demonstrates that funding is vitally important for the establishment, success and sustainability of such institutions. As scholars of Area/Asian Studies at the University of Sydney, many of us have benefited from our experiences in those institutions and continue our research collaboration with colleagues from those institutions.

To date there is still no Area Studies institution in Australia that attracts similar international visibility and impact. It is time that the University of Sydney asserts its leadership in Area Studies in Australia and aspire for international recognition with the establishment of Area Studies centres.

We believe that adequate funding is crucial for the establishment, success and sustainability of Area Studies centres. We suggest that the University’s central administration provide a start-up fund and the running expenses for the first five years initially. The funding should be at the level sufficient to appoint high-profile directors and researchers to attract PhD students and postdoctoral fellows. In order to attract visiting researchers and postdoctoral fellows, we recommend targeted allocation of one or two 1-3 month visiting international scholar fellowships to work on collaborative research projects with University of Sydney academics and targeted allocation of at least one university postdoctoral fellowship for the Centre, but located in a department. Like the Fairbank Centre, we recommend that research funding be
provided to the postdoctoral fellows to run workshops, seminars and conferences that involve leading scholars in their fields of research.

During the founding period, the centre(s) should also seek funding from outside sources, including the Australia Research Council and the funding bodies for research and scholarly exchange in various countries of the region. The Japan Foundation, the Korea Foundation and the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation, for example, typically support Area Studies research and institutions that focus on their country or region. In the private business sector, there are many large Asian companies who engage in major trade relations with Australia which may be approached, such as the Bank of China, Chinalco, Lenovo, Samsang, Hyundai, Toyota, Sony, and Honda. Australian companies engaged in extensive trade with Asia can also be tapped for contributions, such as Rio Tinto and BHP. The Hong Kong film star Jackie Chan, who often resides in Canberra, might also be an appropriate person to approach. Rupert Murdoch and his Chinese wife Wendy Deng have deep connections with both Australia and Asia, however, there has been controversy over the Murdoch Chair of Language and Communication at Oxford University.

**Question 8**

We believe that the university-wide Area Studies strategy should be under an entirely separate organization from the University’s International portfolio. The Area Studies strategy is primarily targeted at enhancing research at the University, while the International Office, with its Research Institute for Asia and the Pacific, the Confucius Institute, and offices for Europe and the Americas, has been focused on the university’s external relations, on university marketing in international education markets, and outreach activities to governments and businesses around the world.

**Question 9**

Most of the major academic institutions in the world have long supported Area Studies and have allocated generous funding to maintain Area Studies research institutes or centres. We would like to highlight three programs in particular that have very developed Area Studies, and Asian Studies in particular. In the U.S., the University of California, Berkeley and Harvard University have perhaps the best and most extensive Area Studies research and teaching programs in the country. In the Netherlands, the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) also provides a good model for the University of Sydney.

At U.C. Berkeley, the International and Area Studies (IAS) is undergoing some restructuring and relabeling. The IAS supports an extensive research programme, overseas UG and PG degree programs, and also provides services to international students and scholars at Berkeley, such as the International House, a dormitory and restaurant. Underneath IAS, there are several Area Research Institutes and smaller Centres: Center for African Studies, Canadian Studies Program, Institute of East Asian Studies (IEAS), Institute of European Studies, Center for Latin American Studies, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Institute of Slavic, East European Studies, Center for South Asia Studies, and Center for Southeast Asia Studies. (See Berkeley’s IAS organizational chart before their restructuring: http://ias.berkeley.edu/files/u1/IASorg-chartFY09.pdf)

At Berkeley, the three Institutes of East Asian, European, and Slavic & East European Studies all have their own lecture series, organize conferences and workshops, and operate
their own publication series. Each Institute has several smaller Area Centres underneath them. For example, Berkeley’s Institute of East Asian Studies supports the Berkeley Center for Buddhist Studies, the Center for Chinese Studies, the Center for Japanese Studies, and the Center for Korean Studies. Each of these Centres runs their own annual lecture series, organizes one or two international conferences per year, and offers post-doctoral research fellowships that are open to competition among recent Ph.D.s around the world. The Center for Chinese Studies is the largest and most active Center, and it runs its own Library focusing on Chinese language materials from 1949 to the present, thus complementing the East Asian Library, which has an extensive pre-modern East Asian collection.

At Harvard University, the Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies Program operates both pre- and postdoctoral scholars fellowship programs and special events for Area Studies. The Weatherhead Center for International Affairs supports academic activities on strategic international relations and operates a publication series. The Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies offers lectures and conferences and selects at least two postdoctoral scholars each year. The Reischauer Institute for Japanese Studies also has its own office, provides postdoctoral fellowships, and lectures. The Harvard-Yenching Institute was founded over eighty years ago, and supports doctoral scholarships, visiting fellowships, academic publications, advanced training programs, and conferences, as well as its own world renowned library of Chinese language materials.

In the Netherlands, there is the well-known International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) based in Leiden. The IIAS is funded by the Dutch government to attract top researchers and PhD students in Asian Studies from the Netherlands and internationally. Its main branch in Leiden is affiliated with Leiden University and the other branch is attached to the University of Amsterdam. IIAS has been a favoured place for academics from all over the world who wish to spend some time in Europe. It organizes the IIAS biannual international conferences in collaboration with universities in Asia, a lecture series, and offers fellowships to international academics. The IIAS Newsletter publishes articles on politics, popular culture, economy and society in East, SE, and South Asia, and is distributed to individuals and academic institutions around the world.

The University of Sydney may be able to learn from both the strengths as well as mistakes of these institutions. The various Area Studies programs at Harvard University seem to be independently funded and there is much overlapping and duplicating of activities among the various autonomous programs, which the University of Sydney may wish to avoid. The IIAS in Leiden is funded and coordinated by both Leiden University as well as by the Dutch government, which may pose its own challenges. The International and Area Studies program at U.C. Berkeley is undergoing restructuring in part due to the difficulties of an overly large and centralized organization. Since we only recommend three Areas Studies Centres at this stage of development (Centre for the Study of Asia, U.S. Studies Centre, and Centre for European Studies), the University of Sydney would avoid Berkeley’s problems.
Submission to the Review of Area Studies
By
Robin Branson
1st June 2009

This submission is made in a personal capacity

Personal Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>External, part time PhD Candidate in the School of Geoscience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Director, Qubator Pty Ltd.</td>
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| Business experience         | Industrial Symbiosis
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Introduction
My comments are about the structure, governance, organisation and management of Area Studies (Q 6a), which I suggest should be established as if it were a start-up business (Q 6b). The assumptions represent the scenario on which this approach is based.

Assumptions
The University will establish an institution-wide capability to conduct Area Studies, which may or may not also have a thematic bias.

Academics, research staff and students will be domiciled within their (most) relevant faculties and recruited, much like consultants in business, as required for a specific ‘project’. Personnel and physical resources for a project would be selected from the University’s existing compliment and from other sources such as through collaboration with other academic, government, professional and commercial organisations.

The Co-ordinating Office for Area Studies (COFAS) will be domiciled in the International Institute (Q 8).
The University’s reputation would be developed as a result of its capacity to ‘perform’, that is, to organises and support Area Studies, rather than being based on the existence of a physical entity such as an independent institute, faculty or school.

Guiding principles for Establishing COFAS
- Minimise risk (of financial failure) - derived from venture capital investment.
- Obtain resources needed for a project (see process below) only as and when they are required- derived from property development.
- Have a plan; be constantly aware of progress and prepared to deal with the unexpected – derived from project management.
- Manage expectations carefully and be flexible – derived from general business experience.
- Concentrate on postgraduate and vocational research during, say, the first 5 years of operation.

Functional Structure
- Research – establish and manage programmes in specific area studies, on demand.
- Teaching – develop courses, seminars and workshops that train postgraduate students in the techniques of research.
- External Relations – recruitment, collaboration with third parties on project development, ‘marketing’ promotion and media.

Management Structure
- Ethos: Lean and flat – recruit ‘line’ managers as required for specific programmes. Use existing resources within the University for support services such as financial administration, and ICT.
- Entrepreneurial - short path to a decision; minimal requirement for bureaucratic activity e.g. filling in forms, complying with regulations, convoluted approval procedures.

Start-up personnel
- Managing Director – the key requirement is skilled experience in managing a business or similar enterprise such as a development project. Although the director must be acutely sensitive to the exigencies of academia, the role should not perforce be filled by an academic unless one can be recruited who has the experience suggested above.
- Administrator/ assistant to the MD.

Governance
- Board of Directors: Represents academic, management and possibly ‘outside’ interests - guides the overall development and funding of COFAS.
- Project Board: responsible to the Board of Directors for the performance of each project. It should include the Managing Director and a representative of the sponsor (see below).
Process

- A proposal for a project (an area study which may be any size, type, duration etc.) is submitted to the office by a sponsor. The sponsor may be an individual, a group of people or an ‘institution’ such as a faculty or a school within a faculty. A sponsor may also be an external organisation such as a government entity, a corporation or another university.
- A Project Board is established which, inter alia, determines what resources are required for the project.
- COFAS identifies these resources within the university or externally if necessary and negotiates their availability.
- Project documents are prepared and executed. These documents would comprise at least a statement of what the project is intended to achieve, a programme and schedule, the resources required together with an estimate of cost and contracts or memoranda of understanding for the provision of resources.
- The Project Board decides whether or not to approve the project. If the project is approved, the office arranges funding, assists with its establishment and monitors progress. It may also assist where appropriate when ‘things don’t go according to plan’.
- If the project is rejected, it may be amended by the sponsor, as suggested by the Project Board and re-submitted for consideration.

It is noted that the ability of COFAS to fund projects adequately will be crucial to the success of its operation.

Facilities at Start-up

For the Managing Director and an assistant: two offices adjoining, ready access to a meeting room, normal ITC and office services, parking.

Time frame & expectations

COFAS would probably take about 5 years to become established and begin to develop a reputation for delivering substantial projects. Targets and expectations must be realistic and achievable.

Funding COFAS

- Start-up – say the first 5 years: funding provided by the University and augmented by external party contributions as negotiated for project funding from time to time.
- Subsequent operation: predominantly external party contributions with continuing support from the University as deemed commensurate with the ‘qualitative value’ that COFAS contributes to the University.
Dear Stephen,

With great interest have I read the report on the Review of Area Studies. I myself have several contacts in Indonesia in relation to my research on the history of medicine in the Dutch East Indies and modern Indonesia (at the Faculties of Medicine at the University of Indonesia (Jakarta) and Airlangga University (Surabaya). I was a participant of the large delegation of the University of Sydney to the University of Indonesia in July last year, which was a great success.

The Unit for History and Philosophy of Science is currently negotiating an agreement with the Program in Science and Technology Studies at the National University of Singapore. This program has recently been launched. Together prof. Warwick Anderson (History) and A/Prof Waldby (Sociology), we have organized a conference on Science and Technology Studies in Southeast Asia, which was held at NUS and sponsored by the University of Sydney (IPDF), NUS, and the National Science Council of Taiwan. It brought together researchers from the area as well as a number of leading scholars from Australia and the US. The conference was a great success. The STS program at NUS will be a very significant one in the region, and by encouraging postgraduate students in our program to take courses at each other’s institutions, and by encouraging and establishing research cooperations, science and technology studies in South East Asia will greatly benefit.

Following some suggestions of the report, I strongly agree that the University of Sydney needs encourage area studies in areas in which this is relevant. There is already a strong interest and activity at the university in the area of American studies. There is widespread activity with respect to research and collaborations with countries...
in Southeast Asia. Geographically, it makes sense to establish with countries in the region, and many individuals at the university have been doing so already. It is with respects to these initiatives, that an area studies initiatives could be of great support.

I favour an area studies initiative focusing on South Asia (India), Southeast Asia, China, and Japan. There are already many ties with the countries in the region. An initiative focusing on these countries would, first of all, enable researchers to become aware of other initiatives within the university. A second objective of this initiative should be to make funds available for setting up collaborative activities with universities (both in research and in teaching). What should be taken into account is that setting up these initiatives is quite time-consuming, and requires academics to travel and spend time overseas. Funding should be available to support such activities. Lastly, scholars and postgraduate students from the region could benefit enormously from spending some time at the University of Sydney, yet in many cases (Singapore and Japan exempted), the funds for this are not available in their home countries. These exchanges will build research capacity in the region.

But, first of all, I think it is essential that research in Southeast Asia is encouraged in the university by making time and research funds available to staff. Deeper insights in the region and ongoing research activity will stimulate further research collaborations in the region, will attract interest from the region in our activities, and will promote durable collaborative activities.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

Hans Pols
Unit for History and Philosophy of Science
University of Sydney
Preamble

What follows reflects the following diverse assumptions:

• The intent of the Review is to plan for the long term.
• That there is heuristic merit in considering a broad range of models, including ones that are too ambitious for short-term implementation.
• That implementation of any ambitious model would be phased.
• That the present state of the international economy implies a rather long lead-time for the fulfilment of any vision that depends partly on philanthropy.
• That there is truth in the rumour that the eventual demolition of the Brennan-MacCallum Building has entered the planning horizons of those responsible for campus infrastructure.
• That the present task is to identify the most appropriate model(s); detailed planning of the stages towards realization would come later.
• That, realistically, a final report submitted by the end of August 2009 may not be able to do more than narrow down the options that are to be researched, identifying those areas that require investigation.
• That the visionary statements of the Chair of the Review Panel in The University of Sydney News, June 2009, are intended seriously.
• That problematic terms like “traditional,” “modern” and “Western” can be freely used in their naïve, everyday sense to help scholars of radically different disciplines communicate about Area Studies planning.
• That a University that aspires to genuine international pre-eminence will design its institutions as if making clothes for children: two sizes too big, so that the nippers can grow into them.

Thesis statement

• That different approaches will be appropriate for Area Studies institutions / programs for different regions of the globe.
• That the priority for planning and investment should be, specifically, the Asian region and the Southern hemisphere (broadly defined).
• That the Panel should carefully consider how a very significantly modified version of the model provided by the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London might enable the University of Sydney to establish pre-eminence within the Southern hemisphere for cutting-edge research and teaching on issues that will matter to the lives of millions for the foreseeable future.

Question 2

How does one conceptualise “Areas” for planning purposes? Should we not be more self-aware about the assumptions we make in specifying continents in some contexts / for some regions of the globe, and individual nation-states in / for some others? Why, for example, can “Africa” (a continent) be identified as a possible “area” on the same page as “Japan” (a nation-state)? Why “Europe” but “Korea” and “the USA”?
What is healthy about this unreflective mixing is that reminds us of the importance of a both-and approach: BOTH (a) broad, transnational / comparative study of macro-units such as “Asia,” AND (b) depth in the study of individual nation-states. A wise planning principle would be that (a) should not be pursued to the detriment of (b) for those countries to whose study the University commits significant staffing resources. Asian Studies AND Chinese Studies; both are important, and the importance of the latter is at least equal to that of the former.

The University cannot, of course, support state-of-the-art, Area-Studies-approach-intensity research and teaching for every nation-state in every macro-unit included in its Area Studies programs. It will be an interesting exercise, at a later stage, to consider which subcontinental units (groups of nation-states?) might constitute the geographical subfoci of a future African Studies program.

Why might we, at an Australian university, be interested in any particular macro-unit (a word that leaves us greater freedom to identify appropriate units of analysis) or nation-state? The answers might be very different for different parts of the globe. It would seem crucial that, in the process of identifying macro-units and/or nation-states for institutional Area-Studies treatment, the Review Panel should identify the reasons for our being interested. Those reasons might then drive consideration of the model and level of investment that would be appropriate.

All ways of parcelling up the globe are problematic. In what follows, I assume (a) that the whole world is of potential interest, and (b) that one should think about Area Studies in terms of super-macro-units broken down into macro-units and/or nation states in which the University of Sydney (i) already has significant expertise OR (ii) would do well to develop significant expertise as funding permits OR (iii) has no particular currently-identifiable reason to develop significant expertise. Both Canada and the former Soviet Union, for example, should be consciously identified as being either (ii) or (iii): it won’t do to ignore them.

The following train of thought is distressingly conventional, but I share it in the hope that it may stimulate the Panel to do better. The word “add” is used to mean “add as a focus area to be developed as part of the Area Studies strategy,” not “add from zero existing capacity.” Other wording that might give offence if misread (e.g., “left to the ANU”) should be interpreted in the same spirit.

- Asia and Africa might form a super-macro-unit because of (a) the salience of the developmental issues (poverty, health, environment) common to many of the more populous nation-states, and (b) their great intrinsic interest as “non-Western”; however, “South” is a more useful word than “Africa” because it invites us to consider the Pacific; also, although Australia and New Zealand usually count as “Western,” in the context of particular research projects focusing on indigenous societies, it might sometimes make sense to allow them to be “Southern.”

- Asia the University can already “do,” but more investment is needed in the study of South Asia, and this might come at an early stage of implementing an Area Studies strategy.

- It would seem highly desirable to add Africa, but perhaps at a second stage.

- The Pacific can perhaps be left to the ANU, but not until the question has been asked: Is there a good reason for not leaving the Pacific to the ANU?

- European and Slavonic Studies seem to fit together, if only because of overlapping cultural heritage and historical interactions. Western Europe (including the British Isles)
the University already “does”; Eastern Europe tends to be forgotten (why?); the likely future significance of the former Soviet Union should be assessed with a view to identifying the successor states as a level-ii area (one to be added as funding permits).

- North America is a macro-unit; the University already “does” the USA; should it aspire to “do” Canada?

Questions

- Where do Islamic Studies fit? With European and Slavonic studies, on the grounds of shared monotheism and long-term mutual historical engagement? Or with Asian Studies on the grounds that Islam within our region is of more practical importance to Australia than the religion’s close kinship with Christianity and Judaism (important, but more for the faithful than the University)? Bracketing Africa with Asia helps clinch the argument: Islam has been an important force in Africa as well as many Asian countries. An integrative Islamic Studies perspective would embrace Islamic Africa.

- Where do Central and Southern America fit? With North America, on the grounds of geographical proximity? With European Studies, on colonial-language/culture grounds? Or as part of the “South,” on development-needs grounds? Does the priority accorded to Latin America depend on where we place it? My hunch is that it would be best placed in the “South,” where it would be level ii-b (to be added, if possible, after Africa), but this may be mistaken.

Why would we at the University of Sydney want to pursue (a) European and Slavonic Studies; (b) Eastern and Southern Studies; (c) American Studies? The sets of answers and/or the priority attached to each of a common set of answers would surely be different for each super-macro-unit. Priority lists will inevitably vary with the values and political / theoretical leanings of the individual, but for Eastern (i.e., Asian) and Southern (primarily African) Studies, the following ranking of priorities seems worth proposing:

1. Developmental and environmental issues (poverty, health, impact of climate change, urban-rural balance, colonial legacy, relationship with First-world economies, etc.), important on the grounds of Common humanity
   Australia’s long-term security and economic interests as a “lucky country” in the South-east quadrant of the globe.

2. Geostrategic and regional political, military and economic importance of emerging powers and superpowers in the East and, potentially, South; significance of this for Australia.

3. Intrinsic interest of the indigenous cultures of contemporary nation-states as different as Benin and China (interesting precisely because non-Western); intrinsic interest of the hybrid cultures that developed as a result of the infusion of foreign religions, etc. (e.g., Islam in Mali, Buddhism in Japan); intrinsic scholarly value of broadened pool of cultures on which to draw for comparative perspectives in analysing social phenomena (e.g., gender relationships) in “traditional” and “transitional” societies; need for preservation and refinement of scholarly understanding of the authentic in order to counter politically-motivated misrepresentations of indigenous tradition.

4. Intrinsic interest of the modern and contemporary, post-Western-influence cultures of Asian and African nation-states; value of specific modern / contemporary art-forms (e.g., literature, film) in indicating tensions, anxieties and strains (as well as happier phenomena) in the modern / contemporary societies.
5. Relevance of country-specific “cultures” to contemporary issues of practical significance (e.g., effect of “traditional” values on the acceptability of specific components of grassroots development strategies).

6. Importance of the indigenous and hybridised “traditional” cultures of Eastern and Southern nation-states as “heritage” to large (e.g., Chinese) and small-but-significant (e.g., Sudanese) components of the population resident in Australia.

The rankings for (a) European and Slavonic Studies and (b) American Studies would presumably be radically different. For the former, the corresponding order (mutandis mutatis) might conceivably be (4), (3), (2), (6), with (1) and (5) “not applicable,” at least in the everyday sense, to the majority of the nation-states.

If a major part of the rationale for the present Area Studies initiative is that “we have the capacity to think beyond the conventional social science focus of area studies to embrace a much wider range of expertise, notably in the sciences, health sciences and the professions,” and the overarching goals are to “tackle major world problems” and “contribute to … public benefit in the world” (Garton, 2009, p. 5), it seems that the prime area to which this rationale and these objectives can be applied in combination is the Eastern and Southern super-macro-region. It will be fun if, for example, it is Australian research on offender rehabilitation that shows the Americans how to transcend the vituperative debate reflected in recent issues of Aggression and Violent Behavior between “feminist” and “psychological” approaches to designing domestic-violence perpetrator-reform programs, but, overall, it is not obvious that we in Australia are managing our own health-care systems so brilliantly as to be able to offer other OECD countries many significantly useful insights through the deployment of large, interdisciplinary research teams involving health scientists. It is in our own super-macro-region that we may be able to make a difference through respectful cooperation with indigenous researchers.

It follows, I think, that the priority for Area Studies planning and investment should be the Eastern and Southern super-macro-unit. For European and Slavonic Studies, the question might be “What needs to be added to / subtracted from / created in parallel to the existing, recently expanded Faculty of Arts in order to enable it to perform at an even higher level as a world-class centre of Western (including Australian) Studies?” Not a big deal, except that it is hugely problematic that a University that claims world-class status in the humanities does not offer students the study of Dostoyevsky, or even such less-confronting authors as Tolstoy, Turgenev, Lermontov and Pushkin, in the original. Gogol, Blok, Pasternak, Olyesha, Solzhenitsin… Do we care? “A far-away country of which we know little,” as Chamberlain remarked of Czechoslovakia on an infamous occasion. Perhaps we should learn more.

**Question 5**

I believe that any Centre for East- and South-world Studies (name to be improved) should pursue all seven types of activity listed on p. 8 of the “Review of Area Studies: Discussion Paper,” including undergraduate programs. Specifically, in first stage of implementation, it should offer:

1. A four-year Bachelor of Asian Studies with mandatory single-language major (exemption available for native speakers who have full adult language competence), required in-country experience and integrated Honours-by-thesis option;
2. A handful of strategically selected four-year joint degrees, e.g., Bachelor of Asian Studies and Economics, Bachelor of Asian and Development Studies, Bachelor of Asian Studies and Media Studies.

3. A suite of undergraduate units of study that are open to students of all Faculties as well as those enrolled in the above degree; conceivably, a small number of subjects, such as intensive first-year Chinese, that are available only to those students with the high UAIs required for admission to the Bachelor of Asian Studies family of degrees.

It follows from the above that the proposed Centre would in fact be a Faculty. Non-pedagogical aspects of the case for this departure are presented under “Question 6b” below.

On p. 9 of the Discussion Paper, we find the statement “There are some pedagogic objections to the development of Area Studies in undergraduate degree programs. Greater education in disciplines is probably of more long-term advantage to graduates…” Whence comes this opinion? On what is it based? To be sure, scientific and social-scientific disciplines such as Economics must be taught as such (hence the joint-degree proposals above), but humanities disciplines such as History can be taught just as well, arguably better from some points of view, using Asian material and the conceptual and methodological approaches that, for historical reasons, are particularly salient among historians at least of China, and very possibly other Asian countries also. The challenge is to design the optimal Bachelor of Asian Studies for twenty-first-century young Australians. This would include an option to take a limited number of electives from other faculties in the Bachelor of Asian Studies (with significantly more cross-Faculty input to the proposed joint degrees), plus a thorough, American-style individual advisement system to ensure that every undergraduate receives help in tailoring his/her selection of electives to his/her intellectual interests, career aspirations, and possible future research specialization.

I draw the Review Panel’s attention to the attached undergraduate handbooks from the Chinese Studies section of the Faculty of Oriental Studies at the University of Oxford and the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Cambridge. I confine my comments to the Chinese Studies curricula, as this is the area I am most able to evaluate. These are four-year programs in which the norm is study of nothing but China, although options exist for the admixture of other material, and the initial historical survey course (unit of study) may focus on East Asia rather than just China. I do not recommend the specific curricular contents as models for the University of Sydney; some aspects of the Oxford curriculum in particular seem disappointingly conservative. However, even if we purged all the Classical Chinese and all pre-1949 literature (an act of vandalism that I do not recommend for Sydney either), these curricula would still set standards by which the present Chinese Studies program at the University of Sydney can only be called mickey-mouse. Note in particular the statement on p. 17 of the Oxford handbook, under the heading “Texts on the modern politics and society of China,” that “the objective is to teach you to read and comprehend Chinese prose in much the same way as you read English narrative prose”—this in the context of an undertaking to have students read “[Chinese-language] articles or book chapters written by social scientists.” With a four-year program from beginners’ level and a period of required in-country study, these are eminently achievable objectives, but at the University of Sydney we do not even aspire to them. The fundamental problems are lack of vision and adverse organizational and governmental structures in the University at large.

It is not, as I was once told by a superior, “odious” to compare us unfavourably with the better-resourced Oxbridge. If we are to envision excellence, we must benchmark against the best; not just Oxbridge, but the best international contemporary-China, social-science-focused language-plus-studies programs. Alas, however, in terms of curricular design, we are
mickey-mouse by less privileged standards; those, for example, of Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines, where students who have completed the University-wide common first-year curriculum can undertake a Bachelor of Arts in Chinese Studies with a choice of “Business, Humanities, or Social Sciences” tracks (documentation is on file in my office). We urgently need liberation to survey the best models world-wide and then design our own, tailored for Australian circumstances and the likely aspirations of our future students. To make this possible, there must be channels of respectful communication between different levels of the University hierarchy, and a willingness to demolish institutional and organizational barriers to the pursuit of excellence.

The curricular structures of the Faculty of Arts, with its three-year BA and tiny majors, are no doubt well suited for the purposes for which they were designed. However, they are not conducive to enabling well-motivated students attain advanced proficiency in difficult character-based languages plus in-depth understanding of the associated society and culture. The problems are especially acute for Chinese, which I understand is less well-developed than Japanese in New South Wales high schools, and complexified, at both high-school and University levels, by the presence of large numbers of students who speak a Chinese language at home and have widely different levels of proficiency in that language. However, I believe that the whole Asian Studies operation would benefit from liberation from the Faculty of Arts. We need the freedom to design imaginative, effective, workable and flexible curricular structures in cooperation with joint-degree partners, constrained only by the University’s curricular policies, and with independent representation on boards that might revise those policies. The tension between Asian Studies and Single-country Studies, which has been sharp in the last two years, can be productively resolved in a cooperative BOTH-AND if we have a larger, Faculty-level sphere of operation.

I address the implications for academic staff of the proposal to establish a separate Faculty of East- and South-world Studies under “Question 6b.” Suffice it here to note that the implications for students of enrolment in a smaller Faculty would surely be extremely positive. Students of Asian/Oriental Studies Faculties, in my experience, tend to be loyal to those faculties: they benefit from the friendly atmosphere, the proximity to active researchers, joint staff-student common rooms (at the more enlightened institutions), and student-friendly features of the building design such as a library with attractive working space and browsable bookshelves. I am confident that we could build a “culture of expectation” in undergraduate programs if empowered by the University to do so.

**Question 6b**

As implied above, I think different models are appropriate for Area Studies programs for different portions of the globe. In what follows, I attempt to identify an appropriate model for East- and South-world Studies only.

I have read the submission prepared by my former colleagues in the Asian Studies departments of the School of Languages and Cultures. It is an excellent document, and I commend it to the Review Panel. If the model that it proposes is implemented, the result will surely be a qualitative enhancement of research in Asian Studies at the University of Sydney, including greater success in attracting and retaining world-class junior, mid-career and senior scholars as permanent staff members. I would suggest only one addition: a one-year competitive fellowship program specifically for Asian scholars based at Asian universities /
research institutes. This might be inspired by the Visiting Scholar / Fellow programs of the Harvard-Yenching Institute at Harvard University: see
http://www.harvard-yenching.org/fellowship/visiting-scholars-program/
http://www.harvard-yenching.org/fellowship/visiting-fellows-program/
I would suggest that a University of Sydney version have less restrictive eligibility and preference criteria, so as to attract (a) mid-career researchers as well as junior scholars and PhD candidates; and (b) scholars from a wide range of Asian universities, not only those with which the University has partnership agreements. Flying in high-profile Americans or Europeans for gala lecture / workshop / masterclass performances will no doubt have productive stimulus value, but it is surely more strategic for the University of Sydney to build strong bonds of friendship and cooperation with the leading Asia-based, Asian scholars of tomorrow.

I note, however, the following limitations of the Asian Studies departments’ submission:

• The majority of the proposed direct investment is in scholars who will be at the University of Sydney on a temporary basis only, not in those who have potential long-term commitment to the University of Sydney.

• The proposal does not address the problem of inadequate undergraduate preparation for postgraduate research, which is reflected in inadequate flow-through into PhD programs, especially in Chinese Studies.

• The proposal does not discuss where future Asian Studies appointees in humanities and social science subjects should be placed: in discipline-based departments, or in the Asian Studies departments of the School of Languages and Cultures? There is no integrative proposal for identifying gaps in the University’s Asian-expertise staffing profile and determining by what means they will be filled.

• The proposal does not articulate a strategy for facilitating multidisciplinary team research addressing major real-world problems, as envisaged by the Chair of the Review Panel (Garton, 2009, p. 5).

• The document has been approved by majority or unanimous vote, but only as a document. I am not aware of any vote having been taken between alternative models.

• There is nothing about the proposed model to keep one awake at night with excitement.

It is odd that the list of operating models on p. 9 of the discussion paper does not include that of separate Area Studies faculties, despite the Australian precedent of the Faculty of Asian Studies at the ANU. The ANU, however, provides only a precedent, not a realistic and desirable model: it would require the establishment of two Area Studies institutions, a Faculty of Asian Studies and a Research School of Asian and Pacific Studies, thereby institutionalising the separation of too high a proportion of our staff from undergraduate teaching.

The existing model known to me that best fits the apparent objectives of the Area Studies review, insofar as East- and South-world Studies are concerned, is the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the University of London. Three immediate caveats are necessary:

1. Putting scholars who one hopes will work together into the same Faculty and the same building is likely to encourage and facilitate research collaboration, but it does not guarantee that happy outcome.

2. My soundings indicate that SOAS has its full share of problems; the proposal is therefore not that the SOAS model be copied, but that it be treated as a point of reference. There
should be some analysis of the reasons for SOAS’s problems, so that mistakes can be avoided.

3. Not all academic staff with Asian Studies expertise in the range of subject areas that might be included in a Faculty of East and South-world Studies (name to be improved) might wish to move there; some discipline-based departments might wish to build strength in East- and/or South-world Studies in their own departments. The proposal is not, therefore, that everyone be corralled into a new institution by 2011, but that a conversation be initiated to determine on what conditions individuals and teams might find such a move acceptable or, preferably, attractive. 2020 might be a more realistic target date for full implementation. Some individuals / teams / existing centres might not move.

With the above caveats, critical consultation of the SOAS website, http://www.soas.ac.uk/ (it is worth drilling down to the departmental staff lists) inspires the following vision of a model that might meet reasonable aspirations at the University of Sydney, and work in our context:

- A Faculty large enough to have reasonable prospects of world-class eminence by supporting a critical mass of scholars in each represented group of disciplines, but small enough to need no internal subdivision other than the Department. The plethora of Centres at SOAS should perhaps be avoided—in informal, flexible, but institutionally recognized / supported “research clusters” may be a better concept for our context.
- A purpose-built, attractive building, perhaps occupying the site of the present Transient Building, and with its own Library, stocked with books withdrawn from Fisher and perhaps other University of Sydney libraries.
- The following Departments (list subject to refinement):
  - African Languages and Cultures
  - Anthropology, Sociology and Gender Studies
  - Languages and Cultures of the Islamic Middle East (as far east as Afghanistan)
  - Chinese and Inner Asian Languages and Cultures
  - Development, Environmental and Health Studies
  - Economics, Business and Legal Studies
  - History, Archaeology and Study of Religions
  - Japanese and Korean Languages and Cultures
  - Media, Communication and Film Studies
  - Political Science, International Relations and Security Studies
  - South Asian Languages and Cultures
  - South-east Asian Languages and Cultures

  Plus possibly (may not want to move):
  - Art and Music
  - Architecture and the Built Environment

This, while simpler and smaller than the SOAS structure, is a de luxe model that would require additional appointments. However, adjustments could be made to suit the budget; if need be, for example, one could have a single department of Social Sciences. Here, I think, is the question: if one puts the Faculty of Asian Studies at the ANU at one end of a spectrum and the above model at the other, how close to realization of the above model could the University of Sydney afford to go? If the Faculty of Asian Studies at the ANU means “good,” and “like-SOAS-only-better” means “outstanding,” how close to “outstanding” can we get?

- State-of-the-art language laboratory facilities.
- Seminar and conference rooms; shared office space for postgraduate students (2 per room) and honorary associates (less generous); single-occupancy office space for full-
time and fractional academic staff; a suite of offices for visiting scholars, some within
departments, but others flexibly allocable to different interdisciplinary and other team
projects as occasion arises.

- Financial and staffing support for a range of activities and commitments similar to those
  proposed by the Asian Studies departments on pp. 4–5 of their submission.
- Strong Masters-level programs (I understand that this is an aspect of the SOAS model that
  is still working well, with high academic standards and harmonious interdisciplinary
  integration).
- Extensive outreach to philanthropists to make realization of the vision possible; effective
  publicity.

Strategic goals include:

- Not just visibility, but a centre at which other internal stakeholders (e.g., medical
  researchers with an interest in Asia and/or Africa) could be confident of finding genuine,
  real-world Asian/African Studies expertise when needed for consultation or collaboration.
- Ditto for finding well-trained undergraduates / graduates of Masters programs ready to be
  recruited into research teams as PhD students.
- Ditto for external stakeholders, e.g., the media, the legal profession, needing to find
  specific expertise, often at short notice.
- A stimulating environment for staff, including social scientists such as those who have
  recently voted with their feet against employment in a “language plus” department.
- Appropriate and efficient flow-through into PhD programs in all Departments of the
  Faculty
- More effective internal governance, featuring (a) a higher ratio of participatory to
  representative democracy than is possible in a macro-Faculty; (b) routine direct
  communication between Dean and Department Heads, so that there is:
  - Shared understanding of issues;
  - Agreement on strategic priorities;
  - Discussion of the implications where choices between evils must be made; shared
    responsibility for adverse consequences.

Question 8

Broadly speaking, I agree with the Asian Studies departments that the University’s
International Portfolio should have no hierarchical oversight of academic Area Studies
programs. There should, however, be organizational provision for facilitating productive
 collaboration between a future Faculty of East- and South-world Studies and bodies that fall
within the purview of the International Portfolio.

To take a pertinent example, I encourage the Review Panel to look at the website of the
Confucius Institute of the University of Western Australia for information about its Australia-
This apparently splendid program arose out of the initiative of a graduate student with
personal knowledge of a remote community in South-west China. For this reason, it cannot
be effortlessly replicated, and yet it might provide inspiration for similar initiatives here in
Sydney. In view of the strength of existing research collaborations between the Faculty of
Medicine and Chinese partners, it would seem that a project focusing on community health in
a poor part of China might be appropriate. Alternatively, one might seek joint sponsorship
with such organizations as the IWDA (International Women’s Development Agency) for a
women’s well-being initiative inspired by concern to reduce the suicide rate among young
rural women. The suicide statistics for younger people in contemporary China have been dominated, to a staggering extent, by rural females (see the 1980s and 1990s data cited in Li, 2007, p. 31): an interdisciplinary research program involving expertise in development studies, gender-focused sociology / anthropology, and mental health might inform philanthropic initiatives aimed at addressing a little-known humanitarian crisis at the local level.

Thus it is not just that the Confucius Institute could provide valuable extra-curricular cultural activities for our undergraduates. If we are imaginative, we may also be able to create symbiosis between the outreach mission of the Confucius Institute and the research mission of an Area Studies program whose leading *raison d’être* is as specified by Professor Garton (2009, p. 5).

**Reference List**


To Whom It May Concern:

I am currently completing a Masters in International Studies by coursework and was interested to read that you are considering expanding the Area Studies offered at the University.

One of the areas which I feel is currently neglected is the Indian Ocean rim. There are no dedicated courses covering the politics of this area, whilst there are numerous courses focusing on East Asia and/or the Pacific rim.

The Indian Ocean is increasingly important with the emergence of India as a significant power, the continued US maritime presence, and China’s growing influence. In addition to this, a focus on the Indian Ocean rim encompasses the hydrocarbon rich economies of the Persian Gulf.

Australia’s attention is primarily focused on East Asia and the Pacific, with insufficient attention paid to the fact that we are also an Indian Ocean rim country. Australia’s growing trading relationship with India and the Middle East gives us a vested interest in events shaping this part of the world.

An Area Studies department focusing on the Indian Ocean rim would not only cover strategic and economic issues, but also environmental factors such as rising sea levels. In addition, there could be scope for exploring the extensive historical and cultural links of the Indian Ocean rim.

Throughout my degree I have studied a great deal about East Asia, including the following courses:

- Asia-Pacific Politics (GOVT6136)
- Development Dilemmas in Southeast Asia (GOVT6108)
- China in the World Economy (ECOP6016)

In each of these courses, a deeper understanding of India and the broader Indian Ocean rim would have been very valuable.

Please note I am providing these views openly.

Best regards

Eli Oshorov
Professor Philip Hirsch (Professor of Human Geography and Director, Australian Mekong Resource Centre)

Received 16 June 2009

Area Studies Discussion Paper

Response by

Philip Hirsch

Professor of Human Geography, School of Geosciences and Director, Australian Mekong Resource Centre, University of Sydney

I will respond on four main inter-related issues:

- Area studies and discipline-based studies
- Area studies and postgraduate research training
- Potential institutional arrangements for area studies at the University of Sydney
- Financial arrangements for area studies support

1. Area studies and discipline-based studies

At the University of Sydney, a longstanding weakness of area studies has been that the institutionalisation of area-specific expertise has been in the School of Languages and Cultures, formerly Asian Studies/SE Asian Studies/Indonesian studies, while much of the discipline-based expertise has been dispersed with no area-studies focus apart from RIAP, which has been outside the main teaching and research game. As such, there has been a divide between the teaching of languages and associated cultural studies, on the one hand, and the location of area-specific knowledge in economics, history, geography, agriculture, anthropology and so on.

A common dilemma or tension in creating an area studies program is that it can be seen to be descriptive and atheoretical and to undermine the disciplinary core in undergraduate and postgraduate studies. If staff with area expertise were to be taken from their disciplinary “home” departments and relocated to an area studies centre, or if undergraduate units of study and postgraduate training were to be dissociated from their disciplinary locations, area studies could miss the strength of the University’s (albeit scattered) expertise in applying disciplinary strengths to study of a region.

Clearly the challenge for an area studies program is to maintain the disciplinary basis for teaching and research, while bringing together a multi-disciplinary (rather than non-disciplinary) critical mass of scholarship on key regions. One way to do this is to organise postgraduate seminars, and perhaps more structured graduate training, and undergraduate units of study in which disciplines remain distinct within a multi-disciplinary program. Of course there is scope for cross-disciplinary teaching in the social sciences in areas or around themes of common disciplinary concern. Another way is to foster cross-disciplinary research in which the complementarity of the respective disciplines, rather than the region qua region, is the core of the project, but where the leading researchers in each discipline are also area
specialists. In other words, area studies have the potential to stimulate cross-disciplinary teaching and research across departmental and faculty boundaries, while maintaining the complementarity of discipline strengths at the core.

Part of the strategy for maintaining a strong disciplinary core to area studies may be to encourage individual disciplines to build up and “strut” their area studies expertise. Some departments (eg geography, anthropology, history, agricultural economics) already tend to specialise in particular regions, but not necessarily to publicise or strategise their area focus sufficiently (Geography – two academics with fluency in three SE Asian languages, competence in two others, and two further academics with a significant research profile in SE Asia; nine HDR completions on SE Asia in the past 5 years). An area studies program would help identify the strengths and complementaries and over time could also provide an incentive by reputation for other departments to develop area-specific strengths in those area studies programs for which the University has a strong reputation.

2. Area studies and postgraduate research training

Postgraduate research students tend to identify themselves with disciplines and disciplinary expertise of particular supervisors rather than with area groupings, yet students whose theses are based in offshore research also benefit from postgraduate training infrastructure around regional knowledge. Three particular elements of this come to mind. First is language training, which is currently in a dire condition at the University of Sydney, and indeed more widely in Australia, for students wishing to do research anywhere but Indonesia (in the case of SE Asian Studies). Innovative approaches to language training, including significant in-country opportunities and possibly US-style consortium-based summer intensive models, need to be investigated, designed, championed and managed by area studies programs. Second is the opportunity to develop a rounded knowledge of the country and/or region on which the thesis is to be based. Third is the opportunity to interact with a critical mass of fellow research students working on the same country and/or region, including students from the region. Area studies programs with strong discipline-oriented components tend to attract students from the area under study. In Geography, for example, of 15 postgraduate research students currently working on SE Asia, 11 are from the region. In disciplines unable to achieve this critical mass in the first instance, the cross-disciplinary training fostered by an area studies program would help attract students through the profile of the program.

With the prospect of more structured postgraduate training across disciplines being proposed by the Institute of Social Sciences, an area studies program could organise classes and seminars that have a regional frame of reference. These could go beyond social sciences to include the humanities.

I recommend that the Review Team meet with the group of about 15 SE Asia-oriented postgraduates who take part in the weekly postgraduate seminar class organised that I organise in Geography, but which also includes some students from other disciplines. Our theme this semester has been the disciplinary vs area studies underpinnings of thesis research, and we held a lively discussion around the Terms of Reference for this review. The notes from this meeting have been submitted separately to the Review Team.

3. Potential institutional arrangements for area studies at the University of Sydney
The need to maintain disciplinary strengths in the teaching of area studies points to a framework for area studies that stops short of a Centre- or Institute-based approach and rather suggests a well-supported and strategically driven program-based approach – at least in the first instance. An area studies program could pull together existing Centres and cross-departmental initiatives (eg for SE Asia: Australian Mekong Resource Centre, Australian Cambodia Research Initiative, Centre for Asia Pacific Law, Australian Centre for Asian Art and Archaeology, Greater Angkor Project) as well as individual expertise from within existing departments under, for example, a Program in Southeast Asian Studies. The program could then support the existing areas of strength in the kinds of activities outlined above. The program would need a secretariat, and probably a rotating academic director seconded from within the University, but need not require another level of administration and another site or layer of competition for research quantum. Indeed, the establishment of a separate devolved unit dependent on its ability to raise funds in competition with other area-based expertise around the university could mitigate against collaboration rather than supporting it.

4. Financial arrangements for area studies support

The institutional arrangement suggested under item 3 means that the University would need to support the program from central funding. The performance indicators that would ensure continued support would be in “value added” measured in terms of HDR students attracted, cross-disciplinary research funding awarded, and other activity generated by the critical mass, strategic direction and profile achieved by the program. This still leaves a financial quandary for existing area studies-related Centres that are located financially within existing Schools or Departments and whose contribution in publications and attracting research funding and postgraduate students is not recognised financially beyond their Departmental location. Support for such areas of strength might also be part of the University area studies approach based on encouraging disciplines to build up regional specialisation.
Mr Thomas Barnes (Postgraduate Student (PhD, Discipline of Political Economy, School of Social and Political Sciences)
Received 17 June 2009

Submission in response to discussion paper, 'Review of Area Studies' University of Sydney (April 2009)

Thomas Barnes, PhD candidate, Discipline of Political Economy, School of Social and Political Sciences

Comment made in a personal capacity in response to Question 9: ‘What lessons can be learnt for the establishment of university-wide mechanisms for Area Studies from experiences at Sydney and elsewhere in supporting cross-disciplinary activities organised around thematic areas of study and vice versa?’

I write this submission as a very modest contribution based on my experience as a postgraduate research student. I am in the third year of my PhD candidacy. My research deals with the generation of different forms of employment in four urban centres in India, exploring the relationship between economic growth and jobs growth at a state-level. I have undertaken two research trips to India – the first in December 2007 to Gurgaon, Haryana to present at the 12th international colloquium of the Asia-Pacific Researchers in Organisation Studies (APROS) group; the second to conduct field work in February 2009. This involved arranging access to and collecting secondary data from the Directors of Economics and Statistics within the Ministry of Planning in four state governments (Delhi, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Haryana). I base this submission on this research experience as well as impressions formed during my studies here at the University of Sydney.

Of course my interest in this discussion comes from self-interest as well as intellectual curiosity! I am particularly interested to see the development of new avenues for critical social inquiry into South Asian political and economic questions. I take the kind of inter-disciplinary approach that fits broadly into an Area Studies framework, combining aspects of historical and sociological inquiry with a focus on economic categories of analysis.

One difficulty I faced in constructing a basis for my research was the lack of obvious links between the university and higher education institutions in India. Partly as a consequence, my field work involved a considerable financial and academic ‘gamble’. While I assume there is often a similar element of risk in any overseas investigation, my efforts to obtain secondary data unavailable outside India involved making direct approaches to Indian government institutions without critical ‘on-the-ground’ advice. In hindsight, the experience, while challenging, turned out to be personally rewarding and fruitful from a research perspective. However the aid of local knowledge garnered through institutional links via the University of Sydney would certainly have helped the process.

This modest experience does not address the broader questions posed in the Area Studies discussion paper. I note, however, the argument posed in the paper that South Asia is a region presenting one possible route for the strategic development of Area Studies. The growing popular discourse about India’s international economic and political power is of relevance here. In this context, I also note the call for the establishment of an ‘Australia-India Institute’
by Mr Neville Roach and others. Whether or not such an approach to India (or indeed South Asia) is useful or viable, I would comment that it is important that judgements about institutional links between Australia and South Asia not be confined to ‘bottom line’ economic concerns such as international student links or Australian business investment opportunities in South Asian markets and that the question of critically-minded social inquiry be taken into account. Even if such concerns are not fully addressed within the framework of a stand-alone ‘institute’, there is considerable scope for improving the institutional higher education links between Australia and South Asia with relevant, exploratory social science as a central concern.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas Barnes

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Dear Stephen

Brief comment in my capacity as current Head of Dept of Archaeology. This is a summary of publicly available information about current state of area studies within our Dept only. I've not had time to canvas a ‘Departmental response’ and doubt a consensus would exist anyway. Many key staff are also away on fieldwork overseas and off e-mail.

I circulated the paper to all staff (EFT, Research Fellows etc) and invited them to make an individual reply also.

Q 1. Current geographical areas of research and research-linked teaching focus within the Dept of Archaeology. Strengths in all these areas.

SE Asia (esp. Cambodia)
SW Asia (esp. Iran)
Jordan
Central Asia
China
Mediterranean (Greece, Italy)
Australia (esp. Sydney region, NSW, Tasmania, Northern Territory)
Pacific (esp. Solomon Islands, PNG)
Russia

Q 10

I'm sure each member of staff could/would argue that their own geographical area should be given priority.
PG research students and PDFs are currently much less interested in Australian than overseas archaeology.

Many thanks

Sarah

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Head of Department

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Co-Director Archaeology of Sydney Research Group

The Register of Archaeology Work Experience Partners
Dear Stephen

Q2.

As stated USyD already has considerable strengths in some Area Studies which can be built on strategically.

Is the University thinking of ways to better support Australian Studies? Issues – which many know about – concern the relative status of some Australian research esp. in the Humanities which by definition is ‘national’ rather than ‘international’ and perceived relative status of Australian academic publications in an increasingly commercialised global publishing industry.

Many thanks

Sarah

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The Register of Archaeology Work Experience Partners
June 18, 2009

Professor Stephen Garton
Chair, Review of Area Studies
University of Sydney

Dear Stephen,

I read with interest the discussion paper about area studies. As you know, at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (2003-8), I was on the executive committee of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, so I had ample opportunity to reflect on area studies in the modern research university. The University of Wisconsin now boasts more Title VI grants than any other in the United States, and therefore claims to be the leading institution for area studies. Not surprisingly, then, I have a few responses to make to the questions you ask.

2. **Strengths and weaknesses.** I agree that currently we have special strength in studies of the United States and, to a lesser extent, in Southeast Asian studies. Yet there are significant gaps in our coverage of Southeast Asia (especially in the Philippines, Thailand, Indochina). On the other hand, one of our emerging strengths in research into this region—omitted in the report—is in science and technology studies (STS). Indeed, we rival the National University of Singapore in the new field of Southeast Asian STS. These studies have the potential to make our Southeast Asian studies program truly distinctive.

I was surprised to find no reference to another region in which the University of Sydney has a long tradition of scholarship: the Pacific. Sydney has excelled in Pacific research since the 1920s. Indeed, we currently host one of the Mellon Foundation’s Sawyer seminars because of our international reputation for Pacific studies. This is an area greatly under-studied in the U.S. and therefore ripe for development here. (There is some effort to study the Pacific in Hawaii, of course, and also—feeble—at some University of California campuses and at Wisconsin and Michigan.)

6. **Organisational and administrative models.** I believe the University of Wisconsin offers as good a model for this as any other. There, the area studies centres were the responsibility of the International Office. Importantly, they were housed together in a central campus building, each with 2-3 offices, and sharing 2 separate seminar rooms, allowing for extensive interaction between programmes. Each centre had an executive officer who was an academic staff member (i.e. not faculty but having a Ph.D. and research record in the field). All faculty members of the centres were based in the relevant disciplinary department, and one served as director for 2-3 years in rotation. The members of the centre, including students, would gather for a seminar every week. There was also an extensive set of social activities.

9. **Other mechanisms for support of thematic/cross-disciplinary initiatives.** I could write a much longer submission on this matter alone. Let me just say you should look closely at the cluster hire initiative at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. This was amazingly complex and
difficult to organise, but also remarkably successful. It was administered through the Provost’s office there. I’m happy to discuss this with you, if you’re interested.

10. Other issues. One of the criticisms of area studies in the United States has been the artificially bounded character of their expertise, in particular, the way in which they ignore contemporary migrations and diasporas. Vicente Rafael (among others) has written about how area studies need to connect with “hyphenated” American studies – at the University of Washington—Seattle, he has established a Southeast Asian studies centre which incorporates research and teaching in Philippine-American studies, Thai-American studies, etc. Here at Sydney we too have the opportunity to engage local communities from the regions in our area studies scholarship. Not only does this suggest improvements in research and teaching (especially for undergraduates with family connections to these areas), but it also gives access to potential sources of funding. (For example, Rafael tells me the Filipino community in Seattle has supported his program quite generously.)

I hope this is helpful. I find it tremendously encouraging that you are considering these developments. If I can be of any further assistance, do let me know, though you’ll understand that in the circumstances my ability to do much in the next month or two will be limited.

Best wishes,

Warwick Anderson
Dear Stephen,

I can tell you some more about the cluster hires since I was involved in many of them - the department I chaired was more successful gaining cluster hires than any other. I have less to say about the logistics of the area studies administration - but if you like, I can ask some colleagues who are more closely involved.

1. Cluster hires. The url for these is: [http://www.clusters.wisc.edu/](http://www.clusters.wisc.edu/) The process is a cumbersome one, but it did bring excellent scholars to the university and foster interdisciplinary work (sometimes "transdisciplinary" which became the currency of choice). As you can see from the web pages, each year the provost called for proposals for a new cluster. The lines for this new cluster would be funded directly through the provost's office and may disappear once the successful candidate left. If the proposal was successful, a search committee would be established, trying to bring in the key parties - these would cross schools, so often there might have to be 12 or so on the committee. Usually there would be 4 or so positions, broadly defined in terms of discipline, but narrowly in terms of topic. The university would advertise widely, and also very actively use informal means of attracting applicants. For each position there would be a short list of 4 or so. One the decision was made, it was necessary to find a tenure home in some department. Often the department would then go through its own process of evaluation. The process ceased effectively in 2006 because of budgetary problems.

The biggest problems were: a) poor advertising, difficulty in covering all relevant disciplines, hence the reliance on informal networks. b) Incongruence between the cluster hire committee and the relevant department executive committee, leading to "department shopping." c) fears that interdisciplinary hires were being favored at the expense of core disciplinary needs.

There was no need to hire in area studies through the cluster hire process at Madison, but it would seem like an option at Sydney.

2. Area studies administration at Madison. The relevant url is: [http://www.intl-institute.wisc.edu/](http://www.intl-institute.wisc.edu/)

At Madison, the area studies programs are part of the International Institute, part of the School of International Studies and Programs. The directors of all 16 international programs are represented on the APC (academic planning council) which reports to the dean of the school. The directors of area studies expressed concerns while I was there that they were taken for granted, and the dean was more interested in supporting cross-cutting international research circles. I thought the research circles were a good idea (Richard Keller and I ran one on the globalization of psychoanalytic subjectivities, which proved success, I think; and I set up another, Empires in Transition, which recently held a conference here at Sydney). You may want to consider support for international research circles too: [http://www.intl-institute.wisc.edu/Research/](http://www.intl-institute.wisc.edu/Research/)
Again, I could tell you a lot more about the research circles, if you're interested.

It seems to me that the structure of the portfolio of the Sydney DVC-International is analogous, but it would need to be filled in much more with research and teaching activities, rather than service and promotional ones.

I draw your attention to the global studies programs that count as area studies at Madison too. At Sydney, could we consider in addition to standard area studies programs such as: Global and Transnational Studies; and Comparative Indigenous Studies?

Finally, I'd just like to say that for many years now, as I've traversed the Pacific, it's seemed obvious to me that the best models for universities like Sydney and Melbourne are the large, successful state research universities in the US: Michigan, Wisconsin-Madison, and UC-Berkeley (probably in that order). The efforts of Melbourne to become the Harvard of the south (as a previous VC once called it) always looked a little risible. As someone who's taught at Harvard, Berkeley and Madison, I can assure you the latter two are much better models.

I hope this is helpful.

Best wishes, Warwick
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Warwick H Anderson, MD, PhD
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19 June 2009

Professor Stephen Garton
Chair, Review Panel
Review of Area Studies Work Slate Project
University of Sydney
areastudies.review@usyd.edu.au

Dear Stephen

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Review of Area Studies Discussion Paper. We write on behalf of the Menzies Centre for Health Policy. Our comments respond to Questions 2a, 5 and 6b in the Discussion Paper.

**Question 2a: What are our Area Studies strengths and weaknesses, and where do we want our future strengths to be?**

The Menzies Centre for Health Policy (MCHP) is a joint venture between the University of Sydney and The Australian National University. It aims to develop a better understanding of Australian and international health systems. The Centre encourages informed debate about how citizens can influence health policy to ensure that it is consistent with their values and priorities and is able to deliver safe, high quality health care that is sustainable in the long term.

The MCHP has a geographical ‘area strength’ in the Asia-Pacific region. As the Asia-Pacific hub of the global Oxford Health Alliance, MCHP is at the forefront of a multi-sectoral global initiative to reduce the burden of chronic disease. Our current initiatives include:

**Cardiovascular disease in developing economies**

With research funding from the Initiative for Cardiovascular Health Research in the Developing Countries, the MCHP has worked on the economic consequences of cardiovascular disease and the translation of these economic insights into effective preventive and control strategies through the recruitment of industry, labour, treasury and finance ministers from developing countries.
This work builds on a report written by Stephen Leeder and colleagues on the challenge of cardiovascular disease in developing economies, *A Race Against Time*.

A study of the microeconomic consequences in families of people admitted to hospital in the previous two years for heart disease is being conducted in centres in China, India, Malaysia, Argentina and Tanzania. The family studies are being supplemented by a review of the cost effectiveness of various cardiovascular disease preventive interventions in developing countries.

**The impact of trade and fiscal policy on population nutrition in the Pacific Islands**

The MCHP is engaged in analysing the interactions between trade, food and health in the Pacific. Research to date has examined the historical interaction between trade and diets in Pacific Island nations, particularly in relation to the rapid increases in chronic diseases over the past 50 years.

The project is also investigating the potential to use trade and fiscal policy tools in diet-related disease prevention, through the evaluation of existing innovative policies, such as fatty meat bans and soft drink taxes. The lead researcher on this component has a two-month posting at WHO headquarters with the Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity & Health team in June/July.

**AusAID links**

Additionally, MCHP is conducting an AusAID-funded study on health policy development in the Pacific region. While most of health policy focuses on what health policy reforms countries should introduce, there has been little analysis of how countries carry out reforms, how policy is developed and implemented, and who is involved in these processes.

This study provides a framework to understand health policy development in the region and looks at case studies of local, regional and international policy-making experiences with a view to elucidating challenges in the policy cycle and areas where Pacific evidence-based policy-making capacity should be strengthened.

**Indonesia**

Peter Heywood, an honorary professor at the MCHP with a long career with the World Bank, has received Ford Foundation funding since 2007 to conduct several health projects in Indonesia. He has investigated the impact of decentralisation on health service delivery, health sector funding and health outcomes in Java and on the health care workforce in West Java. His findings have been of great interest to both the Ford Foundation in Jakarta and Indonesian health authorities. More recently Professor Heywood has been funded to design an intervention aimed at reducing maternal mortality in West Java.

**The Diabetes Unit**

The MCHP’s Diabetes Unit undertakes work on: building the evidence base for prevention and health care policy; strategic planning for population health improvement; health and sustainability; and the link between chronic disease prevention and aspects of climate change. The Diabetes Unit has a strong track record and long history of work in international health, particularly in the Western Pacific Region. Its mission is to reduce environmental and social causes and consequences of diabetes and related chronic conditions. It strives to honour this commitment through its work in international health in the following ways:

- leading capacity building projects in Pacific Islands countries (currently Nauru and Vanuatu);
undertaking consultancies for AusAID and WHO-WPRO (Tonga, Mongolia, Saipan);
advocacy through its leadership of the Oxford Health Alliance (OxHA) Asia-Pacific Centre;
developing regional prevention and care action plans for diabetes (WPR 2000, Africa 2006);
training attachments for Pacific Island personnel and the engagement of civil society.

The Director of The Diabetes Unit, Associate Professor Ruth Colagiuri is a member of the Regional Council of the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) - WPR and chairs the IDF’s Global Task Force on National Diabetes Policy and Action which is currently implementing a global program of regional workshops on national diabetes strategies and plans. Associate Professor Colagiuri leads the Health Theme of the University of Sydney’s Institute for Sustainable Solutions and is bringing this perspective into the Unit’s work in international health.

**Question 5: What kinds of activities should be pursued through Area Studies centres?**

The MCHP supports an Area Studies centre that builds capacity for sustainability and social cohesion in Pacific Island countries by addressing chronic disease prevention and aspects of climate change as an integrated ‘package’.

Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) are currently facing twin crises of:

1. **Chronic diseases**
   Fuelled by changes to diet and physical activity resulting from rapid westernization and urbanisation - commonly manifest as obesity - diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and kidney failure are rampant in PICTs and now account for three in four deaths in all Pacific Islands except Papua New Guinea. Shocking as this is, it does not tell the full story of the disability, personal suffering and societal cost that accrue from the often long lead in time from diagnosis –or the onset of complications - to death. It is this burden that devastates individuals and families and drives macroeconomic costs and damage to human (workforce) and social capital. Further, people with chronic diseases are more likely to get infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS and TB, and anecdotal evidence suggests that people with diabetes were significantly over represented among the deaths resulting from the Hong Kong SARS epidemic of 2003/4.

2. **Climate change**
   Surface temperatures in several parts of the Pacific have risen alarmingly in the last decade. Cyclonic intensity is increasing, and rising sea levels, food insecurity, lack of water, forest degradation and loss of natural food sources are among the many overwhelming challenges currently faced by PICTs. Rapid urbanization (in some countries up to 40% of the population now live in urban areas) is exacerbating these changes and threatening those factors of PICT culture that have traditionally protected against so-called lifestyle diseases, social dysfunction and disharmony.

   The combined effect of climate change and chronic diseases is undermining the very fabric of PICTs and threatening their long-term viability. These parallel modern scourges impact negatively on social cohesion, political stability, street and domestic violence, literacy, social and gender equality, mental health and poverty.

   The Sydney Resolution (refer Appendix 1) sets out a compelling case and clear framework for addressing chronic diseases and climate change. The urgent need to address climate change is apparent to virtually all. Although equally imperative, the need to address chronic
diseases is not so apparent or emotive and health is often viewed as the poor relation - never contributing to the economy but always draining it. By piggy-backing health onto the climate change agenda, the proposed approach provides a means of placing health higher on the agenda of PICT Governments as a whole - not just Ministries of Health - and has the potential to reap returns on investment far over and above those expected from investing separately in these two issues.

The benefits of an Area Studies centre include:

**Pacific Island countries**
- Greater capacity of health systems to work across government and private sectors to ‘deliver’;
- Stronger (more secure and cohesive, less vulnerable) societies;
- Economies of scale and broader return on investment;
- Exposure to expert resource people and opportunities for supportive partnerships;
- Enhanced capacity to protect health and human and social capital;
- Improved capability to solve problems and deal effectively with contemporary imperatives;
- A synergistic focal point for fostering intersectoral government co-operation;
- Joined up policy and legislation for health and environmental sustainability.

**University of Sydney**
- Enhanced profile and academic leadership in the Asia-Pacific region;
- Opportunities for future partnerships;
- Exposure of staff and students to meaningful engagement in the pursuit of solutions to major societal issues.

**Question 6b: Which operating model, or models, are preferred for this University and why?**

The University of Sydney (USyd) has the opportunity to be the first major academic institution to develop an integrated capacity to study and strategise the solutions to chronic disease and climate change (CDCC) in Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs).

**Assets**
- USyd has resident within its academic leadership, skills and expertise from every discipline needed to develop an integrated plan for integrated CCDC solutions.
- Just as the problem is now global, USyd is a global institution with graduates around the world with academic linkages across the globe that can contribute to the solutions.
- USyd is located at the centre of immigration in Australia. Its neighborhood is ‘global’ and global solutions developed at USyd can be tested locally.
- Sydney is also home to a large number of multinational corporations with workforces around the world, and hence an aggregation of business interest in these problems is located in Australia.
- USyd has done seminal work in documenting the nature of these problems.

**Goals**
USyd fulfils the function of a loom on which the threads of insight and skill from all disciplines and other countries are woven together to achieve a massive global improvement in health. We propose a set of five-year goals (including research, training, and communications) for an Area Studies centre in CDCC in PICTs:

- **Goal 1**: To institutionalise the initiative and to then create a base for the initiative at USyd. This will require short-term core support for planning.
Goal 2: Integrate research capacity— to extend and broaden and deepen existing research capacity in all elements and sectors of CDCC, and to integrate research into collaborative strategies for prevention and disease management in PICTs.

Goal 3: Integrate educational approaches – to develop and disseminate an integrated curriculum across schools, sectors and skills, for the development of leadership that can be exercised in every sector of society and the economy.

Goal 4: Develop and deliver training capacity – to skill up existing leadership from around the world about the nature of the problems of CDCC and the potential for developing, and contributing to, preventive strategies.

Goal 5: Build partnerships – to establish for USyd a critical mass of partnerships with PICTs and the Asia-Pacific region more broadly for the purposes of joint research, programmatic design and impact on local (global) institutions.

Goal 6: Raise public visibility - to use the stature of USyd, the breadth of the partnerships, and the integrated leadership that it creates, to raise the visibility of CDCC at an international level.

Plan of action
Each of the goals needs to be broken down into components of action with a time line. We offer a series of priority organisational steps.

Let us suppose that we had eight months (entirely arbitrary) to ‘get the business together’. Assuming that core, basic support were available in the first, development phase, the following are important actions.

First, we would need to motivate leadership within USyd and its constituent departments and schools.

Second, we would need to acquire a planning grant (or similar) to support an interim secretariat.

Third, we would develop a five year business plan for an initiative that would result in an investible entity.

Fourth, we would research, approach and cultivate sources of likely long-term support.

Fifth, we would identify across USyd, existing and past initiatives but more importantly future ideas in pursuit of the goals.

Sixth, when a business plan (including likely costs) was developed for the Area Studies centre, time would need to be spent assessing with potential international partners whether they would be willing to work with us. In other words, this would be an assessment to whether its hypothetical leadership could be exercised. For a commercial partner, we would need to establish that the centre would deliver what those corporations want in the markets of interest to them. This will need to be tested: would a commercial commitment to the initiative in Australia really count positively in their market in Malaysia? This is not a decision that can be taken by any one individual in a corporation: it would need to be checked out by communications and top management etc.

The long term support of this centre needs to come from organised philanthropy, and government (including research funding). If a corporation nominated a site in which they would wish to invest overseas, then we would need to know whether those institutions would be happy to work with us. We would need to be sure that the plan was bankable (i.e., that wrapping money around the problem is feasible and desirable).
A second audience in which the plan would need to be tested includes community organisations (Heart Foundations and so forth) and active civil society groups.

We would value the opportunity to discuss this submission with you further. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information about the ideas raised.

Sincerely

Stephen Leeder
Director
Menzies Centre for Health Policy

Ruth Colagiuri
Director, The Diabetes Unit
Menzies Centre for Health Policy
The Sydney Resolution
February 2008

Healthy People in Healthy Places on a Healthy Planet

The way we live is making people sick. It is also making our planet sick. It is not sustainable. We can do better.

The world is now facing the most serious challenges to human health. The magnitude and complexity of these challenges require the broadest alliance and partnership of stakeholder groups to confront this growing and urgent problem. Four preventable chronic diseases – heart disease/stroke, diabetes, chronic lung disease and cancer – account for 50% of the world’s deaths. Their underlying causes are tobacco use, physical inactivity and poor diet.

These preventable chronic diseases are at epidemic proportions. They are increasingly affecting younger people and cause physical disability, depression, and early death. There are immense costs to society in lost productivity and increased use of health services. The epidemic threatens economic stability in developed and developing countries alike. Families striving to escape the poverty trap are pushed back into disadvantage and despair. The problem is similar to that of climate change in that it affects the whole world, is the result of our way of living and, crucially, can be reversed.

Urgent action is needed. There is a clear way forward. The four major chronic diseases can largely be prevented, but there is no simple or quick solution. To achieve real change, it is necessary to bring together dedicated stakeholders from all parts of society. The development of how we live as societies, share opportunities, interact with the natural environment and how we design our cities, transport systems, food systems, work places and housing will fundamentally determine future patterns of health and disease. We need health services focussed on prevention as well as cures and we need our world free of tobacco. We must fundamentally reshape our social and physical environments so that they are aligned with eradicating this epidemic of chronic disease.

The call to action

We call on the United Nations’ agencies, governments, corporations and businesses, donor agencies, professionals, consumers, non-government organisations and employee unions, civil society and individuals to collaborate in taking urgent action to halt the devastating global impact of chronic diseases. We know that change is possible for individuals and families, communities and nations and that the change will promote economic and environmental sustainability. We need:

- Healthy places – designing towns, cities and rural areas, which are smoke-free, and where it is easy to walk, cycle and play, with unpolluted open spaces and safe local areas that foster social interaction.
- Healthy food – making healthy food affordable, and available to all.
- Healthy business – engaging business in the agendas promoting healthy people, healthy places, healthy planet and making good health good business.
- Healthy public policy –formulating comprehensive, innovative and ‘joined-up’ legislation and social and economic policies that promote health.
- Healthy societies – addressing equity and socio-economic disadvantage.

Oxford Health Alliance, 27 February 2008
June 19, 2009

Prof. Stephen Garton, Provost Designate
Head, Review Panel, Area Studies Work Slate
Office of the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor
University of Sydney

RE: Area Studies in the ancient cultures of Europe and the Near East

Dear Professor Garton,

I enclose, for your consideration, a statement regarding the situation and potentialities of declaring as an area study the ancient cultures of Europe and the Near East.

The attached document is a personal submission, from my perspective as Professor of Classical Archaeology, but it has been composed in consultation with a group of colleagues in the three pertinent academic departments:

Archaeology: Dr. Lesley Beemont, Dr. Ted Robinson
Classics and Ancient History: Prof. Eric Csapo, Prof. Peter Wilson
Philosophy: Assoc. Prof. Rick Benitez

My colleagues in Near Eastern archaeology, Prof. Dan Potts and Assoc. Prof. Alison Beatts, are abroad at present, and so not available for consultation. They supported the foundation of CCANESA, which is in the same spirit.

At the heart of this proposal is a conviction that the most exciting recent international development in the field has been the breaking down of barriers between former narrow disciplines (language, literature, history, archaeology, art; Classical and Near Eastern studies) in favour of a general cultural studies approach. Where academic structures are allowed to shift in support of such a development, great things can and do happen.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret C. Miller
Area Studies: Classical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies

At the University of Sydney today, the study of the culture and history of the ancient civilisations of Greece, Rome, and the Near and Middle East is fragmented in separate administrative entities: the Department of Classics and Ancient History, the Department of Archaeology (Near Eastern and Classical), the Department of Philosophy, the Australian Archaeological Institute at Athens (AAIA), the Near Eastern Archaeology Foundation (NEAF), and the Nicholson Museum. In its aggregate the breadth and depth of expertise in the ancient world significantly exceeds that of any university in the Southern hemisphere and constitutes one of the strongest internationally.

In Europe and North America, the study of the ancient world has grown increasingly multidisciplinary over the last twenty years. Here, the recent renewal of the Department of Classics and Ancient History and the appointment of a new professor of Classical Archaeology resulted in a new era of collaboration in teaching and research. We are no longer comfortable with the structural boundaries established by earlier generations of scholars in our various sub-disciplines. We have already taken significant steps towards the creation of a common research and teaching culture by forging links at all levels.

Existing Research Collaboration

- Members of the Dept. of Classics and Ancient History (Prof. Wilson, Prof. Csapo, Dr. Nervegna) recently submitted an ARC Discovery application for a project related to research of the ancient theatre together with members of the Dept. of Archaeology (Em. Prof. Green, Dr. Robinson).

- Members of the AAIA (Dr. Paspalas) and of the Dept. of Archaeology (Prof. Miller, Dr. Beaumont) recently submitted an ARC Discovery application for the Zagora field project in Greece.

- A current ARC Discovery project, Academies under Stress: the Reinvention and Survival of Platonist Schools, is a collaboration between philosophers in Departments of Philosophy (Assoc. Prof. Benitez here and Assoc. Prof. D. Baltzly, Monash) and in Departments of Classics (Prof. H. A. S. Tarrant, Newcastle; Prof. F. Renaud, Moncton, Canada).

Other areas of research synergy are readily visible:

- The social historical interests of Dr. Blanshard (Classics and Ancient History) mesh with those of Dr. Beaumont (Archaeology) whose important book on children in ancient Greece will soon be published.

- The social history of Italy before the Romans (Classics and Ancient History) is also a significant component of the archaeological fieldwork of Dr. Robinson (Archaeology).

- The tradition of archaeological fieldwork supported by NEAF has yielded extensive data on the Hellenistic and Roman Near East, whose social and economic histories figure high in current studies (Dr. da Costa, Archaeology; Dr. Miles, Classics and Ancient History).

- Ancient religion is another area of shared interest, with specialists in religion in Classics and Ancient History (Prof. Csapo, Dr. Kindt) and in Archaeology, fieldwork at a Greek sanctuary (Dr. Beaumont) and publication in the iconography of religion (Prof. Miller).
The most recent appointment within the area, of Dr. R. Miles (Classics and Ancient History), whose research encompasses ancient history and Roman archaeology, further enriches the synergistic potential of the group.

Existing and Planned Teaching Collaboration

Undergraduate

• Collaboration between the Depts. of Classics and Ancient History (Assoc. Prof. Tatum, Dr. Blanshard, Dr. Roche), Archaeology (Prof. Miller, Dr. Robinson) and Philosophy (Assoc. Prof. Benitez) in delivering the first-year units of study, ANHS 1600+1601, started in 2008; the units have attracted over 1100 students in the first two years. A follow-up is taught in Philosophy, PHIL 2649, “The Classical Mind” (Assoc. Prof. Benitez).

• Philosophy contributes one unit in ancient Greek to the Dept. of Classics and Ancient History: GRKA 3604, Greek Philosophical Texts (Assoc. Prof. Benitez).

• Classics and Ancient History and Archaeology already cross-list units of study for some sectors of their programming (i.e. Ancient History and Classical Archaeology).

• Complementary studies abroad programmes have been successfully initiated by the Depts. of Archaeology (Greece: Dr. Beaumont, Archaeology and Dr. Paspalas, AAIA) and Classics and Ancient History (Italy: Dr. Welch), taught at both UG and PG levels.

Postgraduate

• The taught PG programme, MA in Ancient World Studies, has contributions from Classics, Ancient History and Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology. Its structure and offerings are currently under reconsideration and will re-emerge in an augmented form. It is already clear that a joint venture will yield the most successful product.

• The Dept. of Classics and Ancient History is planning to introduce a post-baccalaureate programme. It provides training to those students who realised too late that they wish to pursue post-graduate studies in the history, languages or archaeology of the Ancient Mediterranean but have not the prerequisite languages for admission to any reputable institution. Such a programme has experienced spectacular success in the USA. It is anticipated that post-bac students will, while studying Greek and Latin, also wish to enrich their background knowledge in the subject areas in which they wish to pursue graduate studies. This will generate a further need for Classics and Ancient History to coordinate with Archaeology and Philosophy.

Within the state more widely, a significant proportion of what is taught as “Ancient History” in high school deals with material culture studies, in a somewhat extraordinary instance of the public school sector being more up-to-date than the university in structuring its offerings in terms of Area Studies.

A Vision for the Future

Collaborative pooling of resources has recently (May 2009) resulted in the foundation of the Centre for Classical and Near Eastern Studies of Australia (CCANESA). The Centre embodies an integration of the research activities of these separate operating units in keeping with recognised shifts in the approach to teaching and scholarship in the broader disciplinary
area. It will give rise to an even more vital intellectual community within which PG learning can thrive.

Plans for the future include:

- Collaboration in developing research partnerships in key areas of extensive common interest (e.g. ancient theatre studies), through pooling resources for mounting international conferences, co-hosting lectures, etc.

- The integration of PG studies through the creation of a PG Pro-seminar led by researchers from different units within CCANESA.

- Thoroughly integrated undergraduate instruction in order to make UG students more competitive applicants for graduate studies internationally while using staff resources more efficiently.

- Honours and PG programmes especially will flourish within such an environment, and stand out in a national and even international context.

Uniting Ancient History and Classics and facets of Archaeology and Philosophy under one umbrella, in the context of the contribution of the AAIA, NEAF and the Nicholson Museum to the research environment, would greatly enhance our international profile and attractiveness to potential PG applicants. Such a move would both further the momentum generated by the foundation of CCANESA and fulfil the objectives of the Area Studies Work Slate Project in facilitating “high profile, high quality research centres, enabling people to come together to work across disciplinary boundaries with a focus on particular geographical or cultural areas.”

M. C. Miller
Archaeology
June 19, 2009
Dr Vek Lewis and Dr Fernanda Peñaloza (Lecturers, Latin American and Spanish Studies in the School of Languages and Cultures)
Received 19 June 2009

Joint response prepared by Dr Vek Lewis (Chair of Spanish and Latin American Studies Department Semester 2 2009 and ongoing) and Dr Fernanda Peñaloza (Coordinator of Sydney University Research Community for Latin America).

Question 1  What is the current extent and state of Area Studies at the University of Sydney?

To understand the current state and potential of Area Studies and its promotion at the University of Sydney, it is vital to look at Latin American research and program initiatives. We have broken down our response to this by highlighting some important factors of both the location of our “area” and its disciplinary/institutional dialogue.

a. Reference to the importance of “South East Asia and the USA”

Latin America is geographically, historically and culturally connected to the USA, hence it would be misleading to completely detach the region from the rest of the Americas (Canada, the US and the Anglo- and Francophone Caribbean). In fact, US and Caribbean-related studies have many points of intersection. In this way, we see our “Area Studies” structure as strongly connected to much critical work that goes on in the social sciences on the US, and the so-called area of US studies has benefited greatly as well from the scholarly work produced in and on Latin America, which not only makes it evident that there are disciplinary and thematic boundaries that are porous, but also that cross-disciplinarity is a long standing tradition. Indeed we are involved in initiatives that relate to Latino/as in the US and border studies in current teaching and research.

This area is better understood as ‘The Americas’. The Americas uniquely encompass both North and South geopolitically, especially at the vantage point of Mexico and the US, whose border is the largest frontier, industrial zone and crossing point for both human and capital movement between Global North and South. No other “area” better represents that globality. Some examples of the global/transnational dimension of our Area are:

* Migration studies: trends and policy - including skilled migration
* Latino/as in the USA - bilingualism, multiculturalism and language policy
* cultural resources - reviving the Australian film industry with transnational funding, distribution and promotional models seen in the New Latin American cinema industry.

In our Sydney University Research Community for Latin America (SURCLA) grouping we already have research projects underway that cover the first two. The third is being incorporated into an undergraduate course offered by Dr Peñaloza in 2010 that will be cross-listed to several majors.

In sum, it should be stated that Latin American Studies encompasses a wide range of disciplines, for example Anthropology, Archaeology, Film and Literary Studies, Economics, Geography, History, Political Science, Sociology, Tropical Medicine and Environmental Studies, many of which are drawn upon in our current research and teaching. Our field is cross-disciplinary by definition as it encompass a variety of areas of expertise that cross established departmental/disciplinary boundaries.

b. “Most country or region specific academic activities appear to take place in single faculties though there are also often other academics carrying out research in and on those specific countries and regions in other faculties.”

Certainly a great number emanate from Arts, but from our experience setting up and leading the SURCLA network, we are beginning to engage with other Faculties such as Education. Given our research portfolio, it is very likely that we will be able to attract more colleagues and students to our activities which is already part of our strategic planning. Part of this has already begun at honours and PhD level.
c. "There are a number of language and culture departments in the School of Languages and Cultures, as well as teaching programs in Asian and European Studies."

Although the Spanish and Latin American Studies Department has partial representation under this rubric, SURCLA's "area" is not represented by either Asian or European descriptors. We believe this previously missing link has only reinforced a lag that the University of Sydney faces in coming up to speed with other centres and institutes that deal with global and area studies worldwide. Latin America and the Americas are a common focus in many other countries. SURCLA was created out of a recognition of the need to articulate this vision of the future – placing Latin American research on the agenda and on the conceptual/academic map, both here (among the Australia-based Latin American communities) and there, that is, in the USA (where Latinos are the largest minority and are major power brokers) and in Latin America. Some of the seismic shifts in global geopolitics indicate the need for brokerage with Latin America, especially given the status of countries such as Venezuela, Chile and Brazil in the 21st century.

Our vision from the beginning of the setting up of SURCLA has been to work toward a centre. The Area Studies Review is the ideal nexus to bring this into the realm of reality.

d. "The University has a Research Institute for the Asia Pacific (in the International Portfolio) which runs international leadership training programs and produces consultancy reports for external (to the University) consumption. The University also has a Confucius Institute, which sits within the International Portfolio and the US Studies Centre is a significant and recent addition to the University campus—if not strictly to the University itself."

It is important to highlight that there was no Sydney University based formal forum through which common interests in Latin American Studies could be channelled and shared, until the creation of SURCLA. Additionally, no other Sydney based University runs research seminars and organises cultural activities with a focus on Latin America. This answers both a student demand (the exponential enrolments at UG level in Spanish are arguably motivated by a strong interest in Latin America among the current generation), but also a community and academy-wide interest. The fact that we have managed to attract to each of our events between 40 to 70 people speaks volumes about the fact that we have identified a demand and we are satisfying it. SURCLA offers a site of debate where members share their ideas, strategies and research experiences with the common goal of advancing knowledge of Latin America. Given our experience, it is our firm belief and conviction that the University is uniquely placed to become the leader in Latin American research, something which our competitors (eg. ANU with ANCLAS, Australian National Centre for Latin American Studies) already threaten to do (as they have done in Asian Studies, for example – a significant loss).

e. "there is a lack of scale in many fields of study that hinders both research and the development of critical mass.”

The Institute for Social Sciences (ISS) is certainly an excellent way to upscale and create critical mass. The ISS has officially acknowledged the importance of SURCLA for its plans of encouraging cross-disciplinarity in the Social Sciences by providing administrative support. Even before ISS’s acknowledgement, this was deeply imprinted in the SURCLA vision. Our pioneer projects already point the way with a FARSS (Faculty of Arts Research Support Scheme) grant to SURCLA members (V. Lewis, F. Peñaloza, V. Quinteros) and Honours students who are carrying out the first stage of a project on Latin American Migration in Sydney. This will give us the basis to produce an ARC project application for 2011. We intend to make the bid for our Area national conference in 2012, held via the Association of Iberian and Latin American Studies of Australasia (AILASA). In addition, we will be contributing to a Government-funded project called The Australia-Latin America Leadership Program (ALALP). Supported by the Australian Government's Council on Australia Latin America Relations (COALAR) and coordinated by Professor Russell Lansbury (Faculty of Economics and Business), the event will attract 36 participants (18 from each of Australia and Latin America) drawn from business, government, trade unions, education, the arts, the community service sector, including NGOs, for a practical and intensive leadership program over a 12 day period. SURCLA will be giving a session on Latin American Studies in Australia for the participants. Another project is the grant proposal to be submitted to COALAR on Indigenous Knowledge
and Sustainability. Inspired by the multimedia Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future (TLSF) run by UNESCO, the projects aim at helping educators in the Higher Education sector of Australia to identify opportunities for integrating in their teaching and learning relevant aspects of Latin American indigenous knowledge in the field of social sciences. The project’s main activity will be a workshop where indigenous leaders and specialists will be responsible for disseminating information, ideas and tools to members of academic staff of Australian Universities. The workshop will also provide a forum where experiences on indigenous sustainability from Latin America and Australia will be channelled and experiences compared. Participants will also have the opportunity to establishing a network of information and activities concerning their experiences in teaching and learning indigenous knowledge.

**Question 2a** What are our Area Studies strengths and weaknesses, and where do we want our future strengths to be? and

**Question 2b** Which cultural or geographical areas should the University focus on and on what grounds should such decisions be made?

We consider that a focus on the Americas, and in particular the major missing element, Latin America, constitutes a future and potential strength for Area Studies at the University of Sydney.

To reiterate, academic, cultural, political and industrial elements of the North-South dialogue are encapsulated by the Americas. China and Japan – both economically and in universities – have already made inroads into Latin America. This is even the case with institutes in the Asia-Pacific. A good example is the Latin American Studies Council of Asia and Oceania (CELAO).

Some important features related to academic knowledge production and expertise exchange that argue the case for the concentration on the Americas include:

* The major breakthroughs seen in research and the impact of social movements in the region - in terms of civil society/NGOs/broad-based popular groups. These new social actors are important on the world scene and within emergent micro and macro politics.

* Leading regional studies which are important for global comprehension of political systems (in political science) – principally concerned with newly democratizing states that are renegotiating global capitalist networks.

Lastly, for Australia & the region what would be most significant are the south-south links; with both regions emerging from peripheries and semi-peripheries, being well-placed as potential horizontal new centres in global and regional geopolitics (the recent signing of the FTA between Australia and Chile underlines this). This is destined to become a burning issue on the radar of trade and equitable development (social and economic justice in the new century).

**Question 3** What relationship should there be between the University’s development of any strategies for Area Studies and its broader strategic planning process?

In order for our specific Area Study field to develop we have to encourage in all Faculties the hiring of staff who specialise in Latin America. We are also promoting the teaching of courses on the region, but support for the expansion of the library collection, securing funding for faculty/student research, as well as support in seeking funds for special lectures, visiting scholars, workshops, and a biennial Conference on the Americas is vital. The creation of a Centre for Latin American Studies would provide a framework and infrastructure for the pursuit of Latin American Studies at the University of Sydney and would assist us more efficiently in generating the resources to support these endeavours. In order to generate credibility and an excellent international reputation we need to support visits by outstanding scholars who are experts in Latin America and who will enrich the teaching of courses on Latin American topics, and strengthen relationships between our Universities and the home institutions of visiting scholars.

**Question 4**

We see the following factors as critical to the success of any Area Studies strategy:
... ensuring that the strategy is academic led: Yes, vital for independence. Relations can be established with industry and other groups, but credibility needs to be maintained.

- ensuring that it has the support of key faculties and their staff;

the adequacy of start-up and ongoing funding for any Area Studies centres that are created: This needs to be prioritised and adequately covered.

- the efficiency of the management structures adopted, and in particular the extent to which the duplication of administrative activities is minimised; Absolutely – vital to have an excellent administrator who is a professorial colleague of renown.

- the extent to which the centres are able to attract high quality staff and students, and in particular international higher degree by research students of the highest calibre; Vital to growth, expansion and sustainability.

- the quality of the international linkages established by the centres; Key contacts, International Portfolio DVC integral here.

- the extent to which they develop international reputations for excellence; and

- the extent to which the establishment of Area Studies structures adds value to the University as a whole.

This is necessary in order to up the university’s status among the best (alongside US and continental institutions and to attract institutes of excellence in the Americas). The DVC has already been engaged in conversations with delegates from Brazilian and Cuban universities. These links were earmarked as important, but are perhaps not yet viable without the firm and visible elevation of our area studies and links at higher levels, and the creation of a Latin America/Americas Centre (with diverse fields and applications, for instance, in biotech research and science as well as social sciences).

Question 5
We view the following kinds of activities as of utmost importance

- research projects;

- higher degree by research programs

- postgraduate coursework programs; for example, by establishing an MA in Latin American Studies. This needs expansion, but there is much preliminary demand already in Latin America (including from students in International, Media, Education and Gender Studies). Raewyn Connell (a member of SURCLA) is a name that attracts people from Latin America; her draw card is the first in many possible future ones – PG course development will obviously ensure this, as will new appointees.

- undergraduate programs; yes, which can be cross-listed and undertaken by Global Studies students – many request them, but they aren’t yet developed.

- outreach; Especially in terms of the community nexus (cf SURCLA’s migration project already establishing this) / Teaching training with the Indigenous Knowledge Workshop, Support to Sydney Latin American Film Festival, our involvement with ALALP

- policy advice;

- regional development programs. Yes -- see telecommunications and related industry areas/policy development

All of this will work both for the University and our field

- It will attract historians: sorely needed in many areas of area research

- Australia is becoming a cheaper destination for international UG and PG students. However, why would these potential future students choose USYD and Area Studies? Because of our firm commitment and bringing in of prestigious researchers and appointees, if followed through.

- It will bring visibility towards expert supervision ACROSS departments and schools – the true meaning of interdisciplinarity

- It will enable us to compete with ANU

- Cross and inter-disciplinary foci are far from minimizing the quality of research and teaching. In our field, these are always already in evidence. Thus the work is rich and profoundly contemporary.

In all senses, the University needs to OPEN to the various sectors indicated above; that is, in order to become truly ‘universal’, which is an essential meaning of a university. As we carve out socio-politically a new path and vision in Australia, multiculturalism will hardly be a catch phrase only; rather, it will be applied through cross-cultural disciplinarity. We strongly feel the University must be a leader in this process: making knowledge and its application multidirectional.

Question 6a  What are the options for organisational, administrative and governance models for Area Studies? and
**Question 6b** Which operating model, or models, are preferred for this University and why?

Some comments on extant and/or proposed models: annotated

“There are various distinct models for the organisation of Area Studies capabilities in place at universities around the world. These generally differentiated by their funding arrangements, administrative and governance structure and the way that academic appointments are made to them. Operating models include, for example:

- centres established through the International portfolio of the University, often overseen by a board comprising faculty representatives, and appointments made by the head of the portfolio or in partnership with the faculties: In our view, less desirable
- each centre as a distinct entity within the University with joint appointments of staff from the faculties: possible/better
- centres embedded within a single department or faculty: possible/positive
- a physically distinct Institute for Area Studies with an overarching board and a coordinating, group administration function, with each Area Studies Centre having a director and its own board; and possible, but this model needs more clarity and definition about roles.
- centres hosted by a single faculty and accountable administratively to that faculty, but with a separate board of directors from all participating faculties, and joint appointment of staff from the faculties. In our view, less desirable

**Question 7**

Here we reprise and annotate on part of the question posed:

“What level of funding will be required to create and sustain internationally competitive Area Studies centres and where will this funding come from? Any proposal to establish Area Studies centres at the University of Sydney presupposes the availability of additional funding, beyond normal teaching load funds, to support their establishment and development. Each centre will require funding to support the appointment of a director, administrative support and any other activities the University determines they should pursue. At a low level of activity the minimum requirement in the establishment phase would be to provide teaching relief to permit an academic staff member to be seconded to an Area Studies centre as a part-time director. Beyond the minimum there is the possibility of University-supported research appointments to centres established as a result of this Review.”

All these things must be pursued but especially the last point (underlined) to ensure success and sustainability.

**Question 8** What role should the University’s International portfolio play in the establishment and operation of Area Studies centres?

Briefly, we envisage the following as of greatest importance for the International portfolio:

- Administrative – diplomatic (higher level for MoU etc)
- Tours of delegations
- Procedural and publicity
- Cross-sectoral engagements
- Continued sponsorship and grant coordination

**Question 9** “What lessons can be learnt…?”

What we have learnt is how receptive and strategic SURCLA’s aims are, and have been seen to be, by others, even in our earliest endeavours. The features of interdisciplinarity and community affiliation are of great importance. All this needs capital and institutional backing to carry it through.
University of Sydney Review of Area Studies
Submission and Capacity Statement
Agricultural and Resource Economics Group
Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources

Summary
The Agricultural and Resource Economics Group (ARE) within FAFNR has had extensive involvement in international research and training programs and supervising research student projects and theses, mostly in various parts of Asia and the Pacific (including Vietnam, Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Laos and Tonga). One of the current academics and a number of research students have also done work in African countries.

Students in the Bachelor of Agricultural Economics and Bachelor of Resource Economics may also undertake a unit in Agricultural Development Economics. There is potentially more scope to develop teaching units in the “area studies” vein, potentially involving (for example) international field trips.

The Group has no particular view on the role or design of an “Area Studies” centre or institute. The information provided herein is provided as a statement of the Group’s interests and capacities, particularly regarding Asia and the Pacific.

Background
“Development economics”, the sub-discipline of economics looking at economic issues facing developing countries, has grown in Australia through the agricultural and resource economics profession, somewhat by default. Since developing economies have substantial agricultural sectors, agricultural and resource economists have been engaged by agencies seeking researchers and consultants to do international project work. For
many years, for example, agricultural and resource economists have done project work for the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR).

At Sydney, this pattern has held as it has elsewhere, with agricultural and resource economists undertaking international projects and training workshops through agencies like ACIAR and AusAID, and supervising research projects and theses looking at developing country issues. Some of these projects have been collaborative, including with scientists in FAFNR and Veterinary Science, and colleagues in Geosciences. The countries under study include but are not limited to Vietnam, Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Laos and Tonga. The Group is currently negotiating an arrangement by which they will assist with Hue University of Economics in Vietnam revise its undergraduate curriculum in agricultural economics.

PhD and Masters students in recent years have undertaken thesis research focused on countries including Vietnam, Pakistan, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, China, Uganda and Kenya.

Building on this history, the Agricultural and Resource Economics Group has recently hired two specialist development economists—for whom researching and publishing in the development economics literature is a defining feature of their professional work (rather than an incidental one). The intention is to build a specialist focus on the economics of developing countries, and to make Sydney one of the country’s most prominent centres in this sub-discipline. This has already strengthened the Group’s connections with leading international researchers and institutes, including at the World Bank and IFPRI as well as at leading international universities.

The Group has no particular views on the appropriate design, role or governance of an Area Studies centre, institute or program. Its members with an interest in the Asia-Pacific regard themselves as best aimed at getting on with what they do, including projects in collaboration with people outside the Group. Participation in a more formal Area Studies enterprise can be considered when such a thing emerges.
Examples of ARE projects (recently completed or in progress)

- Identifying economic and social constraints for water management in vegetable production in NTB and NTT (Indonesia)
- Capacity building in applied natural resource economics and management for Vietnam
- The welfare impacts of land titling in Laos
- Migrating away from a seasonal famine—a randomized experiment in Bangladesh
- Integrated control of powdery mildew and other disease, weed and insect problems in squash in Tonga and Australia.

Current ARE academics who have been involved in international projects

Tiho Ancev, Shyamal Chowdhury, Ross Drynan, Michael Harris, Lynn Henry, Paulo Santos.

Examples of funding bodies that have supported ARE “area studies” projects

AusAID; Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research; Japan Bank for International Cooperation; Asian Development Bank

Selected recent “area studies” publications by ARE academic staff/students

- Fredoun Ahmadi-Esfahani. “Agricultural biotechnology in China and South-East Asia: Collaboration and competition”, forthcoming in A.R. Welch and D. Jarvis (eds.), *China ASEAN and Regional Integration*, Palgrave, United Kingdom.
Asia, edited by Volker Beckmann, Nguyen Hu Dung, Max Spoor, Shi Xiaoping, and Justus Wesseler.


- Shyamal Chowdhury, “Governance Decentralization and Local Infrastructure Provision in Indonesia” (forthcoming IFPRI discussion paper).


Recent postgraduate “area studies” research theses

- Tran Than Be, “Agricultural Extension in Vietnam: Alternative Institutional Arrangements” (PhD)
- Diana Chalil, “Empirical Analysis of Asymmetric Duopoly in the Indonesian Crude Palm Oil Industry” (PhD)
- Mohamad Farida, “An Economic Analysis of Corruption in Lebanon” (PhD)
- Rahma Fitriani, “Land Use Policy in the Jabodetabek Metropolitan Area (Indonesia) from the Perspective of Land Use Externalities” (PhD in progress)
- Adam Komarek, “An Empirical Analysis of Ugandan Agricultural Households” (PhD)
- Truphena Mahindu, “Milk Marketing Margins in the Kenyan Dairy Industry” (MAgrEc)
- Deepa Pradhan, “The Economics of Water Management in NTB and NTT, Indonesia” (MAgrEc)
- Deborah Schlichting, “An Empirical Analysis of Household Food Security in the Northern Areas of Pakistan” (PhD)
- Youhua Shu, “Local Governance and Public Goods Provision in China” (PhD in progress)
- Le Xuan Sinh, “A Bio-economic Model of a Shrimp Hatchery in the Mekong River Delta of Vietnam” (PhD)
- Deviga Vengadasalam, “Rice Self-Sufficiency and Biotechnology in Malaysia” (PhD in progress)
- Piyanuch Wuttisorn, “Water Allocation in Thailand: an Economic Analysis” (PhD)
Dear Area Studies Review Panel,

We – the academic staff involved in European Studies – would like to submit the following comments on the “Review of Area Studies”:

a. re Question 1:
We are pleased to see that the University of Sydney’s expertise on Europe has been noted in the review document, and we would like to stress the broad scope of this existing expertise.

In fact, as the cross-disciplinary credit options for the European Studies degrees show, large parts of the teaching at the University such as in History and Philosophy and other disciplines in the Arts Faculty (and even beyond Arts and Humanities) focus on Europe, European heritage and contemporary European issues. Europe and the European-Australian encounter have been and still are a cornerstone in laying down the ethos of contemporary Australia, and Europe is a major interlocutor in Australia’s international commercial, political, cultural and intellectual exchanges. The expertise on Europe, European heritage and contemporary European issues throughout the University of Sydney appears to not be fully recognised in the review paper.

The School of Languages & Cultures is a leader in area studies both in teaching and research – as the host of Asian Studies, the Sydney University Research Community for Latin America, and a longstanding undergraduate (second-year entry) major and postgraduate degree program in European Studies. In addition to expertise in both teaching and research in applied linguistics, sociolinguistics and language pedagogy in European and Middle Eastern languages, Europe and Middle East-related expertise in the School of Languages & Cultures includes research and teaching fields such as social and political sciences, literary studies, film and theatre studies, cultural studies, gender studies, studies in religion, history and philosophy. The appointment of a professor in European Studies to commence in 2010 is expected to raise the profile of European and Middle Eastern Studies in both teaching and (particularly) research. We look forward to the development of research on Europe and the Middle East in other schools and faculties (e.g. through targeted appointments), and we welcome the opportunity to strengthen and expand our collaborative links to build a high-
profile research network and Australian centre of excellence in European and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Sydney.

The expertise in the School of Languages & Cultures provides a strong basis for future developments towards Europeanisation of the university’s activities outside Arts. The newly created Institute for Social Sciences is a promising resource within the University for interdisciplinary research and expansion of interests. Current research and teaching initiatives in European Studies are also being expanded into internationally collaborative programs (such as a Master of European Studies-program with several major European universities, e.g. Sevilla/Spain, Perpignan/France, Sheffield/UK), and have the potential to attract funding from European bodies such as the European Commission (Erasmus-Mundus-Programme, EU Research Framework Programme), the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the Humboldt-Foundation, etc.

b. re Question 4:
One factor in enhancing the success of European Area Studies is the full recognition of research publications in languages other than English. Unfortunately this is not the case within the current “Excellence in Research for Australia framework” of research evaluation. The University of Sydney misses out on a great part of the potential of area studies as the strength and excellence of our work is not fully recognisable/demonstrable. This is because there is a reluctance to acknowledge internationally recognised publications published in languages other than English. The University should work towards mechanisms that enable the institution to fully benefit from the outcome of the work that is currently being conducted. Area Studies need strong links to the geographical/cultural regions on which the relevant disciplines focus. Therefore international collaboration and co-operation is crucial to success. Recent developments such as the appointment of an International Development Manager for Europe are encouraging steps in the right direction. However, the International Office would still need to reduce hurdles and obstacles re establishing and conducting international exchange and collaboration.

c. re Question 5:
Geographical/cultural area studies need a strong emphasis on relevant languages, as knowledge in the field will otherwise be very limited and at risk of obsolescence due to an inability to keep conversant with international developments. Therefore the University of Sydney needs to foster its language programs if it aims to achieve success in a particular geographical/cultural area. One of the strengths of the University’s existing European Studies program is the requirement for study of a European or Middle Eastern language. The University’s European languages’ students are among the best in the country, at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, going on to use their language and cultural competencies in a variety of fields (including university research) in both Australia and Europe. This essential training for students in the languages, cultures and societies of Europe and the Middle East is seriously undermined, however, by insufficient resourcing. Students enormously appreciate the teaching in foreign languages and cultures that we offer but consistently express their frustration with over-large classes and insufficient tutorial time. By increasing its already healthy enrolments in European and Middle Eastern languages (enrolments in Modern Greek and Italian have been steady while French, German, Spanish and Arabic have all increased their numbers over the last years) and improving the conditions of language learning, the University of Sydney could take a national leadership role in addressing the parlous state of foreign language education that has been the focus of the just-released Nettelbeck report for the Australian Academy of the Humanities, on foreign
language enrolments in Australian universities. Area studies programs in general and the European and Middle Eastern Studies program in particular would be greatly strengthened by such initiatives.

From the view point of European Studies, there are good reasons to offer area studies at the undergraduate level (starting in first year) and provide students, during the course of their training, reasons and encouragement to focus on a particular area and language – as well as offering postgraduate degrees. Europe is such a heterogenous region and a broad “area” in itself that it can only be understood through a focused and yet multi-disciplinary pedagogical and investigative approach.

On behalf of the academic staff involved in European Studies,

Yours sincerely,

Dr Birte Giesler
Acting Director of European Studies
Department of Germanic Studies
School of Languages & Cultures, Faculty of Arts
Mr Michael Webb (Postgraduate Student (PG Dip), Faculty of Law)
Received 20 June 2009

Dear Mr Payne

Re: Question 9 & Research Generally

I provide observations on a personal basis. I am a mature age student, who has returned to University after some 28 years in the workforce. My former occupation was as a Global Equity and Global Bond Portfolio Manager in the Investment Department of a large General Insurance Company. The concept of an Area other than the globe is a little foreign given my occupational context. However I have noted Area, Thematic and Regional Studies portions of overseas universities which are often sponsored by business. Where they are not Area studies I have noted Thematic scholarship supported by combined student effort and philanthropic funding which is low in Australia. A United States example is the John M. Olin Foundation.

As you can surmise my qualifications are financial but I applied to the Sydney Law School to study Investment Compliance Law by coursework to achieve a Graduate Diploma in Corporate, Securities and Finance Law. Obviously my application was successful and I have relished my course to date. Fortunately my first subject was predicated on a research essay and the challenge, enjoyment and discovery involved was as exhilarating as the outcome and practical application. My other subjects have been equally engaging. University has been a refreshing opportunity, re-invigorating my curiosity. I consider the student must bring a desire for research as much as the University should provide for it.

Having worked in the General Insurance business, I know that a great deal of research was carried out by my former employer in identifying Climate change and its specific aspects as a very significant risk to the business. This work was carried out with great specificity. So the Institute for Sustainable Solutions as well as the Australian Centre for Climate and Environmental Law in the Law School are of enormous practical value to the Chief Risk Officers of Australian General Insurers. It should be worth considering most financial institutions have cut staff dramatically since 2007 and as Research areas are not profit centres, they have been affected. The ability to offer a multi-disciplinary, academically founded approach is difficult to duplicate at the best of times by even a large public company.

In turn Global Re-insurance companies devote similar resources in understanding their global risk exposures. I understand I am focussing on a very particular area, however it is one in which I have some commercial expertise, but would be happy to be corrected if my approach is unsuitable.

Sincerely

Michael Webb
SID: 309153654
M: 0438 126 174
H: 9876 1884
To the review committee:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to provide feedback on the Area Studies review. The review is important and timely and I strongly endorse the idea that the University develop an Area Studies focus.

I am writing to let you know that the Department of Spanish and Latin American Studies will not be submitting a separate response in its own name. Instead, I have contributed to the response from European Studies, and Vek Lewis and Fernanda Peñaloza have prepared a submission regarding Latin American Studies. This reflects the fact that the department is uniquely placed to inform teaching and research in two different areas, as well as to draw comparisons between them.

I would only add that the strong recent growth in undergraduate enrolments in the department, coupled with innovations in research such as the creation of the interdisciplinary Sydney University Research Community for Latin America, demonstrate that Spanish and Latin American Studies is one of the fields with most potential to contribute to a university-wide Area Studies strategy.

Regards,

Dr Kathryn Crameri
on behalf of the Department of Spanish and Latin American Studies

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Dr Kathryn Crameri
Chair of the Department of Spanish and Latin American Studies
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MacCallum-Brennan Building A18
University of Sydney
NSW 2006
Australia
Tel: +61 2 9351 4085
MEMORANDUM TO: Professor Stephen Garton

FROM: Professor Iqbal Ramzan

DATE: 22 June 2009

SUBJECT: Review of Area Studies Discussion Paper

Dear Stephen,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Review of Area Studies discussion paper which was very well written, addressing a wide range of issues for the new initiative.

Advice and feedback was sought from the senior members of the Faculty of Pharmacy regarding the discussion paper. Unfortunately, there was not a substantive amount of engagement from those members regarding the issues in the paper. As Dean, I am supportive of Area Studies being pursued at The University of Sydney provided the practical implications which result from this discussion do not negatively impact on existing Faculty programs.

Please find below my response to the discussion paper.

Question 1 – What is the current extent and state of Area Studies at the University of Sydney?
I agree that Area Studies at Sydney have a low stand-alone profile and support increasing that profile so long as the increase does not disadvantage the individual efforts made by Faculties.

Question 2b – Which cultural or geographical areas should the University focus on and on what grounds should such decisions be made?
Currently there is a significant amount of energy being focused on other countries rather than our own region – the Pacific. The focus on indigenous area of studies within our region should be increased.

Question 3 – What relationship should there be between the University’s development of any strategies for Area Studies and its broader strategic planning process?
The two processes need to be aligned and not divorced from each other. Resources should also flow to facilitate outcomes.

Question 4 – What factors will critical to the success of any Area Studies?
The following factors will be crucial:
• establishing and maintaining mutual respect and trust from stakeholders;
• maintaining transparency with regards to decision making and resource allocations, and
• ensuring equal ownership (minimising dominance by one or two major players).
Question 7 – What level of funding will be required to create and sustain internationally competitive Area Studies centres and where will this funding come from? If there is too much emphasis placed on the international nature of this initiative, cynicism will begin to grow with regards to whether this initiative is first to further internationalise the university.

Question 9 – What lessons can be learnt for the establishment of university-wide mechanisms for Area Studies from experiences at Sydney and elsewhere in supporting cross-disciplinary activities organised around thematic areas of study and vice-versa? There is the potential for thematic areas of study to become ‘silos-based’, especially in terms of ownership by a particular management portfolio (i.e. Ownership by a particular DVC).

In summary, the Faculty of Pharmacy is interested in participating in Area Studies related to health issues, particularly in the areas of research and the role that Pharmacists and other health care practitioners have to the delivery of health care to patients.

Regards

[signature]
One first arriving at the university in 2006 I was tremendously excited to be part the multidisciplinary teams of the Greater Angkor Project and the Living with Heritage Project which are both focused on Cambodia. While the vision and the rhetoric of a multidisciplinary environment were supported by my academic colleagues, the administrative aspects of such programs were atrocious. Limited space and funding for resources was available when I arrived. I needed to provide my own equipment and a simple research tool such as an internet connection took two months to establish. When I required inter-faculty cooperation to access resources I was made to feel like I was attempting to steal or engage in corrupt activities. It seemed I became a criminal for wanting to work beyond the limits of a specific faculty. These are strong words but coming from ten years in private industry the university’s administrative inadequacy in engaging with a real multidisciplinary research program with real needs was shocking and disheartening and if it hadn’t been for the support of my academic colleagues I would have considered shifting to a different institution before I even had an opportunity to begin work. This could have been avoided if funding and administrative support was aligned with such multidisciplinary programs rather than competing faculties.

Considering my experience at the university the four things I believe are most critical to the success of area studies as covered in Question 4 What factors will be critical to the success of any Area Studies strategy? are:

1. the adequacy of start-up and ongoing funding for any Area Studies centres that are created. Funding independent of faculty support is the area most in need of improvement. A model such as that used by UC Berkley since 1968 needs to be put in place at Sydney University. The university needs to support projects which have won funding by providing physical space for postgraduate students and research staff to collaborate and undertake research. Without physical space to collaborate on a daily basis, multidisciplinary programs are not effective.

2. the quality of the international linkages established by the centres – this has been critical to the calibre of my research. Without international connections of an international standard the area studies units are not viable.

3. the extent to which the centres are able to attract high quality staff and students, and in particular international higher degree by research students of the highest calibre; This is linked to funding but also the industry and academic links the directors have. I became part of my program through a simple email my former Professor at UNSW received. There needs to be funds to advertise positions and scholarships.

In response to Question 5 What kinds of activities should be pursued through Area Studies centres?
1. There needs to be opportunities at the undergraduate level to engage with area studies research programs. Area studies allow students to tailor their degrees to create specific and relevant educational experiences. This requires that faculties coordinate timetables. Opportunities to be exposed to research at an undergraduate level have a large impact on influencing promising undergraduate students to contribute to research programs in later stages of their career.

In response to **Question 9 - thematic areas of study** - *The review corresponds with a global trend to organise research along thematic lines as opposed to geographic lines.*

1. the Greater Angkor Project and the Living with Heritage Project have much to contribute outside the specific area of Cambodia and South East Asia. The strong research capacity developed with a specific geographic focus needs room to expand into other geographic areas and related thematic areas. Flexibility needs to be built into such programs to allow inter-disciplinary cooperation beyond initial research agendas.

Thankyou for considering my response. I wish you the best of luck in making area studies a dynamic research area within the university.
Regards Scott Hawken.