

Asian American Communities
HIST 2041/AAS 2041/AMST 2041
Spring 2011
McGraw 215
TR 2:55-4:10

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Office Hrs: T 12:30-1:30 (454 McGraw Hall) & W 12:30-1:30 (425 Rockefeller)

Course Description

This seminar offers an in-depth analysis of Asian American communities and, more generally, an analysis of the idea of community. Ranging from the mid-19th century to the present, this course uses the community study as a lens to explore the development of Asian America. But the course also interrogates the very notion of community, placing an emphasis on the process and politics of community formation. It focuses on collective strategies of resistance to discrimination and racism as well as tensions within Asian American populations. The course also explores how race and racism, migration, family relations, gender, and ethnic and national identity have shaped different ideas of community.

A central feature of this course will be service learning. Students will be required to participate in one of a number of service learning projects. Options include interviewing subjects for oral histories, tutoring local students, and working with migrant laborers.

There are three main goals for the course: (1) to provide a critical perspective, with particular attention to power relations, on the concept of “community” and on the process of community formation; (2) to provide, through specific case studies, a sense of how some Asian American communities have developed; and (3) to explore, through participation in service-learning projects, the contours of community formation in practice.

Requirements

1. Attendance and Participation (30%). As any seminar depends upon active participation in class, students will be expected to complete the assigned readings and to contribute to class discussions every week. Readings for each week should be completed in advance of the Tuesday session. Attendance is required. This portion of your grade includes regular and responsible participation on your service-learning project.

Students will be asked to attend 4 movie screenings at the beginning of the semester. Attendance at the screenings is required unless there is an unavoidable scheduling conflict.

2. Journal (25%). Students will be required to keep a journal based primarily on the course readings and your work on your service-learning project. A description of the assignment is attached to the syllabus. Due dates are listed on the course schedule.
3. 5 Short Papers (15% total). Students will be asked to write five short papers at the beginning of the course of the semester. See Course Schedule for details and due dates.

4. Final Project (30%). For the Final Project, each student will describe and analyze his or her service-learning project, paying particular attention to how their project related to “community” and community formation. Students will submit a paper, no longer than 10 pages, by Friday, May 6th at 12:00 p.m. Students will also make a brief (10-15 minute) presentation on their project to the class during the last two weeks of the semester.

For all assignments, students are required to abide by Cornell University’s Code of Academic Integrity. A copy of the code can be found at the following URL: <http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html>.

Violations of the Code of Academic Integrity, especially plagiarism, may result in a failing grade in the course. Students are urged to read and complete the exercises on “Recognizing and Avoiding Plagiarism” at <http://plagiarism.arts.cornell.edu/tutorial/index.cfm>.

Assigned Texts

All of the reading assignments will be available electronically as pdf files or as links on the course Blackboard site. Access the Blackboard site is restricted to registered students in the class. You can access Blackboard at the following url: <http://www.blackboard.cornell.edu/>

Course Schedule

WEEK 1

Jan. 25 Introduction to Course
Jan. 27 "Community"

WEEK 2

Read: At least two selections from: <http://www.cornell.edu/president/speeches/>

Assignment: 2-page essay on President Skorton's use of the word "community" in one of the pieces from the reading assignment. **Due Tues., Feb. 1.**

Feb. 1 The Cornell Community?

Feb. 3 No Class: Attend screening of 9500 Liberty at Cornell Cinema on Wed., Feb. 2nd at 7:00 p.m.

WEEK 3

Read: Vicki L. Ruiz, "Citizen Restaurant: American Imaginaries, American Communities," American Quarterly 60:1 (2008): 1-21 [Blackboard & JSTOR];

George Sanchez, "Working at the Crossroads," American Quarterly 54:1 (2002): 1-23 [Blackboard & JSTOR];

Bonnie Honig, "Immigrant America? How 'Foreignness' Solves Democracy's Problems," Social Text 12:2 (1997): 1-27 [Blackboard & JSTOR].

Assignment: 2-page essay on 9500 Liberty and how "community" is both portrayed and invoked in the film. **Due Tues., Feb. 8.**

Journals Due Tues., Feb. 8.

Feb. 8 "Community," Race, and Immigration in American Culture & Politics

Feb. 10 No Class: Attend screening of Children of Invention at Cornell Cinema on Wed., Feb. 9th at 7:00 p.m.

WEEK 4

Read: Dorothy Fujita-Rony, "Water and Land: Asian Americans and the U.S. West," Pacific Historical Review 76:4 (2007): 563-574 [Blackboard & JSTOR];

Huping Ling, "Reconceptualizing Chinese American Community in St. Louis," Journal of American Ethnic History 24:2 (2005): 65-101 [Blackboard & JSTOR];

Joseph Wood, "Vietnamese American Place Making in Northern Virginia," Geographical Review 87:1 (1997): 58-72 [Blackboard & JSTOR].

Assignment: 2-page essay on Children of Invention and how “community” is both portrayed and invoked in the film. **Due Tues., Feb. 15.**

Feb. 15 Place

Feb. 17 No Class: Attend screening of From the Other Side at Cornell Cinema on Wed., Feb. 16th at 7:00 p.m.

WEEK 5

Read: Adam McKeown, “Chapter 3: Chinese Diasporas,” from Chinese Migrant Networks and Cultural Change (2001): pp. 61-99 [Blackboard];

Donna Gabaccia, “Immigrant Women: Nowhere at Home?” Journal of American Ethnic History 10:4 (1991): 61-87 [Blackboard & JSTOR];

Ritty A. Lukose, “The Difference that Diaspora Makes,” Anthropology & Education Quarterly 38:4 (2007): 405-418 [Blackboard & JSTOR].

Assignment: 2-page essay on From the Other Side and the relationship between community and place. **Due Tues., Feb. 22.**

Feb. 22 Diaspora

Feb. 24 No Class: Attend screening of A Thousand Years of Good Prayers at Cornell Cinema on Wed., Feb., 23rd at 7:00 p.m.

WEEK 6

Read: Sofia Villenas, “Diaspora and the Anthropology of Latino Education: Challenges, Affinities, and Intersections,” Anthropology & Education Quarterly 38:4 (2002): 419-425 [Blackboard & JSTOR];

Maria Timmons Flores, “Navigating Contradictory Communities of Practice in Learning to Teach for Social Justice,” Anthropology & Education Quarterly 38:4 (2002): 380-404 [Blackboard & JSTOR];

Vichet Chhuon & Cynthia Hadley, “Asian American Ethnic Options: How Cambodian Students Negotiate Ethnic Identities in a U.S. Urban School,” Anthropology & Education Quarterly 41:4 (2010): 341-359 [Blackboard & JSTOR];

Bic Ngo & Stacey Lee, “Complicating the Image of Model Minority Success,” Review of Educational Research 77:4 (2007): 415-453 [Blackboard & JSTOR].

Assignment: 2-page essay on A Thousand Years of Good Prayers and the relationship between community and place. **Due Tues., March 1.**

March 1 Community and Community Formation in Practice: Education

March 3 Community and Community Formation in Practice: Education

WEEK 7

Read: Norton Wheeler, "Gaining Access & Sharing Authority," *The Oral History Review* 31:2 (2004): 53-68 [Blackboard & JSTOR];

Alistair Thomson, "Four Paradigm Transformations in Oral History," *The Oral History Review* 34:1 (2007): 49-70 [Blackboard & JSTOR];

Susan Rose & Sarah Hiller, "From Migrant Work to Community Transformation: Families Forming Transnational Communities in Periban and Pennsylvania," *The Oral History Review* 34:1 (2007): 95-142 [Blackboard & JSTOR].

Assignment: **Journals Due Tues., March 8**

March 8 Power and the Production of Oral History

March 10 Towards a Democratic Form of History

WEEK 8

Read: Website: From Burma to New York: <http://fromburmatonewyork.com/>

National Public Radio Story: "Burmese Refugees Find New Home in Indiana": <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=14841071>

March 15 Case Study: Burmese Refugees & Settlement

March 17 Case Study: Burmese Refugees & Settlement

SPRING BREAK

WEEK 9

Read: Michael Hanagan & Marcel van der Linden, "New Approaches to Global Labor History," *International Labor and Working Class History* 66 (2004): 1-11 [Blackboard & JSTOR];

Rhacel Salazar Perrenas, "Transgressing the Nation-State," *Signs* 26:4 (2001): 1129-1154 [Blackboard & JSTOR];

Glenn Omatsu, "Racism or Solidarity? Unions and Asian Immigrant Workers," *The Radical Teacher* 46 (1995): 33-37 [Blackboard & JSTOR].

March 29 Labor, Migration, & Community

March 31 Labor, Migration, & Community

WEEK 10

Read: Paul Y. Watanabe, "Global Forces, Foreign Policy, & Asia Pacific Americans," *PS: Political Science & Politics* 34:3 (2001): 639-644 [Blackboard & JSTOR];

Jeremy Hein, "Ethnic Organizations and the Welfare State," *Sociological Forum* 12:2 (1997): 279-295 [Blackboard & JSTOR].

Assignment: **Journals Due Tues., April 5**

April 5 The State

April 7 The State

WEEK 11

Read: Catherine Ceniza Choy, "Towards Trans-Pacific Social Justice," *Journal of Asian American Studies* 8:3 (2005): 293-307 [Blackboard & JSTOR];

Nga-Wing Anjela Wong, "'They See Us a Resource': The Role of a Community-Based Youth Center in Supporting the Academic Lives of Low-Income Chinese American Youth," *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 39:2 (2008): 181-204 [Blackboard & JSTOR];

Scott Kurashige, "Pan-Ethnicity and Community Organizing," *Journal of Asian American Studies* 3:2 (2000): 163-90 [Blackboard & JSTOR];

Dina G. Okamoto, "Institutional Panethnicity & Boundary Formation in Asian American Organizing," *Social Forces* 85:1 (2006): 1-25 [Blackboard & JSTOR].

April 12 In-Class Screening: A Village Called Versailles

April 14 Activism: Place, Politics, and Panethnicity

WEEK 12

Read: *To be announced.*

April 19 Reflections: Community & Service-Learning

April 21 Reflections: Service-Learning & Education

WEEK 13

April 26 In-Class Presentations

April 28 In-Class Presentations

WEEK 14

Assignment: **Journals Due Tues., May 3**

May 3 In-Class Presentations

May 5 In-Class Presentations