



8/25/23

Dear Friends of the Asia Center,

The Harvard University Asia Center and the Department of South Asian Studies are pleased to announce the hire of Lady Aileen Orsal as Preceptor in Filipino Languages (Tagalog). Beginning in Fall 2023, Elementary and Intermediate Filipino (Tagalog) courses will be offered for the first time in Harvard's nearly four-hundred-year history. Filipino (Tagalog) is currently the fourth most spoken language in the U.S. (after English, Spanish, and Chinese). Thanks to a generous gift, this new Preceptor position is funded through an endowment that ensures that Filipino languages will always be taught at Harvard.

Lady Aileen Orsal began her teaching career as a Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Northern Illinois University in 2018, where she assisted in the teaching of Filipino at the introductory and intermediate levels. Since then, she has taught Filipino at Cavite State University in the Philippines. Prior to coming to the U.S., Lady Aileen received her B.A. in Mass Communication from Cavite State University in the Philippines in 2012, and her M.A. in Philippine Studies in 2017. She is currently completing both an M.A. in Communication from Northern Illinois University and a Ph.D. in Philippine Studies from De La Salle University in the Philippines. Both degrees are expected to be completed in 2024.

Lady Aileen is a dedicated, creative, and effective teacher who is committed to being a leader in Filipino language pedagogy. She also has an impressive background in Philippine Studies, including Philippine culture, history, and politics. She has conducted research and published on traditional tattoo art, the coffee culture of the Philippines, and the use of music in political campaign jingles.

The Harvard University Asia Center and the Department of South Asian Studies are also pleased to announce the hire of Sakti Suryani as Preceptor in Indonesian. Beginning in Fall term 2023, Elementary, Intermediate, and Advanced Indonesian courses will be offered at Harvard.

Sakti Suryani is from Wonogiri in Central Java. She began her academic career at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, where she earned a B.A. in English in 2011. After graduating she returned to Indonesia to teach English in Central and East Java. In 2014, Sakti came back to the U.S. and began teaching Indonesian at the University of Wisconsin and for the Defense Critical Language and Culture Program (DCLCP). She has taught previously at the University of Montana, Missoula, and, more recently, became a Lecturer in Indonesian Language at the University of Wisconsin. During her time at the University of Wisconsin she also pursued an M.S. degree in World Language Education (with a focus on Curriculum and Instruction), which she completed in 2022. She has earned a well-deserved reputation as a dynamic and enthusiastic teacher of Indonesian and has experience teaching Javanese.

Sakti's academic work supports her commitment to teaching language and culture, which is evident from her leadership role in the Indonesian Language Team at the Southeast Asian Language Council (SEALC) symposium, where the focus is on developing new reading materials for use in

Indonesian language instruction. Sakti has also served for two years as the Indonesian Language Coordinator for the well-regarded Southeast Asian Summer Institute (SEASSI) at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and has just begun a three-year term as Secretary of the Council of Teachers of Southeast Asian Languages (COTSEAL). She has a long-standing interest in Indonesian Gamelan music and has performed with University of Wisconsin, Madison's Javanese Gamelan Music Ensemble.

We are extremely happy to welcome Lady Aileen Orsal and Sakti Suryani to the Harvard community. We also look forward to working with them to develop, highlight, and showcase the richness and variety of the history and cultures of the Philippines and Indonesia through events on the Harvard campus.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Robson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

James Robson  
Victor and William Fung Director, Harvard University Asia Center  
James C. Kralik and Yunli Lou Professor of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, Harvard  
University  
Harvard College Professor