Asian Americans and Education

AAST/EDCP 498A

Dr. Julie J. Park
Thursdays 1:30-4 PM
Benjamin 0202
Office: 3214 Benjamin Bldg
Office #: 301-405-7998
parkjj@umd.edu

Office Hours: Generally Tuesdays 1:30-2:45
See http://bit.ly/Ppz1XB for exact times and to sign up

Learning Goals

Through addressing the historical and contemporary issues that have affected the experiences of Asian Americans in U.S. schools and colleges, students will critically investigate themes across Asian American educational experiences, as well as the ways in which there are many different educational experiences for various subpopulations of the Asian American community.

Students will be able to identify and articulate some of the major challenges that Asian Americans encounter in the educational system, as well as some of the controversies related to Asian Americans in education.

Students will be challenged to explain how Asian American experiences in education contribute to the broader story of race and racial stratification in the U.S. educational system and society.

Texts


All other texts on Canvas

Philosophy and Expectations for Respectful Discourse

The underlying framework for my teaching style is based on Baxter-Magolda’s Learning Partnerships Model. The LPM poses three challenges to learners, along with three principals that help educators initiate productive learning experiences. The three challenges are: that knowledge is complex and socially constructed, that students should bring themselves into how they construct and understand knowledge, and peers (both students and the instructors) have a mutual responsibility to share authority and expertise in constructing knowledge. In this class, we will seek to create an optimal learning environment by validating one another’s capacity to know, situating learning in our own experiences, and co-constructing meaning with one another. Instead of seeing the classroom as a space where I (the expert) deposit knowledge into passive student recipients, I see the classroom as a learning community where students will take ownership of their own learning experience and I wear
multiple hats including guide, facilitator, honest critic, and even occasionally but certainly not exclusively—expert.

As a community of learners, we have expectations for respectful discourse and consideration for others. Use respectful language, listen to your peers, and avoid interrupting. Treat others as you would wish to be treated.

Logistics

Phones. Turn them off during class. If there’s a reason you need to keep it on (e.g., pending emergency) please let me know in advance.

Laptops. Please turn your Wi-Fi off, have relevant materials downloaded to the desktop prior to the start of class if you’re using it to reference articles. If folks use laptops/iPads for extraneous reasons (web surfing, email, working on other class work) then we will likely go to a no laptop policy. Don’t spoil this one for your peers—stick to using the laptop for only class-related work, if you plan to use one.

Guidelines about academic integrity are at: http://umd.edu/honorpledge Simply put: Do. Not. Cheat. Or plagiarize! Please attribute all sources used to the proper authors and consult the APA/Chicago/MLA Manuel for citation guidelines.

If you have a disability that affects your participation in the course and/or need accommodations, please let me know during the first week of class.

Class Requirements

Attendance: You are expected to attend all classes. Per university attendance policy, excused absences are permissible in the case of illness, religious observances, and “compelling circumstances beyond the student’s control.” Please let me know at the beginning of the semester if you will be absent due to a religious observance. After a first absence due to illness (please let me know via email asap), documentation from a healthcare provider is required to qualify as an excused absence. A student’s grade participation grade will be adversely affected in the case of two or more unexcused absences.

Participation (20%); Active and engaged participation is expected and required. Participation will be gauged through your participation in discussions and class activities. It is expected that you will come to class having done the readings and prepared to engage in discussion. I’m aware that verbal participation generally comes easier to external processors; if you are worried that your level of speaking in class is inadequate, please come speak to me. Towards the end of the semester, I will ask you to fill out a self-evaluation for participation, which will be used to inform your grade.

Final Paper Preview (5%)

Take Home Midterm (20%)

Final Paper (25%): Two options
Option 1: Preliminary draft due in class Week 13, Final draft due Finals Week (feedback will be given to you Week 15)
Option 2: Final (only) draft due Finals week

Class Presentation #1 (15%)
Class Presentation #2 (15%)

**Explanation of Assignments**

**Final Paper Preview:** An overview on the topic that you have selected for your final paper. Include a brief overview of the subject that you wish to study, preliminary questions or themes that you might want to address, things that you already know about the subject and things that you need to find out more about, and any personal reflections you have on the subject such as things you might know about the subject due to personal experience or observations. ***Include a list of five preliminary sources—book chapters, books, articles, etc. (3 can be from our readings) relevant to your topic.*** Optional: You may include an outline. The purpose of the paper is to jumpstart your thinking on your final paper and receive feedback on the feasibility of your ideas. **2 full pages minimum.**

**Final Paper Options (Both 10-13 pages without references, references should be consistently cited using APA, Chicago, or MLA format)**

1) A research-based critical synthesis of any of the topics we covered over the quarter, or an issue affecting Asian Americans in education that we did not address in-depth. Alternately you may pick an issue related to education and discuss how the issue affects Asian Americans (e.g., No Child Left Behind or standardized testing in general). Somewhere in your paper, provide an analysis about what your issue says not only about the state of Asian Americans in American education, but also what it reflects about broader trends around issues such as equality, race, racism, meritocracy, etc. Optional: You may choose to also include a short discussion of how your own personal experience or perceptions of Asian Americans tie into your paper topic.

2) Pick a portrayal of Asian Americans in popular culture or the news that relates to education and write a critical analysis of it, along with the educational issues that it addresses. Some suggestions include the Philadelphia bullying issues, support or lack thereof for LGBTQIA Asian Americans, portrayals of Asian Americans in cartoons such as Doonesbury or King of the Hill, media coverage of the model minority myth over the years, or films such as *Better Luck Tomorrow* or *AKA Don Bonus*. Somewhere in your paper, provide an analysis about what your issue says not only about the state of Asian Americans in American education, but also what it reflects about broader trends around issues such as equality, race, racism, meritocracy, etc. Optional: Include a short (1 page) discussion of how your own personal experience or perceptions of Asian Americans tie into the piece of pop culture/media you picked: Is it reflective of your own experience or does your experience make you challenge its validity?

3) College Access Story. The purpose of this option is to get you to think critically about the pathway that you and another took to college, the relationship between the personal and the political. Part I: Begin by writing a critical analysis of your own college pathway story. Your narrative should include an analysis/scholarly reflection on three factors

Asian Americans and Education 3
related to race/ethnicity in some fashion that influenced your pathway. Examples include social capital, racial/ethnic identity, immigration, gender, affirmative action, socioeconomic status and its intersection with race/ethnicity, parental involvement, being a first-generation student (or not), how you went about applying to college, etc. The point is to use your own personal experience as a gateway into some of the broader issues and trends that affect college access; accordingly, you should situate your analysis in a discussion of these broader issues by referring to relevant literature on the topics you choose to focus on. Part II: Find an Asian American of any ethnicity whose college access story likely differs from yours, design and conduct an interview with them to learn their story. Following the guidelines of Part I, write a critical analysis of their college pathway story. If applicable, you can integrate the two parts to compare/contrast/synthesize, or you may write the assignment as two separate pieces. You are expected to draw on the semester’s readings as well as outside citations where appropriate.

Class Presentations #1 and 2: In groups of 2s and 3s, you will be responsible for coming up with a 30 minute presentation on the week’s readings. This presentation should include some sort of balance between communicating the content of the week’s readings and an exercise, activity, or demonstration related to the readings that will help engage your classmates in an interesting and hopefully fun way. You could also think of the exercise as a “conversation starter” that can kick off dialogue on a key theme(s) found in the reading. Creativity is encouraged! You are also responsible for turning in a summary with key points (1-2 pages per reading) that week; upload them to Canvas by the end of the day of your presentation so everyone can access them. You may request some extra time (beyond your 30 minutes) if you anticipate that your activity/exercise may run a little longer than the 30 minutes.

As part of the assignment, you need to email Julie an agenda of your presentation by **Monday 12 PM** the week of your presentation. She will get feedback back to you by the end of the day. This is your opportunity to ask any questions, get feedback, etc.

*Rubric (out of 35)*

Does the presentation effectively summarize the week’s readings? (0-10)

Does the presentation bring up interesting points connecting course content to previous course reading or other relevant themes related to race/ethnicity, Asian Americans, and/or education? (0-5)

Does the “activity” spur the class in meaningful learning and/or engagement about the week’s readings? (0-10)

Do the handouts effective summarize the week’s readings? (0-10)

Extra points may be assigned for exceptional creativity

*Required Readings and Weekly Schedule*

Week 1, Jan 30: Overview, situating our stories

Week 2, Feb 6: Historical context, contemporary patterns

MM, Museus Chapter 1

Week 3, Feb 13: Who are we?


Week 4, Feb 20: Bilingual education, immigration, and “the good student”


Week 5, Feb 27: Structure and culture

Tiger Mom (3-5, 20-24)


Week 6, March 6: Structure and culture continued, school climate

Asian Americans in Class, Lew, 65-104


Take Home Midterm Given Out

Week 7, March 13: The road to college

MM Buenavista Chapter 10


Take Home Midterm Due (Upload to Canvas)
SPRING BREAK

Week 8, March 27: The role of policy

iCount Report

APIASF Scholar Perspectives Report


Guest speaker: Jacqueline Mac from Asian & Pacific Islander American Scholarship Foundation

Week 9, April 3: The politics of admissions and affirmative action


FINAL PAPER PREVIEW DUE IN CLASS

Week 10, April 10: Asian American identity in college


MM, Pizzolato Chapter 6

MM, Wong Chapter 4

Week 11, April 17: Identity continued

MM, Museus Chapter 2
MM, Wright Chapter 7
MM, Tran Chapter 3
MM, Pepin Chapter 12

Asian Americans and Education 6
Week 12, April 24: Campus climate and student needs


Week 13, May 1: Campus climate and student needs Part II

“On some college campuses, a focus on mental health” New American Media article http://newamericamedia.org/2013/09/on-some-college-campuses-a-focus-on-asian-american-mental-health.php


Yeh, T. (2002). Asian American college students who are educationally at risk. New Directions for Student Services, 97, 61-71.

Week 14, May 8: Asian American Studies and faculty battles


FINALS WEEK, May 15

Final paper due, upload to Canvas by 5 PM

Asian Americans and Education 7