

Student Spotlight



Name: Christine Choi

Major: Asian American Studies

Minor: Educational Studies and Applied Psychology

Hometown: Northridge, California

Graduation quarter: Spring 2020

What made you decide to major in AS AM?

I remember coming to the Asian American Studies table and grabbing a folder of information at Spring Insight when I was a high school senior (I still have the folder)! I was so shocked to see that there was an entire major dedicated to Asian American Studies. The most I ever learned about my own history was a paragraph about the Korean War in history books. To see an entire major dedicated to Asian American Studies and knowing that UCSB was the first to offer a B.A. in this field, and first in the entire country to do so, was extremely empowering. I took AS AM 5 my first quarter at UCSB because my old high school English teacher, Heather Macias, was now a TA for this course and she had suggested taking it. I learned so much about myself and the history of my ancestors within that one class that I knew I needed to take more. After taking AS AM 9 my winter quarter, I knew that this was the major for me and I declared my spring quarter!

What have been some of your favorite classes?

- AS AM 9 with Dr. Fujino, I truly learned so much in this class and it was the reason why I wanted to declare the Asian American Studies major.
- AS AM 157 with Dr. Heather Macias, as someone who is pursuing a career within Higher Education, this class was absolutely a dream come true. Two of the subjects that I'm most passionate about in one all while taking it with one of the best professors!
- AS AM 142 or Playsia was one of the best classes. I'm still friends with so many of the folks in this class today and we not only created such beautiful performances but a lifelong community
- Outside of AS AM, some of my other favorite classes that I've taken include: ED 125, ED 123, BL ST 133, and teaching ED 20/ED118

What kinds of work/internships did you pursue as an undergrad?

I honestly did a lot during undergrad, but I'm so happy to have had all of these experiences. as they helped me gain a well-rounded undergraduate experience and prepare me for my graduate school interviewing/selection process! My work and internships consisted of:

- Residential Housing Association (RHA) Coordinating Board Member (2017)
- Health and Wellness Advocate (2016-2017)
- Returning Resident Assistant (RA) at Santa Cruz Hall (2017-2019)
- Campus Tour Guide (2017-2020)
- Lead Peer Advisor and Office Assistant at the Department of Asian American Studies (2017-2020)
- Notetaker and Test Proctor at Disabled Students Program (DSP) (2017-2020)
- Teaching Assistant (TA) for ED 20 and ED 118 (2017-2019)
- Vice President of Recruitment and Training for the Gaucho Tour Association (2018-2019)
- President of the Gaucho Tour Association (2019-2020)
- Visitor Center Intern at the Office of Admissions (2019-2020)
- Research Assistant and Peer Mentor at the Koegel Autism Center (2017-2019)
- Fellow at the NASPA Undergraduate Fellowship Program (NUFP) (2019-2020)
- Conducted original research within the Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities (URCA) unit (2019-2020)

What advice do you have for students you might be interested in majoring in AS AM?

For anyone who is interested in majoring or minoring in AS AM, I would highly encourage you to take the chance! So many of my friends ended up taking AS AM classes later in their college careers and regretted that they didn't make the space for it on their schedules. The AS AM department offers such an interdisciplinary academic experience, and you truly feel heard, understood, and seen within the department. I'm forever grateful to have called AS AM home, and especially for those of you who are worried about double majoring or adding a minor, the major/minor unit requirements is relatively small, and it's definitely been done by many graduates. Utilize your academic, undergraduate department, and peer advisors for help!

What are your plans after UCSB?

I will be attending Michigan State University to obtain my M.A. in Student Affairs Administration on a full ride for the next two years. I will also be working as an Assistant Community Director for MSU's Residence Education and Housing Services.

Favorite quote: "Bloom Where You're Planted."

This was a quote that was passed on within the hall I became an RA for, but I really ended up embodying this quote and reflecting it onto my own life. I think during times of natural transition, such as graduating college - and especially during unprecedented and challenging times like now - this quote is especially important to me. I'm the type of person who's hyper-organized and a little bit of a control freak, so these times where everything is out of my control has been tough. But with this quote, I know that wherever life takes me, I will bloom and thrive. I will make the best of every situation. Every flower goes through its winter season, and in the spring, we will all bloom and thrive where we're planted.