

Asian American Studies 1100
Tuesday/Thursday 10:10-11:25
251 Malott Hall
T.A. Corinna Lee (cl352)
Office hours: R – 2:00-3:00 427 Rockefeller

Instructor: Shelley Wong (ssw6)
Office hours: T/R 3:15-4:15
427 Rockefeller (Tues)
282 Goldwin Smith (Thurs)

Introduction to Asian American Studies
AAS 1100 – Spring 2010
Tuesday/Thursday 10:10-11:25

What's in a name? For starters, the contemporary term "Asian Pacific American" has been taxed to hold together in a classificatory embrace a complex, diverse, and rapidly changing population of people of Asian/Pacific descent in the Americas. In this course, we'll track the ongoing adventures of this term "Asian Pacific American" and try to understand how the social and political twists and turns in meaning over the course of its historical journey come to shape individual and collective identities. This interdisciplinary course will introduce students to key ideas and issues in the study of Asian American histories, cultures, and racial formation including, for example, matters of migration, social/cultural/legal citizenship, social movements and cultural politics. Materials for the course will include film, literature, historical and sociological essays, and mass media and popular culture productions.

Course Requirements

1. Class attendance and participation (20%). Attendance is mandatory. Students are required to do the assigned readings and to formulate two questions on the basis of the readings for each class. You must post these questions to an electronic discussion board no later than 8:00 p.m. of the evening before the class session dedicated to those readings. Sharing these postings will enable everyone to be better prepared for the following day's discussion. Students are required to attend a small number of lectures or film screenings outside of class time. Attendance at these sessions is mandatory (discuss with the instructor—in advance of the event—any unavoidable scheduling conflicts). More than two unexcused absences will result in the forfeiture of part of your grade for class participation
2. Prelim Examination (20%) An in-class exam
3. Group project and presentation (30%) Each student will be part of a 5-6 person team (depending on class size) that will be responsible for choosing a topic pertaining to the course to research and present to the class at the end of the semester. Although some class time may be provided for the groups to meet over their respective projects, students will generally conduct their meetings outside of class time. We will devote some class time early on in the semester to discussing project formats and topics.
4. Final essay (30%) A take-home final consisting of a 5-7 page essay that addresses issues raised in class discussion, readings, and lectures. Students will have a choice of questions to answer and will have one week to complete the assignment.

Students are expected to abide by Cornell University's Code of Academic Integrity. Violation of the Code will result in a failing grade. A copy of the Code can be found at the following URL:
<http://cuiMo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html>

Required Texts

Min Zhou and J.V. Gatewood, *Contemporary Asian America: A Multidisciplinary Reader*, 2nd Edition (New York: New York University Press, 2007)

Jennifer Lee and Min Zhou, *Asian American Youth: Culture, Identity, and Ethnicity*, (New York: Routledge, 2004)

Bharati Mukherjee, *Jasmine*

Syllabus (subject to change)

Week 1

T - 1/26 - Introduction

R - 1/28 - Screening of *Ancestors in the Americas*

Week 2 - *The Many as One*

T - 2/2 - Readings: Okiihiro, "When and Where I Enter" (Blackboard); Michael Omi and Howard Winant, "On the Theoretical Status of the Concept of Race" (Blackboard)

R - 2/4 - Readings: Neil Gotanda, "Multiculturalism and Racial Stratification" (Blackboard); Robert Lee, "The Cold War Construction of the Model Minority Myth" (in Zhou/Gatewood); [optional reading: "Success Story of One Minority Group in U.S." U.S. News and World Report (in Zhou/Gatewood)]

Week 3 - *The Many in the One*

T - 2/9 - Readings: Yen Le Espiritu, "Coming Together: The Asian American Movement" (Blackboard); Glenn Omatsu, "'The Four Prisons' and the Movements of Liberation: Asian American Activism from the 1960s to the 1990s" (in Zhou/Gatewood)

R - 2/11 - Readings: Nazli Kibria, "Not Asian, Black, or White? Reflections on South Asian American Racial Identity" (Blackboard); Lisa Lowe, "Heterogeneity, Hybridity, Multiplicity: Marking Asian American Differences" (in Zhou/Gatewood); Vijay Prashad, "Of the Origin of Desis and Some Principles of State Selection" (Blackboard)

Week 4 - *Journey to the West*

T - 2/16 - Reading: Bharati Mukherjee - *Jasmine*

R - 2/18 - Reading: Bharati Mukherjee - *Jasmine*

Week 5 - *Mixing It Up - Part 1*

T - 2/23 - Screening of "Sa-I-Gu"; Reading: Jennifer Lee, "Striving for the American Dream: Struggle, Success, and Intergroup Conflict among Korean Immigrant Entrepreneurs" (in Zhou/Gatewood)

R - 2/25 - Readings: Claire Jean Kim and Taeku Lee, "Interracial Politics: Asian Americans and Other Communities of Color" (in Zhou/Gatewood); Vijay Prashad, excerpt from *Everybody Was Kung-fu Fighting: Afro-Asian Connections and the Myth of Purity*

Week 6

T - 3/2 - Readings: TBA

R - 3/4 - Guest lecturer: Professor Dylan Rodriguez, Chair, Department of Ethnic Studies, University of California at Riverside

F – 3/5 – Public lecture: Professor Dylan Rodriguez speaking in lecture series “Carceral Archipelagos” at 3:00 p.m.

Week 7 – *Mixing It Up – Part 2*

T – 3/9 – Readings: Jennifer Lee and Frank D. Bean, “Intermarriage and Multiracial Identification: The Asian American Experience and the Implications for Changing Color Lines” (in Zhou/Gatewood); Sara S. Lee, “Marriage Dilemmas: Partner Choices and Constraints for Korean Americans in New York City” (in Lee/Zhou)

R – 3/11 – Prelim

Week 8 – *Mass Media and Mass Consumption*

T – 3/16 – Guest lecturer: Corinna Lee (film screening on either 3/14 or 3/15)

R – 3/18 – Guest lecturer: Professor Thuy Linh Tu, Assistant Professor, New York University
Readings: TBA

R – 3/18 – Public lecture: “Asian Chic”, 4:30 p.m.

Week 9

T – 3/23 – Spring Break

R – 3/25 – Spring Break

Week 10 – *Many More*

T – 3/30 – Readings: Carl L. Bankston III and Danielle Antoinette Hidalgo, “The Waves of War: Immigrants, Refugees, and New Americans from Southeast Asia” (in Zhou/Gatewood); Min Zhou and J.V. Gatewood, “Transforming Asian America: Globalization and Contemporary Immigration to the United States” (in Zhou/Gatewood);

R – 4/1 – Guest lecturer: Professor Lisa Hall, Associate Professor of Women’s Studies, Wells College;
Readings: TBA

Week 11 – *In the Halls of Academe*

T – 4/6 – Readings: Dana Takagi, “From Discrimination to Affirmative Action: Facts in the Asian American Admissions Controversy” (Blackboard); Don Nakanishi, “A Quota on Excellence? The Asian American Admissions Debate” (Blackboard)

R – 4/8 – Discussion of group projects

Week 12 – *Citizenship and Belonging*

T – 4/13 – Readings: Leti Volpp, “‘Obnoxious to Their Very Nature’: Asian Americans and Constitutional Citizenship” (in Zhou/Gatewood); L. Ling-chi Wang, “Race, Class, Citizenship, and Extraterritoriality: Asian Americans and the 1996 Campaign Finance Scandal” (Blackboard)

W – 4/14 – Public lecture: Professor Lisa Hall 4:30

R – 4/15 - Screening “Miss India Georgia”; Vijay Prashad, “Of the Origin of Desis and Some Principles of State Selection”

Week 13 –

T – 4/20 – Readings: Nancy Wang Yuen, “Performing Race, Negotiating Identity: Asian American Professional Actors in Hollywood” (in Lee/Zhou); Screening of either “Slaying the Dragon” or “The Slanted Screen”

R – 4/22 – Readings: TBA

Week 14

T – 4/27 – Group presentations

R – 4/29 – Group presentations

Week 15

T – 5/4 – Group presentations

R – 5/6 – Course wrap-up