Asian American Studies 200  
Introduction to Asian American Studies  
Spring 2016 Syllabus

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E-mail Policy: I endeavor to respond to all e-mail within 24 hours. Please remember that e-mail is a formal form of correspondence. Write carefully, identify yourself completely within the email, and be clear about your questions and expectations for a response. Remember that I, like you, am a student with my own classes, research, work, and family commitments; response times may be delayed as a result, but do email me again if you haven’t heard from me within 24 hours and it is urgent.

Office Hours: Tuesdays 11 am to noon or by appointment

Class Sessions: Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30 to 1:45 pm  
Class Location: Tydings 2111 (TYD)

Course Description:
This class is designed to be an exciting and challenging introduction to the field of Asian American Studies. Studying Asian Americans means that we examine the concept of race and racial dynamics in the United States more broadly. Regardless of whether you identify as Asian American or not you will be challenged to examine how social identities and their constructed meanings have impacted your life and the lives of others.

This course will introduce and examine major themes in Asian American Studies. The Asian American community has a long history in the United States starting with immigration to the Americas during the 19th century that has continued to today. We will cover the immigration history of Asian Americans as well as the many issues that have confronted generations of Asian Americans. Major emphasis will be placed on the contemporary issues surrounding the experience of Asian Americans: reasons for coming to the Americas, immigration flows and adaptation patterns, economic and social adjustment, gender and family relations, class and community, identity, race relations, civil rights/political participation, and social movements.

The Asian American community is vastly diverse in terms of history with the United States, immigration patterns, language, culture, socioeconomic status to name a few. While the course will introduce different aspects of the contemporary Asian American experience, it cannot cover every group or issue in detail. As an introduction to the field of Asian Americans Studies, we hope that students will further pursue other courses that delve into a particular group or issue more in-depth.
Course Goals and Objectives:
By the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of fundamental concepts and ideas in the field of Asian American Studies.
2. Demonstrate understanding of the methods that produced knowledge in the field of Asian American Studies.
3. Demonstrate critical thinking in evaluating causal arguments in the field and identify evidence.
4. Explain using the course readings and other content how culture, social structure, diversity, or other key elements of historical context have an impact on individual perception, action, and values.
5. Articulate how historical change shapes ideas and social and political structures, particularly with regard to the Asian American community.
6. Explain how history or social science can be used to analyze contemporary issues related to Asian American communities and to develop policies for social change.
7. Use information technologies to conduct research and to communicate effectively about social science and history related to Asian American communities.

In addition, you should be able to:

1. Use the concepts and example of Asian Americans to demonstrate understanding of the basis of human diversity: biological, cultural, historical, social, economic, or ideological.
2. Demonstrate understanding of fundamental concepts and methods that produce knowledge about Asian Americans in the context of a plural society.
3. Explicate some of the processes that create or fail to create just, productive, egalitarian, and collaborative societies.
4. Analyze forms and traditions of thought or expression in relation to cultural, historical, political, and social contexts, as, for example, dance, foodways, literature, music, and philosophical and religious traditions.
5. Articulate how particular policies create or inhibit the formation and functioning of plural societies.
6. Use a comparative, intersectional, or relational framework to examine the experiences, cultures, or histories of two or more social groups or constituencies within a single society or across societies, and within a single historical timeframe or across historical time.
7. Use information technologies to access research and communicate effectively about plural societies.

Required Readings:

All other course materials have been placed on Canvas, in the course modules, and can be accessed on ELMS. It is your responsibility to ensure that the e-mail address that you use is the one that is listed on ELMS. If there is a different e-mail address listed you will not receive important class correspondences.
Instructor's Expectations:

- Arrive in the classroom on time and prepared to discuss the assigned work.
- Class Participation: Learning and critical thinking are most fruitful when done in cooperation with others. To successfully participate in class you must (1) arrive on time, (2) demonstrate you have read the assigned materials through before-class preparation, quizzes, and in-class contributions, and (3) fully participate in all activities.
- Missed exams, quizzes, or late work are unacceptable without prior arrangements made between the student and instructor. In cases of illness or family emergency, be prepared to provide suitable documentation (see below for university policies on attendance).
- Some of the materials and ideas discussed in this class will be controversial. Each class member is expected to treat the ideas, opinions, experiences, and work of others with respect and open-mindedness.

University Policies:

Academic Integrity: The University of Maryland takes academic honesty very seriously. We expect our students to uphold high standards of conduct. The University of Maryland is dedicated to ensuring academic integrity, symbolized by the Honor Code. The Student Honor Council defines the following as academic dishonesty:

- Cheating: intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.
- Fabrication: intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
- Facilitation: intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of the Honor Code.
- Plagiarism: intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one’s own in any academic exercise without citation.

Students are responsible for conforming to the University of Maryland academic dishonesty policy. If you cheat or submit writing that is not your own, not only will you likely fail the assignment, but you may receive a grade of “XF” on your transcript. The grade of “XF” is intended to denote a failure to accept and exhibit the fundamental value of academic honesty. The grade “XF” shall be recorded on the student’s transcript with the notation “failure due to academic dishonesty.” The grade “XF” shall be treated in the same way as an “F” for the purposes of grade point average, course repeatability, and determination of academic standing. No student with an “XF” on the student’s transcript shall be permitted to represent the University in any extracurricular activity, or run for or hold office in any student organization which is allowed to use University facilities, or which receives University funds.

Attendance Policy: Please review the official UMD attendance and assessment policy. Here are the specific policies for this class:

- If a student misses a single class session due to illness or family emergency, the student may be excused provided that they (1) make a reasonable effort to notify me in advance, and (2)
present me with a self-signed note (electronic or hard copy) that explains the reason for the absence and acknowledges that the information is accurate. Please be aware that providing false information is a violation of the student Honor Code. The student is responsible for making up any missed work and/or obtaining notes from a classmate.

- If a student misses more than one class session due to illness or family emergency, I will excuse the absence only with written documentation from a healthcare provider.
- If illness or family emergency prevents a student from taking an exam, pop quiz, or submitting a major assignment, I will only accept a late exam, quiz, or submission without penalty if the student provides written documentation from a healthcare provider.

**Accommodations:** If you have any alternate needs related to your participation in this course, including identified visual impairment, hearing impairment, physical impairment, communication disorder, and/or specific learning disability that may influence your performance in this course, you should meet with me to arrange for reasonable provisions to ensure an equitable opportunity to meet all the requirements of this course. At my discretion, some accommodations may require prior approval by Disability Support Services, located in the Counseling Center, 0126 Shoemaker Building. All communication will remain confidential.

**Students in Distress:**
Services for students in various forms of distress are offered by the Counseling Center and the Mental Health Service in the Health Center. During evenings and weekends, the student peer-counseling hotline (4-HELP or 4-4357) is available.

**Religious Observance:** The University System of Maryland policy on religious observances provides that students should not be penalized because of observances of their religious beliefs; students shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time any academic assignment missed due to individual participation in religious observances. In addition, no major grading event will be scheduled on these dates:

- Rosh Hashanah: September 13 to September 15, 2015
- Yom Kippur: September 22 to September 23, 2015
- Good Friday: March 25, 2016
- Passover: April 22 to April 24, 2016

Please inform me at the start of the semester if you are going to be absent from class due to any religious observance.
AAST 200: Introduction to Asian American Studies

Tentative Course Outline

**Check ELMS before EVERY class for updates!**

January 28th: **Introductions, read syllabus, overview of assignments and grades**

February 2nd: **Our stories, shared and distinct**
   - Readings, et cetera:

February 4th: **What is Race? How do you know someone is “Asian”**?
   - Readings, et cetera:
     - *Keywords*, “Race” (pp. 202-207) and “Yellow” (pp. 224-246)

February 9th: **Asian American Exclusion**
   - Readings, et cetera:
     - *Keywords*, “Exclusion” (pp. 82-87) and “Coolie” (pp. 37-38)

February 11th: **Pacific Colonization**
   - Readings, et cetera:

February 16th: **Citizenship**
   - Readings, et cetera:
     - *Keywords*, “Citizenship” (pp. 20-25) and “Foreign” (pp. 98-101)

February 18th: **The Contemporary Demographic Landscape**
   - Readings, et cetera:
     - *Keywords*, “Assimilation” (pp. 14-17) and “Immigration” (pp. 128-133)

February 23rd: **The 1965 Immigration Act and Post-1965 Racialization**
   - Readings, et cetera:
February 25th: Asian American Movement
  
  o Readings, et cetera:
    o Keywords, “Movement” (pp. 165-168)

March 1st: Black Lives Matter and Systemic Racism
  
  o Readings, et cetera:
    o Keywords, “Riot” (pp. 220-224)

March 3rd: Model Minority
  
  o Readings, et cetera:
    o Keywords, “Brown” (pp. 18-20)

March 8th: Model Minority, continued
  
  o Readings, et cetera:
    o BEFORE-CLASS VIEWING of Better Luck Tomorrow

March 10th: Midterm Exam

Spring Break March 13-March 20

March 22nd: Gender, Sexuality, and Attitudes
  
  o Readings, et cetera:
    o Keywords, “Family” (p. 87-92), “Sexuality” (p. 224-228), “Queer” (p. 197-202), and “Gender” (105-109)

March 24th: Colonialism and Two Spirit Identities
  
  o Readings, et cetera:
    o In-class screening of Kumu Hina

March 29th: Colonialism and Two Spirit Identities, continued
  
  o Readings, et cetera:
    o In-class screening and discussion of Kumu Hina

March 31st: Interracial Dating
  
  o Readings, et cetera:
April 5th: Seeking Refuge
  o Readings, et cetera:
    o In-class screening of Sentenced Home

April 7th: Seeking Refuge, continued
  o Readings, et cetera:
    o In-class screening and discussion of Sentenced Home

April 12th: Undocumented Asian Americans and Immigration Attitudes
  o Readings, et cetera:
    o Keywords, “Deportation” (p. 44-49)

April 14th: Asian American Politics
  o Readings, et cetera:
    o Keywords, “Politics” (p. 189-195)

April 19th: Spirituality and Resistance
  o Readings, et cetera:
    o In-class screening of Mauna Kea: Temple Under Siege
    o DUE: “Past-Present” Paper Assignment

April 21st: Spirituality and Resistance, continued
  o Readings, et cetera:
    o In-class screening of Mauna Kea: Temple Under Siege
    o Keywords, “Religion” (p. 211-215)

April 26th: Racial Triangulation, Asian Americans in Continental Race Relations
  o Readings, et cetera:

April 28th: Racial Triangulation, Pacific Islanders as Indigenous Community
  o Readings, et cetera:
    o TBD

May 3rd: Skin Tone and Mixed Race
Readings, et cetera:


May 5th: **Who are Asian Americans? Diversity, Community, Policy**

May 10th: **Wrap Up and Review**

**FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, May 17th from 1:30 to 3:30 pm** (Subject to confirmation by University Registrar)
**Assignments At-A-Glance:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points:</th>
<th>Dates:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pop Quizzes</td>
<td>20 points</td>
<td>Variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>25 points</td>
<td>March 10th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past-Present Writing Assignment</td>
<td>20 points</td>
<td>April 19th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>35 points</td>
<td>May 17th</td>
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<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 points</strong></td>
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**Assignment Descriptions:**

**Quizzes:** (20 points) There will be six **pop-quizzes** (3 to 5 questions) throughout the semester. These will be multiple choice and very straightforward IF you have done the readings and attended the class lectures. There are no make-ups for these quizzes, unless you have a valid, documented excuse (defined by university policy as due to illness, religious observances, participation in university activities at the request of university authorities, and compelling circumstances beyond the student’s control). HOWEVER, your lowest score (including a “0” for missing a quiz because you did not make it to class on time) will be dropped at the end of the semester.

**Midterm:** (25 points) The midterm is a closed-note, multiple choice and short answer examination administered in class on **Thursday, March 10th**.

**Past-Present Writing Assignment:** (20 points) Each student will be given documentation and readings related to an important historical case (legal or featured in the popular press) in Asian American Studies. Students will also be provided with a set of key words to guide a search for a contemporary case that relates in some respect. Students are to:

1. Become familiar with historical case (we will give you a reading);
2. Identify a current case that relates to the historical case—news report, academic analysis, or analysis by a non-profit/research organization;
3. Summarize key features of both the past and present case;
4. Draw *connections* between each case by drawing on concepts from at least 3 readings;
5. Discuss important differences between each case;
6. Discuss how the past case might help us to develop policies around the present case.

A more detailed set of instructions and a grading rubric will be distributed along with your historical case assignment in week 5 of the semester. Papers should be submitted electronically.
on ELMS BEFORE the beginning of class on **Tuesday, April 19th**. After that time, the paper is considered **late** (unless prior arrangements are made) and will be penalized a **third of a letter grade** for each day it is late.

**Final Exam:** (35 points) The final is a cumulative, closed-note, written examination administered in class on **Tuesday, May 17th from 1:30-3:30 pm**. This exam may consist of multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions, and a short essay.

**Grading:** Grades will be posted on Elms. Students are responsible for monitoring their progress throughout the semester. Your grade will be based upon:

1. Course-related minimal requirements (on-time submission, all assignments complete, instructions were followed by student) AS WELL AS:
2. Degree of evidence of engagement with and understanding of course materials,
3. Degree of clarity of expression and ideas,
4. Thorough development of ideas and ability to link ideas and concepts to broad themes and issues presented in materials and in class more generally,
5. Degree of evidence of thoughtful insight, incisive critique, and analytic rigor addressing critical themes in the class and in the themes presented that relate to Asian American Studies as a field,
6. Overall writing quality, exam performance, and oral communication.

**Breakdown of grades by points:** Students earn grades based on their performance in the course assignments.

A range: “Denotes excellent mastery of the subject and outstanding scholarship.”
- A+: 100 points
- A: 94-99 points
- A-: 90-93 points

B range: “Denotes good mastery of the subject and good scholarship.”
- B+: 87-89 points
- B: 84-86 points
- B-: 80-83 points

C range: “Denotes acceptable mastery of the subject and the usual achievement expected.”
- C+: 77-79 points
- C: 74-76 points
- C-: 70-73 points

D range: “Denotes borderline understanding of the subject. These grades denote marginal performance, and they do not represent satisfactory progress toward a degree.”
- D+: 67-69 points
- D: 64-66 points
- D-: 60-63 points

F range: “Denotes failure to understand the subject and unsatisfactory performance.”
- F: 0-59 points

I will automatically apply a fail grade to plagiarized papers. Please see the following for a guide to using the Chicago-style of citation (Notes System):

http://www.lib.umd.edu/ues/guides/citing-chicago-notes

**Contesting grades:** Students may appeal any grade assigned in this course if they feel that the grade does not reflect the **quality** of the work produced. To **successfully** appeal a grade a student must demonstrate that the instructor’s assessment reflects an “arbitrary and capricious” grading practice.

“Arbitrary and Capricious” grading means:

1. The assignment of a course grade to a student on some basis other than the performance in the course; or
(2) The assignment of a course grade to a student by resorting to unreasonable standards different from those which were applied to other students in that course; or,

(3) The assignment of a course grade by a substantial, unreasonable and unannounced departure from the instructor’s previously articulated standards.

To initiate an appeal the student must contact the instructor directly within ten working days of the grade assignment. The instructor and student will meet and attempt to arrive at a mutually agreeable solution. If a solution cannot be found the instructor will advise the student of additional steps for a formal appeal.