



**ANNUAL REPORT
2025-2026**

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We thank everyone for their support in helping us put together our events, symposium, and this report!

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Introduction

The Southeast Asian Studies Initiative (SEASI) at Brown University is proud to present the **Brown University SEASI Annual Report (2025-2026)**.

This is the third annual report that summarizes the work of SEASI throughout the academic year. Beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year, the SEASI Annual Report serves to recognize and celebrate SEASI's achievements over the past year, while articulating the group's immediate and long-term goals for the following years.

SEASI is a student-led organization at Brown University.

We aim to enhance the visibility and viability of Southeast Asian Studies on campus, with the ultimate goal of establishing an institutional space for Southeast Asian Studies at Brown University. This report represents a long-standing and ongoing effort since SEASI's establishment in 2017, to document and highlight the landscape of Southeast Asian Studies and its offerings at Brown University over the years. Our goal is to provide a summary of this year's accomplishments to advance our case for establishing an institutional home for Southeast Asian Studies at Brown University.

This report is designed to be shared with students, faculty, scholars, and Brown University administrators. **We hope this report strengthens our advocacy for investing in Southeast Asian and diaspora studies—a pedagogy that offers unique perspectives to expand Brown University's locally and globally engaged work.**

Isabelle Boun and Kaden Tan Eustaquio

Co-Presidents, SEASI

SEASI Mission and Brief History

The Southeast Asian Studies Initiative (SEASI) was first established during Spring 2017 by a group of students who took HIST 1978B: Modern Southeast Asian History taught by Professor Evelyn Hu-Dehart. At the time, the only consistently available course that studied Southeast Asia in depth was MUSC 0650: Javanese Gamelan, taught by Professor Marc Perlman. As a result, students banded together to push for additional courses that would explore both the Southeast Asian region and its diaspora. In Spring 2018, a petition was created by SEASI members and disseminated to the Brown community to amass signatures. The proposal petitioned for the following:

- The hiring of an adjunct professor in Southeast Asian Studies within the social sciences and/or humanities
- The hiring of a Vietnamese language instructor or an instructor for another Southeast Asian language
- The recruitment of a Presidential Diversity Postdoctoral Fellow or graduate student studying Southeast Asian (American) studies to teach undergraduate courses on Southeast Asia

At the time of this report's publication, all three of these petitions have been achieved at the department level, and these are described below in Section V of this report. However, there are other long-term institutional commitments to the study of Southeast Asia that have yet to be achieved, including:

The formation of a Southeast Asian Studies Initiative and/or a Center for Southeast Asian Studies

The establishment of a Southeast Asian Studies concentration/certificate

The disaggregation of data in the Asian/American and Pacific Islander category for both students and faculty

The hiring of a Filipino language instructor

In February 2021, SEASI developed an Academic Proposal and submitted it to former Provost Richard Locke, calling for the study of Southeast Asia and foundational resources to support the curriculum's sustainability. In response to our submission, Provost Locke suggested that Brown's faculty should champion the institutionalization of Southeast Asian Studies at Brown.



SEASI 2025-26 cohort

SEASI's 2025-2026 at a Glance

The following sections summarize SEASI's work, as well as developments in Southeast Asian Studies at Brown over the past year.

During the 2025-2026 academic year, SEASI continued and expanded upon many of its long-term missions. SEASI hosted a series of Faculty Working Group meetings, reinforcing our commitment to foster dialogue between faculty and student members. This year, we saw record-high attendance in all categories, including faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students. These gatherings are hosted twice a semester to not only create a space for interdisciplinary collaboration between faculty but also allow strategic conversations to further SEASI's missions and advocacy.

Beyond the Faculty Working Groups, our collaboration with our Faculty Allies is sustained through the SEASI Speaker Series, in which Brown faculty members and beyond share their research in Southeast Asia. In the Fall 2025 semester, SEASI invited Professor Doreen Lee from Northeastern University and Professor Karen Hanna from Connecticut College (the latter a Brown alum) to speak on a moderated panel discussion on recent protests in Indonesia and the Philippines. In the Spring 2026 semester, RISD Professor Emerita Lindsay French shared an overview of her research in post-Pol Pot Cambodia. In this way, SEASI demonstrated our commitment to creating interdisciplinary dialogue by bringing together faculty members from nearby institutions.

While SEASI cultivated an academic and cultural community on Brown's campus, we also developed programming for institutions in the broader northeast region. In our 6th Annual SEASI Research Symposium, participants came from a wide range of peer institutions in the northeast, including students and professors from Tufts University, Yale University, and Dartmouth College to share their research. In addition to a record number of attendees, our programming expanded to include eleven speakers, two student panels, one local artist, and a collaborative Javanese gamelan workshop. By bringing together a community of artists, academics, and musicians, the event highlighted Brown University's potential to act as an academic and intellectual locus in the larger, interdisciplinary landscape of Southeast Asian Studies.

2025-26 Highlights

SEASI Alumni Panel



On October 23, 2025, SEASI organized its second annual Alumni Panel featuring **Lavanya Sathyamurthy '22**, **Filbert Aung '24 MD '28**, and **Jared Ong '25**. Through an open group discussion, these SEASI alumni graciously shared their experiences and takeaways from their time in SEASI. Having graduated from Brown several years ago, Lavanya, Filbert, and Jared have gone on to expand their horizons through graduate school and in various industries. Attendees gleaned useful insights into career opportunities and challenges post-graduation. We were also inspired by how they continued to pursue Southeast Asian Studies in their further education and their working lives. This panel was a testament to the deep commitment of our SEASI Alumni to advancing support and opportunities for members of the Brown community in pursuing Southeast Asian Studies. It demonstrated SEASI's engagement and integration of the wider Brown community in our academic advocacy.

Great Big Mixer

On Saturday, November 15, 2025, and Saturday, April 17, 2026, SEASI hosted its Fall and Spring Southeast Asian Great Big Mixers through a partnership with several cultural groups including the **Brown Indonesian Student Association (BISA)**, **Brown University Merlions (BUM)**, **Filipino Alliance (FA)**, **Hmong Cultural Club (HCC)**, **Thai Student Association (TSA)**, and the **Vietnamese Student Association (VSA)**. The mixers showcased a variety of Southeast Asian food, both catered and homemade, including pad see ew, lumpia, kaya toast, and pad thai.



Both of SEASI's Fall and Spring Great Big Mixers were held in the Leung Family Gallery, where **over 250 students** gathered to enjoy a lively evening of Southeast Asian cuisine and traditional games. For the first time, the Great Big Mixer's event programming included fun team-bonding activities such as "Bring Me" and Pictionary, where members of various cultural clubs engaged in friendly competition and strengthened their sense of cultural pride. SEASI members also took this opportunity to raise awareness for ongoing advocacy initiatives, such as the Filipino@Brown lecture series and the upcoming Spring Symposium. Through these mixers, SEASI maintains broad organizational ties, sparking discussions and fostering connections among students from various Southeast Asian clubs. SEASI members took the opportunity to elicit feedback from other student organizations on our academic advocacy, contributing to our continuous commitment to building a cross-organizational SEA community.

Fall Speaker Event- Understanding Mobilization: A Discussion on The Recent Protests in Indonesia and The Philippines



On the 14th of November, 2025, SEASI held our Fall speaker event, "Understanding Mobilization: A Discussion on The Recent Protests in Indonesia and The Philippines." The panel featured **Prof. Doreen Lee** of Northeastern

University and **Prof. Karen Hanna** of Connecticut College, and was moderated by Brown sociology PhD candidate **Subadevan Boyd-Devan**. 47+ SEASI students and faculty allies, as well as members of the Brown community attended the event to discuss the roots of these movements and their dynamics and ask questions of our panelists.

This late 2025 panel was highly timely for SEASI, coming amidst a wave of global Gen Z protests demanding government reform and transparency. This panel was centered on the recent protests in August and September of 2025 in Indonesia and the Philippines. In Jakarta, young Indonesians sought answers to economic inequality, corruption, and police violence. In the Philippines, youth groups called attention to corruption surrounding flood control projects in the country that had not been completed—or in some cases, ever started.

Prof. Lee and Prof. Hanna offered nuanced perspectives on the reasons behind the ongoing protests in Southeast Asia, and potential future repercussions from these complex social issues. **Many thought-provoking questions were brought up by our panelists and attendees, contributing to SEASI's goal of fostering conversations between universities in the Northeast.**

“Southeast Asian Studies from the Periphery” with RISD Professor Lindsay French

Our Spring speaker event, “Southeast Asian Studies from the Periphery,” took place on March 18th, 2026. Enthusiastic students gathered to learn about **RISD Associate Professor Emerita Lindsay French**'s unconventional journey in academia and holistic approach towards cultural documentation of post-Pol Pot Cambodia. The deeply interdisciplinary, multimodal nature of her research made for an extremely engaging discussion ranging from the political economy of injury through the experiences of amputees on the Thai-Cambodian border to the experience of conducting field research on temple theft from the Angkor temples in Cambodia.



Right before the closing remarks, Professor French gifted the audience a special surprise – a sneak peek of her upcoming documentary! Students were thrilled to get the chance to witness Professor French's creative research approach in real time, where the documentary's minimal narration, stunning cinematography

and intimate nature made for a much more immersive experience. Professor French's speaker event was the first of many **Brown-RISD SEAS collaborations**, underscoring the shared commitment towards centering Southeast Asian research and cultivating long-term scholarship collaborations.

Brown Taiwan Society (BTS) Night Market



On Saturday, March 14, 2026, SEASI participated as a vendor in the Brown Taiwan Society's annual Night Market, a collaboration between numerous clubs across campus to share traditional foods and showcase cultural performances. SEASI's stall sold Indonesian nasi goreng (fried rice) and Vietnamese chè thái, a coconut milk and fruit dessert. The event showcased the rich flavors of Southeast Asian cuisine while allowing SEASI to engage with the Brown and RISD communities, strengthening its College Hill presence through homemade meals.

SEASI 6th Annual Symposium

On April 4, 2026, SEASI hosted its sixth annual research symposium, highlighting the sustained interest in Southeast Asia and its diasporic studies at Brown. While previous symposiums were limited to faculty and student presenters from Brown, this year marked an exciting milestone – **SEASI opened the opportunity to scholars from the Northeast region and hosted a full day event for 100+ students and faculty from over 10 universities**, including Boston University, University of Connecticut, Dartmouth College, and Yale University. This year's symposium was held at Stephen Robert '62 Hall, with the support of Brown's Watson School of International and Public Affairs.

In addition to presentations, SEASI organized Javanese gamelan workshops for attendees to experience the Indonesian musical instrument under Brown Professor Marc Perlman. This year's symposium covered a wide range of topics, from climate research to literary theory. SEASI was honored to feature a **keynote from Professor Erik Harms, Chair of the Yale Council on Southeast Asia Studies, with an introduction from Professor Zachary Sng, Brown Senior Associate Dean of the Faculty.** The result was a vibrant gathering, with 11 speakers who shared multi-disciplinary presentations on Southeast Asian studies:

Justin Custado, Brown University PhD Candidate – Who Conducts Southeast Asian Climate Research? A bibliometric analysis of climate science literature

Eiffel Sunga, Brown University '27 & Lin Lin, Dartmouth College '26 – Colonial Intimacies of Place-Making in Manila: Mapping the Lifeworlds of Militarization and Colonial Governance in the 19th-20th Century

Kendra Eastep '27, Zoe Park '26, Samantha Zhang '27, Brown University – Food for Thought: A Dive Into Southeast Asian Fish Culture

Naw Moo Moo Paw Taing, UMass Lowell PhD Candidate – Remembering Violence through the Body: War Injury and Political Commitment in Myanmar's Resistance Movements

Kannetha Brown, Massachusetts College of Art and Design – Vessels of Memory: Reclaiming the Cambodian Archive from Surveillance to Inheritance

Justin Theodra, University of Connecticut PhD Candidate – Commerce and Tribute in Early Modern Indonesia, 1400-1755

Lucy Ton That, Yale University '26 – “You Can't Destroy My True Red Heart”: A Reading of the Translations of Hồ Xuân Hương

Erik Harms, Yale University Professor of Anthropology and International & Area Studies – A Poetic Politics of Shade in Saigon



“Food for Thought” presentation

With this year's symposium, SEASI succeeded in expanding the reach and voice of Southeast Asian Students across the region. We are honored to serve as a platform for our community to promote the incredible work of our speakers and spark interest in various topics while providing a space for an exchange of ideas. We sincerely appreciate the unwavering support of the community that made this event possible. Moving forward, we would like to uplift Southeast Asian studies further, creating a space for not just students and faculty across the region but also professionals such as art curators and historians.



*Thank you to everyone who helped
with the symposium!*

Faculty Working Groups

This past academic year, Faculty Working Groups (**FWGs**) have been a key way for SEASI to continue to build and maintain strong, collaborative relationships with our Faculty Allies. FWGs were held twice per semester, bringing together our Faculty Allies (which include professors, graduate students, and post-doctoral fellows/research associates) from multiple academic departments. Since its establishment, FWGs have played a significant role in amplifying SEASI's mission and furthering our work and programming, along with demonstrating to the Brown administration that Southeast Asian Studies has concrete and sustained faculty support.

At the first FWG meeting of the year in the Fall 2024 semester, we reiterated the importance of continuing to hold FWGs, stressing former Provost Richard Locke's belief that academic initiatives at Brown should be driven by the "advocacy of a core group of faculty leaders". Following this belief, SEASI, with the help of our Faculty Allies, has decided to transform the FWG into a faculty-led platform. Unlike previous student-led FWGs, the new model asks Faculty Allies to share their ideas for co-facilitating, improving meeting attendance, and the agenda-setting process. In other words, the **new FWG model functions as a de facto department faculty where Faculty Allies will take charge of the initiative with SEASI to assist in the operation.**

Throughout FWG meetings, Faculty Allies shared meaningful updates, including potential courses, writing projects currently in progress, upcoming SEAS events they would like SEASI to support, and how SEASI could stay connected with specific departments and schools at Brown to advance SEAS-related programming. In service of this, SEASI and Faculty Allies collaborated to create a Co-branding Guidelines to create a **unified program series for SEAS at Brown**. The Co-branding Guidelines provides Faculty Allies with specific metrics for promotional materials and writing, whether it be a SEASI tagline or a logo, that signifies SEASI's partnership with Faculty Allies in curating these events. By signaling all events as unified under SEASI, we hope to communicate the unity otherwise scattered array of events. Not only does it make SEASI-related events more memorable, the establishment of a unified series also allows us to create a concrete event list to be announced for upcoming semesters, thus improving the clarity and visibility of SEASI programming.



In the final FWG meeting of the academic year, SEASI provided Faculty Allies with a recap of the successful events that were held, such as the 6th Annual SEASI Research Symposium. The symposium featured presentations, panel discussions, and talks by undergraduate students, graduate students, and professors from universities across the Northeastern United States. The continued support and work of the Faculty Allies has helped SEASI develop its mission and goals in significant ways, including the advancement of the **Tagalog@Brown initiative**, the start of a **Watson School-SEASI collaboration**, and the planning of a **Southeast Asian Studies regional academic conference** in the spring 2027 semester.

SEASI and Faculty Allies continue to collaborate outside of FWG meetings, which have been instrumental in keeping SEASI connected with and updated on the work of our Faculty Allies throughout the academic year. We appreciate the immeasurable support and advice our Faculty Allies consistently give us, and we hope to continue strengthening our relationships and deepening scholarship in Southeast Asian Studies.

Progress Towards Southeast Asian Studies

A) Faculty Initiatives and Course Offerings

SEASI has seen many successes towards the development of Southeast Asian Studies at Brown, reflecting the accomplishment of our previous short-term action items. Brown has seen the hiring of various faculty members studying Southeast Asia and its diaspora within the past five years, such as **professor Lauren Yapp** (Indonesia) in Urban Studies; **Joshua Babcock** (Singapore) in Anthropology; **Professor Daniel Ibarra** (Philippines) in Earth, Environmental, and Planetary Sciences; and, most recently, **Professor Anthony Medrano** in History, with a focus on Southeast Asian history.

Vietnamese language classes started in the Fall of 2021, with Visiting Lecturer **Trang Tran** teaching two classes a semester consistently for the past six semesters. Additionally, **Tagalog language courses** were held for the first time as a Group Independent Study (GISP) in Fall 2022. Year after year, Brown has seen growth in not only its Southeast Asian faculty but also in its Southeast Asian course selections, whether taught by SEAS-oriented faculty, or having an explicit focus on Southeast Asia, Southeast Asian communities, and their diasporas.

Some highlights of faculty initiatives and course offerings this past year include **Professor Trang Tran's Vietnamese Language event series**, which invited individuals from universities around the world to share their scholarship and expertise in Vietnamese history, arts, culture, language, and more. Professor Anthony Medrano taught two courses in Southeast Asian History this past year, **HIST 1962G: Southeast Asian Food History** and **HIST 0216: Southeast Asian History**— these courses have garnered the attention and attendance of SEASI and non-SEASI students alike, with Southeast Asian Food History becoming oversubscribed for the upcoming Fall 2026 semester, and being listed as one of the favorite courses the graduated Class of 2026 took in their time at Brown.

It is incredibly encouraging to see Southeast Asian Studies courses continue to be created, taught, and taken at Brown, continuing progress towards greater recognition for SEAS in the academic space.

B) Updates on 2025-2026 Action Items

In our AY 24/25 Annual Report, we enacted a series of planned actions for the AY 25/26, which worked towards our long-term mission of a Southeast Asian Studies program at Brown University. Here are our updates on those action items:

Long-term Goal 1: Academic Excellence



Students engage in the Fall Speaker Event



Prof. Lindsay French



Prof. Lindsay French event

Unique from the area studies model of Southeast Asian Studies, SEASI would like to develop Southeast Asian Studies at Brown University to have its own unique critical pedagogy.

Action Steps for 2025-2026:

- Initiate the transformation of the SEASI Faculty Working Group to become a formal SEAS Academic Coalition with SEASI Faculty Allies, Post-Docs, Grad Students, Alumni, and Community Partners to coordinate Brown's SEAS academic vision and co-develop Brown's critical pedagogy on SEAS.
- Organize academic events which demonstrate the sustained interest in SEAS including: annual SEASI Research Symposium and guest lectures by academics and practitioners.

STATUS: MET

SEASI focused on improving outreach to both professors and graduate students, with Faculty Allies helping to contact interested individuals from their respective departments. The Faculty Working Group model was upgraded from a student-led meeting to a faculty facilitated one, with faculty chairships being rotated every semester. New Allies such as **Professor Mark Hamin**, **PhD Candidate Victoria Maung**, and **PhD Candidate Justin Custado** were recruited over the academic year. Next year, SEASI intends to improve its visibility to further integrate the graduate community.

Additionally, the 2025-2026 Academic Year introduced two new courses to Brown University- Southeast Asian Food History and Southeast Asian History, taught by Faculty Ally **Prof. Anthony Medrano**. By centering regional history over Western narratives, these courses made notable progress toward decolonial curriculum development. Moreover, SEASI has begun the process of establishing Brown as an intellectual home for Southeast Asian studies via various programming. This included SEASI's 6th Annual Research Symposium, which featured participation from regional universities and community members. SEASI also hosted speaker events such as "Understanding Mobilization: A Discussion on The Recent Protests in Indonesia and The Philippines" and "Southeast Asian Studies from the Periphery" with **RISD Associate Professor Emerita Lindsay French**.

Long-term Goal 2: Community Building



SEASI Members at the Fall Great Big Mixer



Students and SEASI Members at the Fall Picnic



A lively game of "Bring Me" at the Spring Great Big Mixer



Tyler Tjan '26 and Wei Yang Chan '26 with the 2026 Student Activities Office Leadership Award for Collaboration

Improving outreach to and creating consortia between student communities, Providence communities, and academic institutions that are invested in Southeast Asia and its diasporas to create meaningful national and transnational dialogue.

Action Steps for 2025-2026:

- Maintain visibility of the Brown SEAS community through a wide variety of communications channels including: fortnightly SEA Events news blast, the continuation of regular posts on the SEASI Instagram and Facebook pages, Alumni network, and the establishment of SEA Studies @ Brown website
- Organize events which bring together members of the SEAS academic community, including Cultural Night with SEA Cultural Clubs and club fundraising events, and SEASI Alumni sharings

STATUS: MET

This year, SEASI received the **2026 Student Activities Office Leadership Award for Collaboration**, recognizing our collaborative efforts in raising cultural awareness and advocacy, as well as our positive impact on student life at Brown. Throughout the year, SEASI strengthened our digital and in-person presence on campus. We continued our biweekly newsletter highlighting upcoming SEA events in the region, and launched our official website that provides information about our history, members, and upcoming events. Together, these platforms expanded SEASI's visibility and provided new ways for students and community members to engage with Southeast Asian Studies at Brown.

SEASI also continued to maintain our strong alumni network, culminating in our **SEASI Alumni Panel**. The open-group format encouraged a meaningful discussion about SEASI, post-graduation experiences, and opportunities for pursuing Southeast Asian Studies beyond Brown. The panel strengthened connections between current students and alumni while highlighting the continued relevance of Southeast Asian Studies beyond the university.

Alongside the Alumni Panel, SEASI hosted two **Great Big Mixers** in collaboration with the Southeast Asian cultural clubs at Brown. These events brought the Southeast Asian community at Brown together, while also introducing Southeast Asian culture to the wider Brown community.

SEASI's community-building efforts also extended beyond Brown. Our Speaker events and Annual Symposium brought together members of the broader regional Southeast Asian

academic community, including students and professors from **RISD, Northeastern University, Boston University, Connecticut College, Dartmouth College, UMass Lowell, Massachusetts College of Art and Design, University of Connecticut, and Yale University**. Through these events, SEASI strengthened connections across institutions and created opportunities for collaboration and discussion around Southeast Asian Studies throughout the region.

Long-term Goal 3: Strategic Partnerships



Dean Zachary Sng introduces our Keynote Speaker during the '26 Symposium

Create administrative infrastructure for the study of Southeast Asia and its diaspora at Brown University, allowing for the transition from the initiative being student-led to being faculty-led.

Action Steps for 2025-2026:

- Recruit new Faculty Allies, Post-Docs and Grad Students into Faculty Working Group while strengthening working relations with existing Faculty Allies.
- Continue internal goal-setting reviews and power-mapping discussions with a longer-term goal of strategic outreach to members of University Administration. SEASI has already begun this work through its meetings with various administration members this Spring; however, establishing a formalized tracking system or map of administrators worked with will aid in future outreach efforts and in maintaining institutional memory.

STATUS: PARTIALLY MET

In an effort to strengthen connections between members of the faculty, SEASI has created a **faculty event dashboard** in conjunction with our Collaboration Guidelines. The dashboard serves as a database for all events connected to our Faculty Allies, and is circulated among faculty members and updated monthly. We hope that this, combined with sustained communication with faculty through events planning, would facilitate greater academic collaboration and strengthen working relationships in Faculty Working Groups.



Faculty Working Group Meeting

This year, SEASI successfully transitioned Faculty Working Groups to a **faculty-led model**, with a rotating faculty facilitator each semester. Next year, SEASI aims to meet with university administrators such as **Dean Friedman** of the Watson School of International and Public Affairs to continue conversations of operating SEASI at a higher institutional capacity. SEASI has connected with Southeast Asian academics, professionals, alumni, and grassroots organizations within and outside of Brown to foster more exchange within the community. SEASI would like to continue building up these connections and engage in more national and transnational collaborations in the future.

C) Student-led Tagalog Language Initiative

During the Fall 2025 semester, the high-profile advocacy work done by the Filipino@Brown (Tagalog@Brown) initiative, launched by students from Brown's Southeast Asian Studies Initiative and Filipino Alliance, included the receipt of roughly **1,400 petition signatures** from the University community. These efforts made headlines in both the U.S. and the Philippines, which led to the extension of a roughly **\$18,000 grant offer from the Philippine Consulate General** in New York. While the grant was initially intended to fund the instruction of Filipino (Tagalog) language courses, the University was reluctant to launch a new language program given the uncertainty beyond the first year of funding. The Tagalog@Brown initiative spent the majority of the semester advocating for the University to sign the Consulate's funding contract, even if it meant that the funding would have to be channeled outside of language instruction. Eventually, an agreement was reached, and the funding will be allocated towards **Filipino Studies programming** and housed within the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity in America. The Consulate came to Brown's campus on December 11, 2025 for a signing ceremony.

During the Spring 2026 semester, students from with the Tagalog@Brown initiative focused on **planning and developing a year-long Filipino Studies speaker series** to be held during the 2026-2027 academic year. The series is supported by funding from the Consulate General of the Philippines in New York and is intended to advance conversations on Filipino language, history, culture, and identity while raising awareness of the importance of Filipino language programming in higher education.

A significant portion of the semester was dedicated to strategic planning, relationship-building, and speaker outreach. In March 2026, the Filipino@Brown team convened its advisory board, which consists of Brown faculty members, alumni, students, and community partners. During this meeting, participants discussed goals for the speaker series and brainstormed prospective speakers whose work aligns with the initiative's broader mission of promoting Filipino language and Filipino Studies at Brown. The advisory board also provided guidance on **long-term advocacy efforts** and opportunities to **strengthen partnerships with institutions that have established Filipino language and Filipino Studies programs**.

The Spring semester was also devoted to onboarding and training newer student leaders to ensure continuity of the initiative. Returning members shared the history of Filipino@Brown (Tagalog@Brown), reviewed previous advocacy efforts, and introduced underclassmen to the organizational and logistical work involved in building sustainable academic programming. This **leadership transition process** was an important component of ensuring that the initiative remains active and effective in future years.

Following the advisory board meeting, students conducted extensive outreach to prospective speakers, faculty collaborators, and partner organizations. As a result of these efforts, four events are currently planned for Fall 2026, with interested or confirmed speakers identified for each program. The proposed events are:

Let's Talk Language: The Importance of Language Programming in Higher Education (September 2026), a panel discussion featuring educators and scholars involved in Filipino and Southeast Asian language instruction.

Filipino American History Month: Diasporic Experiences, Activism, and the Academy (October 2026), a discussion exploring Filipino-American identity, community-building, and coalition-building for academic advocacy.

Filipino American History Month: The Workings of American Imperialism: Tools of Linguistic Suppression (October 2026), a conversation examining the role of language and education in colonial governance and cultural erasure.

Filipino-Americans in Fiction (November 2026), a discussion with a contemporary Filipino American author about storytelling and representation.

The Filipino@Brown team is currently reconnecting with prospective speakers to confirm participation and begin coordinating logistical details, including dates, venues, publicity, and travel arrangements. Planning for the Fall 2026 series remains ongoing, and the initiative is on track to begin programming in September 2026. Members of the initiative are also discussing using remaining funds to support speaker honoraria for the **2027 Filipino Ivy League Conference**, which will be hosted at Brown in the Spring.

At this time, grant funds have not yet been expended. Funds remain available and are being reserved for speaker honoraria, travel expenses, accommodations, publicity materials, and other event-related costs associated with the Fall 2026 programming.

Moving Forward

Action Items for AY 26/27
SEASI’S PLANNED INITIATIVES: SY 2026-2027

ACS Domain	Long Term Goal	Action Step for AY 26/27
Academic Excellence	Unique from the area studies model of Southeast Asian Studies, SEASI would like to develop Southeast Asian Studies at Brown University to have its own unique critical pedagogy.	• Continue development of the SEASI Faculty Working Group as a formal SEAS Academic Coalition with SEASI Faculty Allies, Post-Docs, Grad Students, Alumni, and Community Partners to coordinate Brown’s SEAS academic vision and co-develop Brown’s critical pedagogy on SEAS • Organize academic events which demonstrate the sustained interest in SEAS including: annual SEASI Research Symposium, semesterly guest lecture series
Community Building	Improving outreach to and creating consortia between student communities, Providence communities, and academic institutions that are invested in Southeast Asia and its diasporas to create meaningful national and transnational dialogue.	• Maintain visibility of the Brown SEAS community through communications channels including: biweekly SEA Events news blast, regular activity on SEASI Instagram and Facebook pages, alumni network, SEASI website • Organize events engaging members of the SEAS academic and regional community, including Cultural Night with SEA Cultural Clubs, club fundraising events, and SEASI Alumni sharings
Strategic Partnerships	Create administrative infrastructure for the study of Southeast Asia and its diaspora at Brown University, allowing for the transition from the initiative being student-led to being faculty-led.	• Recruit new Faculty Allies, Post-Docs and Grad Students into Faculty Working Group while strengthening working relations with existing Faculty Allies. Maintain semesterly rotation of Faculty Working Group chairships among Faculty Allies • Continue internal goal-setting reviews and power-mapping discussions with a longer-term goal of strategic outreach to members of University Administration. SEASI to establish a formalized system to aid in future outreach efforts and maintain institutional memory

