

**LSP 200-241 Asian American Experiences in the U. S. A**  
Tuesdays & Thursdays 9:40-11:00, Winter 2014  
Classroom: Room 552, Byrne Hall, Lincoln Park Campus

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**LSP 200 Multicultural Seminar.** This course provides the opportunity for students to learn about some dimension of multiculturalism relevant to the United States, as considered in the context of the global community. Multiculturalism includes questions of ethnicity, race, class, gender, language, religion, and sexual orientation. Courses pay attention to the history of multiculturalism; examine the experiences and perspectives of at least three distinct cultural groups; develop a critical perspective about meanings of multiculturalism; and investigate the historical roots of inequalities related to differences in class, ethnicity, gender, age, language, religion, ability, and sexual orientation. Topics of seminars vary and students select a course that interests them. Students can complete only one course numbered

**Description of the course:**

Asian Americans consist of diverse ethnic groups whose roots can be traced to China, Japan, Korean, the Philippines, India, and Southeast Asia, and Pacific islands. Like most early European immigrants, Asians first landed in the U. S. in the mid to late 19th century in groups. Early Asian immigrants contributed to American economy in the areas of agriculture, mining, continental railway, manufacturing, and service sectors. However, because of the U.S. anti-Asian policies and negative media portrayal, Asian immigrants were subject to racism, discrimination, prejudice, and stereotypes in the U.S. history.

Today Asian Americans belong to the fastest-growing ethnic minority group in the U. S. They take 5.8% of American population (18, 205,898, PewResearch) and are found in all sectors of life, making significant contributions in science, computers, medical fields and beyond. Yet, many still face challenges and prejudice living in the U.S.A. Younger generation of Asian Americans face challenges in their cultural and racial identity formation processes.

This course reviews literature and narratives on four aspects of Asian American experiences in the U.S.: (1) Asian immigration; (2) Asian American civil rights; (3) Asian American identity construction; and (4) Asian American communication. The readings mainly cover the experiences of three Asian American groups: Chinese Americans, Asian Indian/Pakistan Americans, and Filipino Americans. Similarities and differences of these groups will be identified and compared. The course will involve a combination of case studies, narrative analyses, and social critiques. The format of

teaching is largely a seminar consisting of class discussions, exchange of ideas, critiques of the readings, sharing personal experiences and observations.

**Learning objectives:**

1. To learn about shared interests of Asian Americans as well as distinctive experiences of three Asian American groups in the U. S.
2. To learn about the history of immigration of the three Asian American groups.
3. To critique stereotypical portrayal and negative perceptions of Asian Americans in the U.S. media.
4. To explore cultural identity formation and communication processes of Asian Americans.
5. To improve multicultural awareness and the critical thinking ability.
6. To learn to be self-reflexive as well as appreciative of Asian American cultural values and experiences.

**Textbooks:**

Fong, Timothy P. The Contemporary Asian American Experience: Beyond the Model Minority, 3rd edition. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2008.

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

Reading Packet on D2L

**Assignments:**

**1. Online and In-class Discussions (20 points)**

The online discussion is the forum for your participation and contribution to the class. For each week, there will be **one or two** discussion questions posted on D2L Discussion Board. If there are two questions, you will choose one question out of the two for your first posting which has to be done by midnight every Thursday of the week. After you post your own response you can read other students' posts and then reply with your comments as many times as you want. You must post your comments before midnight on Sunday of every week, The quantity and quality of your responses to these questions will be counted as your participation grade. I will read every discussion post and evaluate your responses based on the following criteria:

- (1). Showing the evidence of having done the readings; e.g. addressing the question by making reference to the readings.
- (2). Showing critical thinking ability in critiquing/evaluating the readings.
- (3). Showing thoughtfulness and completeness in covering the question.

- (4). Showing the ability of making connections to personal experiences, current events, and relevant Asian American experiences.
- (5). Providing evidence and examples to support your statements/arguments.
- (6). Number of times of your posts for each question and for responding to other students' posts.
- (7). Addressing or responding to the selected question in a timely manner. Responses to discussion questions from previous sessions will not be accepted.)
- (8). Helping cultivate a healthy online learning environment; e.g. netiquette, greeting others by name and closing by a signature, offering constructive comments, respecting others' perspectives; academic integrity.
- (9). Coherence and clear organization in your posting and free of grammatical and spelling errors in your written responses.

We will continue the discussion on the questions in class meetings if necessary. The grading criteria will be based on

- (1) Showing the evidence of having done the readings; e.g. asking and answering questions, commenting and critiquing viewpoints from the class readings.
- (2) Contributing to intellectual engagement in class; e.g. referencing outside class readings, sharing your own observations and experiences, bringing to class relevant quotes, articles, or issues to share.
- (3) Helping cultivate a healthy learning environment; e.g. attending to all classes, listening to others' viewpoints, respecting others' perspectives; refraining from side conversations, texting, using your computer for other purposes, coming to class late or leaving early without notifying the teacher. Also see attendance policy in the class policy section.

**I will give you a mid-term participation grade.**

## **2. Case-Analysis Paper (20 points)**

This assignment aims to develop your critical thinking ability through an examination of a case study that related to Asian American experiences in the U.S.A. Choose an issue or case in any of the Asian American groups in the USA (e. g. education, injustice/violence, family communication, identity development, media representation, Asian Americans in politics, sports, art and music). You can take a case that is written or hidden in the American history, or a current case such as the media coverage of Jeremy Lin, or tiger mom controversy, or Asian American dating/marriage. You could also center your paper on the critique of Asian American myth such as assimilation, model minority, stereotypical media representation and relate to some specific cases or examples in your analysis and critiques. Support your thesis statement by research evidence and from the class readings that are relevant to the topic. Feel free to incorporate your own experiences and observations the paper. 7-10 pages, double space. A detailed description and grading criteria will be placed on D2L.

## **3. Team Presentation (20 points)**

Form a group of three and choose an issue or case in any of the Asian American groups in the USA (e. g. education, injustice/violence, family communication, identity

development, media representation, Asian Americans in politics, sports, art and music, South-East Asians, Korean Americans, Japanese Americans, Asian ethnic communities) and give a team presentation on the issue in the last week of class. Be as creative as you can in the presentation to inform the class audience of the issue and critique the impact of the issue on society. The presentations take place in the last week of class. A detailed description and grading criteria will be placed on D2L.

#### 4. Two exams (mid-term and final, 20 points each, 40 points total)

Exams are in the form of filling blanks, short answer, and short essay questions. The exams will be taken in class.

#### Grading summary:

Online and in-class discussion	20
Case-Analysis paper	20
Presentation	20
Mid-term Exam	20
Final Exam	20

Total points 100

The following percentages will be used to determine the final letter grades:

A = 94-100	C+ = 77-79
A- = 90-93	C = 73-76
B+ = 87-89	C- = 70-72
B = 83-86	D+ = 67-69
B- = 80-82	D = 60-66

#### F = 59 and below

**A Grade:** Demonstrate an outstanding performance in all the class assignments. Participate in both in-class and online discussions actively and contribute significantly. Show an enthusiastic learning attitude.

**B Grade:** Demonstrate a good to above average performance in all class assignments. Participate in both in-class and online discussions actively. Show a good understanding of the learned materials and a positive learning attitude.

**C Grade:** Demonstrate a satisfactory performance in class assignments. Participate in both in-class and online discussions occasionally. Show a basic understanding of the learned materials and a positive learning attitude.

**D Grade:** Demonstrate an unsatisfactory performance in class assignments. Participate in both in-class and online discussions at a minimum level. Show a poor understanding of the learned materials and low motivation for learning.

**F Grade:** Demonstrate an incompetent performance in class assignments. Fail to participate in both in-class and online discussions. Show a negative learning attitude and no respect for different perspectives.

**Policies and Expectations:**

1. Attendance: We will meet once a week for 10 weeks. Your attendance to each face-to-face class session is required. Please inform me prior to or soon after if you run into any emergent situation that prevents you from coming to class. Each unexcused absence will result in **one letter grade** deduction in your final grade.
2. Classroom Etiquette: A respectful manner in class attendance and participation is expected. You are expected to be in class on time and leave class only when it is finished. Frequent late arrival or early departure will be considered disturbing to class and will affect your participation grade. Should you leave the class early or arrive late because of some significant reasons, please let me know before or soon after the class. Attentiveness in class is expected. Unless it is required by class activity, any side conversations or passing notes to each other during the class will not be tolerated and will affect your participation credits. If you choose to use your computer in class, please make sure you are only using it for taking notes for this class. If you are found out to use your computer for purposes other than for this class, you will not be allowed to use it again. **Please turn off your cell phones while attending the class.**
3. Online and in-class Participation: Your online participation is essential in accomplishing the goals of this course. I expect you to follow the readings and class materials in all class units. I expect you to voice your views, interpretation, and critique of the readings and sharing your experiences in in-class discussions as well. For the online discussion, post your response and respond to other students' posts in a timely manner as specified in the "Online Discussions" assignment.
4. Policies for the Exams: Exams will be taken in class meeting time. There will be no make-up exam unless there is certified evidence for any emergency or you plan to attend a University sponsored event.
5. Case Analysis Paper: The paper must be turned in in the dropbox on D2L on the due day specified on the syllabus. Papers not turned in on the specified day will be given a grade lower than the one deserved. For example, an "A" paper submitted late will be given a grade of "B." Papers are only accepted within one week of the due date. Papers should be typed and double space. You are responsible for saving documents and drafts of your paper. Any excuse with computer breakdown or loss of document in the disk for the delay of the paper will not be accepted.

6. Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the appropriation or presentation of someone else's ideas, language, or designs as your own. You should be aware of the strong sanctions against plagiarism as stated in the current Bulletin and Student Handbook. If proven, a charge of plagiarism could result in an automatic F in the course and possible expulsion. Be sure to consult with me if you have any questions about what plagiarism entails or how to acknowledge source materials and the works of others.

### **Tentative Weekly Schedule and Reading Requirement:**

#### **Week One**

Tuesday 1/6 (in class)

Introduction of the course

Introduction of each other

Explanation of syllabus

Definition of “American” and definition of “Asian American”

Video: “Asian Americans”

Thursday 1/8 (online)

An overview of Asian American issues and groups

History of Asian immigration

**Readings:** Introduction Chapter and Chapter 1 of Fong’s book

#### **Week Two**

Tuesday 1/13 (in class)

Team presentation assignment

Asian American immigration: Chinese experience

**Readings:** “Never Fear, and You Will Be Lucky”: Journey and Arrival in San Francisco”  
In *The Chinese in America* by Iris Chang (on D2L)

Video: “Becoming American”

Thursday 1/15 (online)

Asian American immigration: Asian Indian experiences

**Readings:** “The Tide of Turbans: Asian Indians in America” by Ronald Takaki (D2L)

#### **Week Three**

Tuesday 1/20 (in class)

Asian Filipino experiences

**Readings:** “Dollar a Day, Dime a Dance: The Forgotten Filipinos” by Ronald Takaki (on D2L)

Video: “In No One’s Shadow”

Thursday 1/22 (online)

Asian American community, Asian American consumer behavior, and the model minority myth

**Readings:** Chapter 2 of Fong's book

**Week Four**

Tuesday 1/27 (in class)

Asian American education

**Readings:** Chapter 3 of Fong's book

Thursday 1/29 (online)

Online

Asian Americans at workplace

**Readings:** Chapter 4 Fong's book

**Week Five**

Tuesday 2/3 (in class)

**Mid-Term Exam**

Thursday 2/5 (online)

Discrimination and anti-Asian violence

Documentary: Who killed Vincent Chin?

**Readings:** Chapter 5 of Fong's book

**Week Six**

Tuesday 2/10 (in class)

Asian Americans in the media

Video: "Slaying the Dragon"

**Readings:** Chapter 6 of Fong's book

Thursday 2/12 (online)

Asian American Family

**Readings:** Chapter 7 of Fong's book

Film: *Joy Luck Club*

**Week Seven**

Tuesday 2/17 (in class)

Asian American political empowerment

**Readings:** Chapter 8 of Fong's book

Thursday 2/19 (online)

Asian American cultural/ethnic identity

Reading: Chapter 1 of Lee and Zhou's book

**Week Eight**

Tuesday 2/24 (in class)

Filipino American youth cultural identity development

**Readings:** Chapters 4 and 12 in Lee and Zhou's book

Thursday 2/26 (online)

Chinese American youth cultural identity development

**Readings:** Chapters 7 and 9 in Lee and Zhou's book

**Week Nine**

Tuesday 3/3 and Thursday 3/5 (online)

Indian American youth identity, Asian American actors, gay Asian American identity negotiation

Readings: Chapters 8, 16, 17 of Zhou and Lee's book

Film: *The Namesake*, *Wedding Banquet*

**Case Analysis Paper due by 12 :00 AM (midnight) Thursday, March 5th**

**Week Ten**

Tuesday 3/10

Team presentations (in class)

Thursday 3/12

Team presentations (in class)

**Final Exam: 8:45-11:00 March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015 (in class)**



