Notice

This syllabus is subject to change depending on new developments or the pace of the class. You are responsible for any and all changes announced in class. The instructor reserves the right to change any course requirements listed below provided he informs you verbally or electronically of the changes.

Course Description

This course aims to broaden the understanding of Korean Americans. Together we will be examining their immigration history, culture, community, and the roles they play in the American economy, politics, and society. Although this course focuses mainly on Korean Americans, the scope of the course is beyond the community. The understanding of Korean Americans unveils race relations in the United States; increasing transnational activities and cultural penetrations; and the issues facing the children of Asian immigrants. Throughout this course, students are expected to understand the past, present, and future of Korean Americans, and further, how social experiences are shaped by the globalizing world represented by increasing international migration.

Course Learning Outcomes

• An awareness of self, family, and the community in cultural context.
• An understanding of the status of Korean/Asian Americans in the U.S. race relation.
• Awareness of the history of Korean immigration and the issues facing the Korean community.
• An understanding of the life of Korean Americans from a transnational perspective.
• Increased research skill in interviewing and interpreting subjects with sociological concepts.

Recommended Texts

Book chapters and journal articles to be read are available at the course blackboard. The following books are supplementary. You do not have to purchase them. Copies are available in McKeldin and AAST libraries.


Assignments

Class presentation: Students are asked to select one topic among the class themes and to do 15-minute presentation.

Final Paper: Interview at least one Korean American family or individuals (parents, relatives, or other Korean friends) and analyze their life stories using sociological concepts covered by the class. You can choose your topic among the followings: 1) The personal history of Korean immigrant interviewees and their social mobility between pre-migration and post-migration and their life in the United States (American dream); 2) The impact of the model minority myth on their life; and 3) The impact of transnationalism on their life and identity. You can also choose your topic beyond these topics upon discussion with the instructor. (Suggested format: 6-8 pages, Font Size 12, Times New Roman, double space).

Exam: There is a mid-term exam (Monday, October 24th). No final exam!

Grading Guidelines

Students earn grades based on their performance on the course requirements listed above. Here is a description of the grading criteria according to the UMD Faculty Handbook (http://www.faculty.umd.edu/teach/grades.html).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+, A, A-</td>
<td>“Denotes excellent mastery of the subject and outstanding scholarship.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+, B, B-</td>
<td>“Denotes good mastery of the subject and good scholarship.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+, C, C-</td>
<td>“Denotes acceptable mastery of the subject and the usual achievement expected.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+, D, D-</td>
<td>“Denotes borderline understanding of the subject. These grades denote marginal performance, and they do not represent satisfactory progress toward a degree.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>“Denotes failure to understand the subject and unsatisfactory performance.”</td>
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**Attendance and Participation:** Students should attend all class meetings, be on time, and be prepared to participate on a substantive and analytical level in discussions of the readings and topics. If you do miss class, contact a classmate to make sure you are up to date on all changes. Bring the appropriate texts and syllabus to class every time we meet. Note that UMD’s official attendance policy is available at [http://www.testudo.umd.edu/soc/atedasse.html](http://www.testudo.umd.edu/soc/atedasse.html).

**Academic Integrity:** The AAST takes the issue of academic honesty very seriously. We expect our students to uphold high standard of conduct. The University of Maryland is dedicated to ensuring academic integrity, symbolized by the Honor Code upheld by the Student Honor Council. You are asked to write the following pledge on all your written work: “I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (or assignment).” Even if you choose not to write the pledge on your work, you are still bound by it.

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 familiarizing themselves with these policies: [http://www.testudo.umd.edu/soc/dishonesty.html](http://www.testudo.umd.edu/soc/dishonesty.html)

**Classroom Etiquette:** The AAST values the diversity of its student body and is committed to providing a classroom atmosphere that encourages the equitable participation of all students. At all times students should be respectful of others’ opinions. If you disagree with someone you should express your alternative view using the evidence that led you to your interpretation. Personalized comments, inappropriate language, insults, sleeping, and raised voices are not conducive to learning and will not be tolerated in the classroom. In addition, cell phone texting or viewing and laptop use other than taking notes are disruptive activities that inhibit students’ ability to learn and are to be refrained from in lecture and discussion section. Please place your cell phone on silent or “vibrate” mode while in lecture or discussion section.

**Online Expectations:** We will assume that the e-mail address that you provided to the university is accurate, up to date and checked at least once a day during business days. If your official e-mail address is not up to date, please update it. In addition, all students will be required to sign into Blackboard in order to obtain or view course-related files or information. On Blackboard we will
have links and handouts relating to the course. Note that the instructor will generally inform you verbally and via e-mail when an item has been added to Blackboard. You can find information relating to getting started with Blackboard here: (http://elms.umd.edu)

**Writing Center:** The UMD English Department offers a superb resource in the form of the campus writing center. It is recommended that you bring your written work to the writing center so that they can help you improve your writing.

Writing Center website:  (http://www.english.umd.edu/the-writing-center-front-page)
Office Number:  (301) 405-3787 (The Grammar Hotline)
Location:  1205 Tawes Hall

**Religious Observances:** University policy 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 that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances.*” Please inform the instructors at the start of the semester if you are going to miss any lecture sessions, discussion sections, exams, or other assignments due to religious observances so that alternative arrangements can be made.

**Special Accommodations:** If you require any special accommodations due to disability please inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester so that the instructor can make arrangements for exams and other items. In addition, please make an appointment with the Disability Support Services (DSS) so that you can learn the procedures and fill out the necessary paperwork. DSS contact information:

•  DSS Website:  (http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS)
•  Main office phone number:  301.314.7682 (fax 301.405.0813)
•  Location:  0126 Shoemaker Hall – Building #37 (just behind Memorial Chapel)

**Course Evaluations:** During the end of the semester, you will be asked to fill out online course evaluations via the website at (www.courseevalum.umd.edu). Please take the time to fill out these forms because the AAST takes them very seriously as tools which we can use to improve our teaching. Therefore, over the course of the semester please think about what worked well in the course, what was ineffective in the course, and what you would recommend be done to improve the course.

**Course Outline**

**Day 1 (Mon, Sept.12th 2011): Introduction to the course**

- Introduction to the course and expectations
- Reflection on self identity in cultural context
- Discussion about the general issues and images of Korean Americans
- Presentation on brief demography and socioeconomic profile of Korean Americans


*Question:* Why does this course begin with the LA riots? What are they this riot unfolds about Korean Americans?
Day 2 (Mon, Sept.19th, 2011): **History of Korean Immigration**: when, who, why come?


*Questions*: How are three waves in the history of Korean immigration characterized? (Who were the majority groups of the Korean immigrants and why did they come?); What are pushing and pulling factors?; What are the political and economic contexts of Korean/Asian immigration to the United States?

Class Presentation- _________________________ and _________________________

Day 3 (Mon, Sept. 26th, 2011): **American Dream? Social Mobility of Korean Americans**

*Reading*: Abelmann and Lie. 1995. *Blue Dreams*. Ch.3. pp.49-84

*Questions*: What are characteristics of the Korean American community in education, labor-market, income and wealth?; What do these characteristics say about the roles and status of Korean Americans in the United States?; Have Korean Americans achieved their American dream.

SPEAKER: Sunny Lee, Principal (Clarksburg ES)

Class Presentation- _________________________ and _________________________

Day 4 (Mon, Oct. 3rd, 2011): **Model Minority**


*Questions*: When did the model minority myth rise?; How is the model minority myth is used/abused?; What are the costs of the model minority myth?

SPEAKERS: Young-Mee Choi and Molly Hong, Parent Outreach Coordinators, MCPS

Class Presentation- _________________________ and _________________________

Day 5 (Mon, Oct. 10th, 2011): **Black-Korean Conflict**


*Questions*: What did Korean Americans say about the Korean-black conflict?; What did blacks say the Korean-black conflict?; How did white involve in this conflict? (What did state do? What did media do?); How is white racism reconstructed in the context of black-Korean tension?; What was the role of cultural discourses on the Korean-black conflict?

FILM: Sa-i-gu

SPEAKER: Troy Boddy, Director of Diversity Initiatives

Class Presentation- _________________________ and _________________________
Day 6 (Mon, Oct. 17th, 2011): **Korean Americans in Race Relation**

*Reading:* Kim, Nadia. 2008. Ch.6 – Ch.7 *Imperial Citizens: Koreans and race from Seoul to LA.* Stanford University Press

*Questions:* In what sense Korean Americans are visible, and in what sense invisible? What are the factors/mechanism that make Korean Americans visible or invisible?

*SPEAKER:* Brian Avila, Equity Specialist

Class Presentation- ___________________________ and ___________________________

Day 7 (Mon, Oct. 24th, 2011) **Mid-term exam**

*Good luck!*

Day 8 (Mon, Oct. 31st, 2011): **Community and Politics**


*Questions:* How has political coalition among racial minorities changed historically in LA? What are common between two cases (Cuban Americans in Maimi and Korean Americans in LA)? What are the difficulties Korean Americans in coalition and in urban politics in general? How have race and class interplayed in urban politics? What would be the future of urban politics? What should be the goal of urban politics?

Class Presentation- ___________________________ and ___________________________

Day 9 (Mon, Nov. 7th, 2011): **Family and Intermarriage**


*Questions:* How has the concept of family among Korean Americans changed? What kinds of conflicts/problems do Korean families face? How much and why do Korean Americans participate in intermarriage? How does globalization affect Korean families?

*SPEAKER:* Pastor Kyu Kim, HOPE Church

Class Presentation- ___________________________ and ___________________________

Day 10 (Mon, Nov. 14th, 2011): **Gender and Sexuality**


*Questions:* How did the gender roles of Korean American women change after their immigration? What are contributing factors to the changes in their gender roles?
FILM: Never Perfect

Class Presentation- ___________________________ and ___________________________

Day 11 (Mon, Nov. 21st, 2011): Culture and Transnationalism


Questions: How do young Korean Americans consume, disseminate and construct popular culture across the Pacific? How is Korean American youths’ consumption of South Korean culture interrelated with their search for identity and community? How is their search for identity related to their status in American society? How are the trans-Pacific cultural flows affected by the interplay of various structural forces including the market and the state? How do they signify the changing global cultural landscape and power relationships?

Class Presentation- ___________________________ and ___________________________

Day 12 (Mon, Nov. 28th, 2011): Identity of Korean American Youth / Korean Americans in Arts


Questions: How is the identity of Korean American youth formed? How does increasing transnational interaction or globalization affect their identity? How have Korean Americans been represented in American arts such as films and literature?

Class Presentation- ___________________________ and ___________________________

Day 13 (Mon, Dec. 5th, 2011): Future of Korean/Asian Americans


Questions: What would be the future of Asian Americans? Are they going to be assimilated or racialized? How can Asian Americans make their own future by themselves?