College of Arts & Letters
Centers and Institutes

China Center
The China Center’s mission is to promote and coordinate research, cultural exchanges, and academic programs in China-related Studies; to enhance mutual understanding of the two cultures; and to facilitate economic and business cooperation between China, other Chinese societies, and the United States with particular emphases on the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Gay Cultural Studies
ODU’s Gay Cultural Studies Advisory Council has established a program, unique in Virginia’s academic community, that focuses on the contributions, concerns, and challenges associated with LGBT culture. The Gay Cultural Studies program promotes academic research and provides graduate and undergraduate educational opportunities, and engages the local Hampton Roads LGBT community through ongoing dialogue and community involvement.

Institute for Ethics and Public Affairs
The Institute for Ethics and Public Affairs seeks to raise awareness and stimulate discussion of the ethical dimension of matters of public concern within the campus community and the larger Hampton Roads community; to strengthen moral community and foster a commitment to ethical ideals in public life; to facilitate reflection on the ethical standards that govern the professions; and to highlight the unique and valuable contribution that philosophical reasoning can make to practical decision making.

Institute for Humanities
The Institute for the Humanities at Old Dominion University offers a Master of Arts degree in the Humanities. The program allows students to pursue individualized programs of study that incorporate classes from across the University.

Institute for Jewish Studies and Interfaith Understanding
In 2002, with a $300,000 matching grant from the Dudley Cooper Trust, Old Dominion University announced the establishment of an Institute for Jewish Studies and Interfaith Understanding dedicated to the idea that interfaith understanding involves both an appreciation of Judaism’s historic role in the development of Western civilization and an understanding of the cross-cultural development of the world’s religions. To this end, the Institute coordinates lectures, symposia, and reading groups related to Jewish history and thought, as well as Judaism’s continuing dialogue with Christian, Islamic, and Asian faith traditions. Presenting information about the world’s religious and ethnic diversity in a University setting of open dialogue to thoughtful students, young and old, can enrich overall understanding of the issues and challenges that confront us in the twenty-first century.

Institute of Asian Studies
Old Dominion University seeks to promote an expanded awareness and understanding of the nations and cultures of Asia, to support and encourage research on Asia, and to make resources available to foster better understanding and more effective interaction between organizations and individuals in the Hampton Roads area and those in Asia. To achieve these goals, the Institute of Asian Studies coordinates special programs and administers a major and minor in Asian studies. It also facilitates cooperative relationships with higher education institutions and other organizations within the United States and throughout Asia. The Institute director works closely with the Office of International Programs regarding scholarships and study abroad programs and opportunities.

Model United Nations
The Old Dominion University Model United Nations Society is ODU’s window on the United Nations and international activism. The Society’s mission is promoting global, multicultural education and leadership experience through experiential learning, stressing student participation in simulation conferences and academic courses. The Society represents the university at model U.N., European Union, NATO and crisis simulation conferences around the country, and by organizing major simulations of its own, including U.N. Day in October and ODUMUNC, held every February. Membership is open to students from all colleges and disciplines at the university.

Social Science Research Center
The Social Science Research Center is located on the campus of Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. The SSRC has been in operation since 1998 and is staffed by two, full-time research and management professionals, a full-time project coordinator, and several part-time research assistants. The SSRC has successfully managed a variety of research and evaluation projects involving several national, regional and statewide surveys, and many program evaluations.

Institute of Asian Studies
In support of the mission of Old Dominion University to place special emphasis upon understanding the perspectives of women, minorities, and non-Western cultures, the Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity (ISRE) seeks to develop, promote and implement academic, research and public service programs that focus on the study of race and ethnicity in the region, the nation, and globally. The political, social, economic, and cultural experiences of African Americans, Filipino Americans, and other communities of color are emphasized in the work of the institute. ISRE seeks to establish itself as a major archive and research center in Virginia and the southeastern region of the United States by providing archival resources through its Resource Center and engaging in the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data and research.