**2014-2015 Annual Assessment Report**

**College: Humanities**

**Department: Asian American Studies**

**Program: Undergraduate**

**Assessment Liaison: Eunai Shrake**

**Overview of Annual Assessment Project**

The AAS department has been working on assessing departmental SLO #2: “*Working from a social justice approach to race, class, ethnicity, gender and sexuality, students will develop and apply their* ***critical thinking******skills*** *as demonstrated through written assignments, oral presentations, class discussion and examinations*,” by focusing on the AAS 201 (Race, Racism, and Critical Thinking) class. AAS 201 is one of 7 core required courses for AAS major and double major students. This lower division GE class is offered every semester with 12-13 sections taught by more than 9 instructors (3 regular full time professors and 3 regular part-time lecturers and 3-4 non-regular part timers).

To assess our SLO # 2 that focuses on students’ development of critical thinking skills, the AAS department created a departmental assessment committee that is made up of three full time faulty who have been teaching the course for some time. Upon meeting a few times in Fall 2014, the committee decided to divide the assessment process into three phases: 1) course syllabi analysis (2014-15); 2) designing assessment tools & creating rubrics (2015-16); 3) measuring student work and course revision (2016-17). This 3-year plan is similar to 3 options in AALC report form albeit not the same.

The purpose of conducting syllabi analysis as a first step in the assessment process was to align the course across various sections in order to lay groundwork for next year’s assessment method design. In other words, we wanted to establish common course learning objectives for AAS 201 and align them with GE SLOs and departmental SLOs. More importantly, we wanted to analyze how and what each instructor teaches our students about race and racism in America in relation to building students’ critical thinking skills.

During the Spring semester of 2015, the assessment committee collected 8 course syllabi from various instructors of AAS 201 and analyzed them. The committee looked at such aspects of each syllabi as “course objectives,” “content of the class (topics/themes),” “assigned readings,” “activities,” and “evaluation methods.” Through this process of syllabi analysis, the departmental assessment committee found each syllabus to be diverse but somewhat consistent in many ways. Based on this syllabi analysis, the assessment committee created a list of common themes and objectives that should be addressed in the course. The list also includes suggested reading materials and various classroom activities as well as teaching strategies. We sent out this list to all instructors who teach this course in the Fall semester of 2015. Affected faculty are assured that this process of course alignment is not to impinge upon their academic freedom but to assist them by providing ideas of key concepts and ways to teach critical thinking to help us to be more consistent throughout all sessions. Below is the list the assessment committee created.

**Required Objectives for AAS 201 (Race, Racism, and Critical Thinking) and Suggested Readings/Activities**

**1)****Race as Social Construction**

Students should understand the difference between biological definitions and social construction definitions of race. Students should also be able to recognize race as something structural, systemic, and more than individual prejudice.

Suggested readings:

* + Chapter 4 and 5 Michael Omi & Howard Winant's *Racial Formation in the United States* (Routledge). Most 201 instructors are using the 1996 edition but we strongly suggest using the

new 2014 edition.

* + Stuart Hall’s (1992) “The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power” in Stuart Hall and Bram Gieben, eds., *Formations of Modernity*, (Cambridge: Polity Press), pp. 295-320
  + Chapter One from David Roediger and Elizabeth Esch’s *The Production of Difference: Race and the Management of Labor in U.S. History*, (Oxford University Press), pp. 3-16 are the

introduction and pp. 67-97 focus on the West Coast

* + - Also consider using selections from Evelyn Nakano Glenn’s (2002) *Unequal Freedom: How Race and Gender Shaped American Citizenship and Labor* (Harvard University Press).

This work is excellent for teaching intersectionality as well.

Suggested activities:

* + Group project having students identify a racial project.
  + Group project having students analyze historic anti-Asian political cartoons and explain how the cartoon is part of the Yellow Peril racial project/discourse.

**2) Historic and Contemporary Forms of Racism**

Students should be exposed to both historic and contemporary forms of racism. Contemporary forms of racism should particularly emphasize color-blind racism as an ideology used

since the 1960s to advocate for a post-racial world. Students should understand how color-blind racism is an ideology used to uphold white supremacy.

Suggested readings:

* + Chapter 1 and 2 in Eduardo Bonilla-Silva’s (2010) *Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in the United States* (Rowman & Littlefield

Publishers, Inc.).

Suggested activities:

* + Analysis of CA Proposition 209 or recent US Supreme Court decision on Voting Rights Act

**3) White privilege and white supremacy**

Students should be exposed to both white privilege and white supremacy. These concepts should continue to reinforce ideas of the social construction of race; who is able to benefit, i.e.

derive material and psychological gains, from white privilege and white supremacy); as well as the structural issues involved with maintaining white supremacy.

Suggested readings:

* + Peggy McIntosh’s (1992) article “White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women’s Studies, in: M. Andersen &

P. H. Collins, eds., *Race, Class, and Gender: An anthology* (Wadsworth Publishing).

* + Zeus Leonardo’s (2004) article “The Color of Supremacy: Beyond the Discourse of ‘White Privilege’, *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 36(2): 137-152, which critiques the

overemphasis on privilege (v. supremacy).

* + Andrea Smith's (2006) chapter “Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy,” in Andrea Smith, Beth Richie, Julia Sudbury, Janelle White, and Incite! Women of Color

Against Violence, eds., *The Color of Violence: The Incite! Anthology*, (South End Press), pp 66-73.

* + Laura Pulido’s (2000) article “Rethinking Environmental Racism: White Privilege and Urban Development in Southern California,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*

90(1): 12-40.

* + Ruth Wilson Gilmore’s (2002) chapter “Race and Globalization,” in Peter Taylor, Richard Johnstone, and Michael Watts, eds., *Geographies of Global Change,* (Blackwell), pp. 261-274

Suggested activities:

* + Teach a unit on environmental racism and the environmental justice movement. Examples can be draw from Los Angeles’ South Bay and harbor regions as well as from Pacoima
  + Teach a unit on post-World War II housing policy, restrictive covenants, redlining, and the intergenerational transfer of wealth.
  + Teach a unit on racial profiling and/or on the prison-industrial complex
  + Teach Gilmore’s definition of racism as “state-sanctioned vulnerability to premature death.”

**4) Asian American racialization**

Students should be exposed to specific ways in which Asian Americans have been racialized in the US. This includes exposing students to the discourse of the model minority and

critiquing this discourse, particularly focusing on how Asian Americans as the model minority has been used as a tool against Civil Rights claims and gains that ultimately perpetuates

white supremacy. Students should also be exposed to how Asian Americans have been racialized as perpetual foreigners or outsiders, which ties into model minority explanations

attributing Asian Americans success to traditional *Asian* cultural values. The model minority is therefore a color-blind re-articulation of foreignness.

Suggested readings:

* + Keith Osajima, 1988, “Asian Americans as the Model Minority” in Gary Y. Okihiro, Shirley Hune, Arthur A. Hansen, and John M. Liu, eds., *Reflections on Shattered Windows:*

*Promises and Prospects for Asian American Studies*, pp. 165-174.

* + Angelo Ancheta, 2010, Chapter 3, “Looking Like the Enemy,” in *Race, Rights, and the Asian American Experience* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press), pp. 61-83.
  + Claire Kim, 1999, “The Racial Triangulation of Asian Americans,” *Politics and Society* 27(1): pp. 105-138.

Suggested activities:

* + Have students compare and analyze at the language used to describe Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans as the model minority in U.S. News & World Report article (1966),

“Success Story of One Minority Group in U.S.” and William Petersen, “Success Story, Japanese-American Style” (*New York Times*, 9 Jan 1966). Have students critically evaluate these

representations in light of broader discussions about the model minority and foreigner racialization.

* + Teach a unit on the Los Angeles Uprising and how Asian Americans were triangulated/positioned with respect to non-Asian communities of color. Consider using David Palumbo-Liu

*Asia/America*.

* + Have students explore contemporary examples of Asian American racialization, such as the debate about affirmative action; Japanese American-Muslim American solidarities after

9/11; the Black Lives Matter and Asians for Black Lives movements after Ferguson.

**5) Hegemony and resistance**

Students should have an understanding of hegemony, power, and movements of resistance against these forces. In particular, students should understand that Asian Americans are

complicit in oppressing other communities of color. This ties into the broader discussion of white supremacy and structural/institutional racism. The way in which instructors teach this

topic is up to the instructor’s digression. Suggested topics include a focus on capitalism; anti-blackness in the API community; model minority discourse as a means to oppress

communities of color and dismantle Civil Rights legislation; API solidarities with other communities in the past (Asian American Movement, Third World Liberation Front, labor

organizing movements) or in the present (Asians for Black Lives, contemporary community organizations serving multiracial communities).

Suggested readings:

* + Read primary source material by Asian American Movement organizations like Asian American Political Alliance or I Wor Kuen
  + Read histories of the Asian American Movement:
    - Karen Umemoto on San Francisco State Strike
    - Daryl Maeda. (2012). *Rethinking the Asian American Movement* (Routledge), especially the chapter on international and interracialism. Make sure the students understand terms like

‘solidarity’ and ‘Third World’

* + - Michael Liu, Kim Geron, and Tracy Lai. (2008). *Snake Dance of Asian American Activism* (Lexington Books).
    - Glenn Omatsu. (1994). “Four Prisons and the Movements of Liberation”
    - Steve Louie and Glenn Omatsu. 2001. *Asian Americans: The Movement and the Moment*. (UCLA Asian American Studies Center).

Suggested activities:

* + Show video “San Francisco State On Strike.” Available through Oviatt web site for streaming
  + Show short video on Bandung Conference
  + Show short video or view web sites on Asian Americans and Pacific Islander Americans supporting #BlackLivesMatter

**6) Critical thinking**

Instructors must define their approach to critical thinking to students at the beginning of the semester. AAS 201 approaches critical thinking from an Ethnic Studies perspective that

includes being able to analyze knowledge and power; being able to analyze information and arguments; being able to make a well-reasoned argument with evidence to support claims;

and understanding what social justice is and envisioning their roles in promoting social justice and/or community empowerment.

Suggested readings:

* + Paolo Friere, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*
  + Grace Lee Boggs, *The Next American Revolution*

Suggested activities:

* + Paper and Moodle post assignments that stress student ability to evaluate and make a reasoning and well-supported argument.
    - Include envisioning exercises that also help students learn to understand the world structurally and to imagine their role to make social change in this world

**Preview of Planned Assessment Activities for Next Year**

The assessment committee will work on designing assessment tools and creating essay grading rubrics to assess our departmental SLO #2. We will encourage all faculty in our department to share ideas for assessment measures and rubrics through brainstorm sessions and email exchanges.