

AAS 100: INTRODUCTION TO ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES
Fall 2011
Tentative Syllabus*

(* The professor reserved the right to change any part of this syllabus.)

Professor: Dr. Gina Masequesmay [pronounced “Mah-say-kes-may”]
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Office Hours: Th 2 to 3 PM or by appointment.
Office Venue: Jerome Richfield 346C [enter through JR 340]
Office Phone: 818-677-7219
Professor’s Website: <http://www.csun.edu/~gm61310/>
Class Website: <http://moodle.csun.edu> - You need to log in to view readings.
Class 1 Info: Tuesdays & Thursdays 9:30 to 10:45 AM, JR 134, #13375
or
Class 2 Info: Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:30 PM to 1:45 PM, JR 134, #13150

Course Catalog Description

Survey of research on Asian Pacific American experiences, including history, community life, language experience, arts, education, politics and economics. Emphasizes research on Americans of Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Southeast Asian, South Asian, and Pacific Island ancestry. Available for Section B of the Multicultural Credential Requirement for Credential Candidates. (Available for General Education, Comparative Cultural Studies)

Instructor’s Course Description

The course covers a brief history and selected issues of Americans of Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Southeast Asian (e.g., Vietnamese, Hmong, Mien), South Asian (e.g., Indian Sikh, Pakistani), and Pacific Islander (e.g., Hawaiian, Samoan) ancestry. A critical perspective on power as it relates to race, class, gender and sexuality will guide this course in analyzing social issues and racial problems and in exploring possible solutions. This course requires students to engage in critical reading, writing, and public-speaking. **WARNING:** Because the best way to learn something is to teach it to others, students are required to do two class presentations that account for a quarter of their grade. There are also 8 writing assignments (35% of grade) and a final 2-page paper (5% of grade) to help students with the main points of the films and readings. Hence, be forewarned if you do not like to write or speak in class, do not enroll in this course. On the other hand, many of the assignments are group assignments. So, if you like group work, then take this course! Please note that I put all readings on Moodle to save you money. However, this means that you need to learn quickly on how to navigate Moodle to find the readings and writing assignments and to post your reading notes and comments.

Course Learning Objectives

1. Develop a core competency in the Asian Pacific American (APA) experience by reviewing APA history, culture, and other aspects of their experiences in the U.S.
2. Critically examine impact of race and class hierarchy of the U.S. society on APA communities
3. Develop effective communication skills through class participation and class discussions
4. Develop awareness of the importance and the need for collective action and political leadership in APA communities

GE Student Learning Objectives

1. Describe and compare different cultures
2. Explain how various cultures contribute to the development of our multicultural world
3. Describe and explain how race, ethnicity, class, gender, religion, sexuality and other markers of social identity impact life experiences and social relations
4. Analyze and explain the deleterious impact and the privileges sustained by racism, sexism, ethnocentrism, classism, homophobia, religious intolerance or stereotyping on all sectors of society

Texts Required

Weekly digital reading pieces are on moodle for downloading or printout. Please learn how to log into Moodle and to navigate it. Unless specified, most readings are from three sources.

Lai, Eric and Dennis Arguelles, editors. (2003) The New Face of Asian Pacific America: Numbers, Diversity and Change in the 21st Century. San Francisco: Asian Week. ISBN 0-9-665020-3-5. [This book will be referred to hereon as NFAPA]

Zhou, Min and James V. Gatewood, ed. *Contemporary Asian America: A Multidisciplinary Reader*. New York: New York University Press, 2000. [Hereon, referred to as CAA1]

Zhou, Min and James V. Gatewood, ed. *Contemporary Asian America: A Multidisciplinary Reader*. Second ed. New York: NYU Press, 2007. [Hereon, referred to as CAA2]

In addition, I may also assign extra short readings based on class interests and current events. I will either pass them out in class or post them online.

Course Requirements and Grading

Participation & Consultation Meeting	40	Points	10	%
Reading Group Presentations (2)	100		25	
Exams (2)	100		25	
Writing Assignments (8)	140		35	
Final Short Paper (1-2 pages)	20		5	
Total	400	Points	100	%

Grading is based on a strict scale of 400 points:

380 – 400	A	320 – 332	B-	269 – 279	D+
360 – 379	A-	309 – 319	C+	253 – 268	D
349 – 359	B+	293 – 308	C	240 – 252	D-
333 – 348	B	280 – 292	C-	Below 240	F

The **course format** consists of lectures, films, reading group presentations, exams, correcting homework assignments and discussions. Students should read the assigned reading(s) BEFORE coming to class. I expect students to be prepared and ready to engage in class discussion based on the readings. Please be prepared on film days by having the questions from writing assignments printed out for note-taking.

Participation accounts for 10% of your grade or 40 points, where 10 points must be earned by meeting with the professor in the office at least once to discuss your group presentation(s). You must attend class to receive participation credit. An **absence** means a deduction of 1 point; **tardiness** or leaving class early is a subtraction of 0.5 point. I take attendance at the beginning of class. If you are late, make sure I mark you down at the end of class; otherwise, my record will show you have an absence. You are given automatic excuses for 2 absences and 2 tardies; *after that, I accept no excuses unless it's life threatening*. **Participation** is also based on the student's thoughtful contribution to class discussion.

Each student is required to participate in **two reading group presentations** that account for 25% of their grade or 100 points. Students can sign up for two readings or be assigned as needed. Each reading group presentation can earn up to 30 points and the accompanying reading notes will account for the other 20 points. While students must provide notes on the reading, the ten-minute presentation can be more creative as long as the main points from the reading are articulated. Extra credit points may be given for having a well thought-out and effective presentation or for going in-depth in critiquing or expanding on the authors' arguments.

Eight writing assignments (WA) are assigned to assess students' critical understanding of the course materials and a means to give students practices at writing. Many of these assignments will be discussed and evaluated in class,

and this discussion counts towards your participation grade. **Two exams** are scheduled and given to ensure students are keeping up with the assigned readings and class materials. The format for exams is multiple-choice, matching, identification, short answer, and fill-in-the-blank. A **final short paper** is the final class requirement and provides a means for students to articulate what they have gained from the course.

Opportunities for **extra credit** assignments are also available. The instructor will inform students of possible extra credit assignments. Students must consult the instructor of other possibilities before doing the assignment(s). Students can earn up to 12 points of extra credit. Each extra credit paper (ECP) has a maximum of five points. ECP can be a reaction 1-2 page paper to a reading (not assigned in class) or film (not shown in class) on Asian Americans. Students must summarize the reading or film and discuss what they learned from it and what new questions arose from this assigned reading or film (see guideline on page 8 of syllabus). Students are especially encouraged to attend Asian American or Asian-ethnic event(s) and to write a report of what happened and what they learned from the event. **The due date for an ECP is usually one week after the event/film screening, usually by Thursday 5 PM. Students can hand in two ECP per week. Week 15 is the last week to hand in extra credit papers.**

Each student is highly encouraged to see the instructor during office hour or by appointment at least once so that I will have a chance to know you and that you can ask me questions about class, majoring or minoring in AAS, graduate school and career options. If you have any struggles (e.g., work, family, learning disability), it would also be good to let me know ahead of time. I am strict on deadlines, so do not wait until the last minute to tell me about your obstacles. If I know ahead, we can work around your obstacles.

A Note from the Center on Disabilities

Students with disabilities must register with the **Center on Disabilities** and complete a services agreement each semester. Staff within the Center will verify the existence of a disability based on the documentation provided and approve accommodations. Students who are approved for test taking accommodations must provide an Alternative Testing Form to their faculty member signed by a counselor in the Center on Disabilities prior to making testing arrangements. The Center on Disabilities is located in Bayramian Hall, room 110. Staff can be reached at 818.677.2684.

A Note on the Rules of Scholarly Discourse in the University**

In this course we will be discussing very complex issues of which all of us have strong feelings and, in most cases, unfounded attitudes. It is essential that we approach this endeavor with our minds open to evidence that may conflict with our presuppositions. Moreover, it is vital that we treat each other's opinions and comments with courtesy even when they diverge and conflict with our own. We must avoid personal attacks and the use of *ad hominem* arguments to invalidate each other's positions. Instead, we must develop a culture of civil argumentation, wherein all positions have the right to be defended and argued against in intellectually reasoned ways. It is this standard that everyone must accept in order to stay in this class; a standard that applies to all inquiry in the regularly, but whose observance is especially important in a course whose subject matter is so emotionally charged.

[**From UCLA Professor Melvin Oliver's Sociology 156 syllabus, Fall 1991.]

Practicing Respect and Inclusiveness

The recent year has shown the harm of bullying. Please be mindful that racist, xenophobic, sexist, classist, homophobic, heterosexist, cisgenderist, ablist, and ethnocentric languages can create division and disharmony, if not emotional injury. Let us aspire to practice respectfulness and inclusiveness in the classroom and beyond.

Course Schedule for AAS 100, Fall 2011

Week 1, 8/30 & 9/1

Introduction

- Overview of course syllabus and expectations of professor
 - Sign-In Sheet (#; Name; Enrollment status)
 - General announcements of events, student organizations information, etc.
 - Go over syllabus
 - Assign Writing Assignment #1 (WA#1) on Student Profile (see last page of syllabus). It is due the next meeting.
 - Students to sign up for reading group presentations
- Introduction of students
 - Student Introduction: Name game (group of 4 to share WA#1 and report back to class)
 - Discuss students' expectations.
 - Guides on studying and being a professional student.
 - Collect WA#1 (5 points) at the end of class.
 - Students to sign up for reading group presentations

Week 2, 9/6 & 9/8

Asian American Studies and Critical Reading/Inquiries – Takaki Preface & Ch. 1 (skim); Syllabus

- What is AAS and why AAS?
 - Go over guidelines on how to read critically (p. 8 of syllabus).
 - Read and discuss Takaki's preface using the questions on critical reading.
- Library Instruction with Librarian Eng. Please meet at **Oviatt Library Lab C** for Thursday. Professor Gina will be at a conference that day and will not be at this library instruction meeting nor at office hour.
 - Students to sign in for attendance
 - Students to sign up for reading-group presentation

Read Ronald Takaki's "Preface" (pp. xi-xv) and scan chapter 1 "From a Different Shore," (pp. 3-18) in Ronald T. Takaki's *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans*. Updated and revised ed. Boston: Little, Brown, 1998.

***** Group Reading Notes and Presentation Begins*****

Week 3, 9/13 & 9/15

WHO are Asian Americans? – CAA2 Chapter 15 (skim); CAA2 Ch. 16; NFAPA Introduction

- Watch Film "My America, or Honk if You Love Buddha." Written & directed by Renee Tajima-Pena, 1998. (87 minutes). Call # N84506.

We will watch the last part of it in the following class meeting.

- Take notes with guide from questions in WA#2 (20 points).
- Finish film. Discuss WA#2 using film and readings.
 - Assign WA#2, which is due the following meeting.

Chapter 15: Janine Young Kim. "Are Asians Black?..." in CAA2; Chapter 16: Min Zhou. "Are Asian Americans Becoming White?" in CAA2; Lai & Arguelles. "Introduction" in NFAPA.

Week 4, 9/20 & 9/22

Asian American Movements – CAA1 Chapters 1 (skim); CAA1 Ch. 2

- Lecture and discussion on history of Asian American Studies.
 - Discuss, correct and collect WA#2.
 - Go over the week's assigned readings with group presentation. CAA1 Ch. 2.
- Watch Film "The Fall of the I-Hotel" by Curtis Choy, 1993. (58 min.) Call # N84022
 - Assign WA#3 (15 points), which is due the following meeting.

Chapter 2: Glenn Omatsu, "The Four Prisons."; Chapter 1: Karen Umemoto, "On Strike!"

Week 5, 9/27 & 9/29

Asian American History & Immigration & Demographics –Chronology; *NFAPA Immigration, Demographics; 2011 Statistical Portrait of APA by UCLA AASC*

- The History and Politics of Asian America
 - Discuss, correct and collect WA#3.
 - Discussion on History, Context and Critical Perspectives.
- Discuss assigned readings this week.
 - Discussion on privileges versus blatant discrimination, institutional vs. interpersonal vs. internalized racism; self-reflexivity.
 - Assign WA#4 (20 points), which is due the following meeting.

Judy Yung. "A Chronology of Asian American History."

Week 6, 10/4 & 10/6

Critical Perspectives on Race and Racism – *McIntosh; CAA1 Ch.24*

- Racisms
 - Discuss, correct and collect WA#4.
 - Watch Film "Who Killed Vincent Chin?" by Christine Choy and Renee Tajima, 1988. (82 min.) Call # N12705.
- Discussion of assigned readings and film
 - Finish watching film.
 - Assign WA#5 (20 points) and discuss it and readings.

McIntosh, Peggy. "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack." In *White Privilege: Essential Readings on the Other Side of Racism*, edited by Paula S. Rothenberg, 109-13. New York: Worth Publishers, 2005.

Chapter 24: Lisa Park. "A Letter to My Sister."

Week 7, 10/11 & 10/13

Recap First Section and Short Exam 1

- Recap of First Section
 - Discuss, correct and collect WA#5.
 - Last minute question before Exam 1.
 - Watch film "Sweet Jail: The Sikhs of Yuba City" by Beheroze Shroff, 1985. (53 min.) for Extra Credit.
- **Exam #1** based on previous weeks' materials.

Week 8, 10/18 & 10/20

Chinese, Japanese and Filipinos – *NFAPA Chapters 1, 6, 2 in Section II*

- Go over Exam 1.
- Go over assigned readings with group presentations.

Week 9, 10/25 & 10/27

Koreans; Entrepreneurship; Religion - *NFAPA Chapter 4 in Section II & Chapter 9 in Section IV; CAA Ch. 15*

- Korean Americans: the roles of religion
 - Group presentation and class discussion
 - Concepts: social capital and cultural/ethnic resources
- Korean Americans: entrepreneurship and 1992 Riot/Rebellion
 - Group presentation and class discussion
 - Concepts: middleman minority thesis; immigrant entrepreneurship

Week 10, 11/1 & 11/3

Asian Indians and Other South Asians; Hi-Tech Businesses - *NFAPA Chapters 3 & 10 in Section II and Chapter 7 in Section IV*

- Group presentation and discussion on Asian Indians and other South Asians readings
- Group presentation on and discussion on Business and High-tech readings

Week 11, 11/8 & 11/10

***Vietnamese and Other Southeast Asians* – NFAPA Chapters 5 & 9 in Section II**

- Watch Film “Kelly Loves Tony” directed by Spencer Nakasako, 1998. (57 min.) Call # N85517.
 - Assign WA#6 (20 points), which is due the following meeting.
 - For extra credit, view and answer E.C. questions for film “A.K.A. Don Bonus” (55 min.). To be presented in next class meeting. Four points maximum.
- Types of Capital & Contexts
 - Discuss WA#6 and correct and collect it.
 - Concepts of social capital vs. human capital vs. economic capital

Week 12, [11/15 is Veteran’s Day, No Class] 11/17

***Native Hawaiians & Pacific Islanders and Gays & Lesbians* - NFAPA Chapters 7 & 8 in Section II and Chapter 8 in Section IV**

- Film “Ke Kulana He Mahu: Remembering a Sense of Place” by Kathryn Xian & Brent Anbe, 2001 (67 minutes)
 - Assign WA#7 (20 points), which is due the following meeting.

Week 13, 11/22 [11/24 is Thanksgiving, No Class]

***Stereotypes of Asian Americans* – NFAPA Ch. Entertainment**

- The stage is set
 - Quickly go over WA#7.
 - Watch Film “Slaying the Dragon,” by Deborah Gee, 1988. (60 min.) Call # N82753
 - Assign WA#8 (20 points), which is due the following meeting.

Week 14, 11/29 & 12/1

***Interrogating the Model Minority Thesis* – CAA1 Chapters 19, 20, 21**

- Stereotypes are like horoscopes
 - Discuss, correct and collect WA#8.
 - Discuss assigned readings
- Debunking the model minority thesis.

Week 15, 12/6 & 12/8

***Hapas and Multiethnicity* – CAA2 Chapters 18 & 19; NFAPA Ch. 11 in Section II**

- Discuss Interracial Marriage and Multiethnicity readings.
- **Exam #2.**

Week 16, 12/13 & 12/15

Final Examination Week

- For TR 9:30AM class, FINAL DAY is on 12/13, Tuesday, from 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM in the same room.
- For TR 12:30PM class, FINAL DAY is on 12/15, Thursday, from 12:45 PM to 02:45 PM in the same room.

ADVICES TO STUDENTS ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Here is a **list of things TO AVOID** in being a professional student:

- 1) Emailing/phoning me to find out what you missed in class. Come to office hours to find out or ask your classmates. Please befriend your classmates and ask them what you missed. Assignments will usually be posted on the web end of the week. Below are spaces to write down 2 of your classmates contact information.
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- 2) Having your pager/phone/video game on while the professor conducts class.
 - 3) Reading materials (e.g., newspapers/magazines) not relevant to class activities during class.
 - 4) Disrupting class discussion by having your private conversation with other students.
 - 5) Sleeping in class. If you are not feeling well, rest at home. The classroom is not your bedroom.
 - 6) Disrupting class by arriving late or leaving early.
 - 7) Faxing/emailing me your paper. If I don't have your paper by the due date in class, you'll have a zero.
 - 8) Disrespecting others in class, including name-calling, cat-calling, snickering, and disrupting.
 - 9) Cheating. Please see <http://www.csun.edu/~vcspc00g/303/achonesty.html> and http://library.csun.edu/Research_Assistance/plagiarism htm/

Things to do to be a professional student:

1. Be organized and allocate study time (~ 8 hrs/wk) for this class as you do for your other classes.
2. Attend class regularly and arrive on time.
3. Read assigned readings or do assignment before class and arrive prepared to discuss readings or assignment.
4. Be respectful of everyone in class and keep an open mind.
5. Contribute positively to class discussion by active listening and thoughtful commenting.
6. ASK QUESTIONS when you don't understand. Remember, the best way to learn is to ask questions.
7. Hand assignments in on time.
8. Visit the professor during office hour for extra help, if need be, or just to familiarize yourself to speaking to your professor and to keep in touch in case you ever need a recommendation letter.
9. Be proactive in your education and make the most out of it. You have already paid for it.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

<u>NAME</u>	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>LOCATION/URL</u>
Asian American Studies Department	X4966	http://www.csun.edu/aas
The Advising Resource Center / EOP provides academic advisement services to all undecided or undeclared students.	x2108	Student Services Bldg 210. http://www.csun.edu/eop/arc.html
Career Center	x2878	University Hall Suite 105 http://www.csun.edu/~hfcar009/
Center on Disabilities	x2684	http://www.csun.edu/cod/center.html sdr@csun.edu
Counseling Services	x2366 x7834 TDD	Student Services Bldg 520 http://www.csun.edu/~cs46896/
Learning Resource Center	x2033	Student Services Building (SB408) http://www.csun.edu/~hflrc007/
National Center on Deafness	x2054	http://ncod.csun.edu/
Positive Space Program and Ally Training – resources to support the LGBTIQQ community.	X7219	Gina.Masesquesmay@csun.edu http://www.csun.edu/eop/positivespace
Women's Center	x2780	http://www.csun.edu/~ws20500/center.html
The Writing Center	x2033	The Writing Center (SB414) http://www.csun.edu/~hflrc006/
Guide to do a Library Research		http://library.csun.edu/strategies.html

CRITICAL QUESTIONS FOR ASSIGNMENTS

Here are some general questions to help you with critically reading articles & taking notes, viewing films, and attending events. More specific questions on films will be given in class. This page serves as a general guide for the rest of this semester.

READING CRITICALLY

Questions to Answer:

- 1. What is the larger context of why this article was written? To what is the author responding?**
I hope that you will begin to ask this question for everything you read. All perspectives are partial and you need to not only know where **the article** is situated in the larger sociopolitical debate but also what it is saying and not saying or implying about a specific issue. This question may best be answered last after you understand the author's main argument. This question is about the larger debate that the author is engaged in or the implication of his/her work given his/her thesis. The author's own background is mostly a factor in the reason for the essay. [e.g., The article is about "lazy welfare mothers" and thus it contributes to the debate for welfare reform.]
- 2. What is the author's main argument?**
Search the reading for the thesis statement and either quote or paraphrase it with citation (reference with page number). Explain clearly what the main argument of the author is. If question #1 is about motive, this question is about what the crime is. [e.g., The main argument by the author is that welfare mothers are lazy and just abusing taxpayers' generosity.]
- 3. What are the evidences the author used to support his/her argument?**
Good scholarly work requires a thesis and supporting evidence. What kind of evidence does the author have to support the thesis? How was the data compiled? Elaborate on evidence (at least 3 items) the author makes to support his/her thesis. [Is the evidence based on personal anecdotes or beliefs, on scholarly national survey research, on limited samples, etc. and what are the evidences?]
- 4. Are the arguments compelling?**
This question is meant to remind you to question authority rather than blindly accept what is dished out or packaged to you. Sometimes people have facts that don't support their argument. So, you need to make sure their facts back the argument the author makes. Just because something is written, doesn't mean it's true. [Despite the fact that the author may have support for his/her argument, can that evidence be generalized to the larger population or other populations? What is the reliability (duplication) and validity (operationalization) of this work? Can you come up with counterarguments?]
- 5. What questions arose for you from reading this article?**
This is to urge you to reflect on what you read and become an active reader instead of a passive recipient of information. This is to help you apply what you just learned. [What issues did the author not address?]
- 6. Any other reactions you have from reading this article? Relates to some other issues? Personal reaction?**
Does the information challenge your original thoughts and assumptions? Do you find yourself resistant to the information? Why do you think that is so? These are good questions to think for yourself as you become more reflexive of the information around you, those that you readily accept and those that challenge the foundation of your values.

VIEWING FILMS/EVENTS CRITICALLY

General Questions to Answer for Extra Credit Assignment on Films/Events:

- 1. What is this film/event about?** (e.g., What is the setting? Who are involved? What happened or how did this end? What is the event? Who presented and sponsored it? Who were the targeted audience?)
- 2. What do you think is the point/or message of this film/event?**
- 3. What do you think is the larger context to which this film/event is responding?**
- 4. How does this film/event fit into this class on Asian American issues?**

Example of Writing Assignment #1: Format for Future Writing Assignments

Page 1 of 4

Pat Le
AAS 100 TR 9:30
Prof. Masequesmay
September 1, 2011

Writing Assignment #1: Student Profile

- (1) **What is the name you want us to call you in class (please include pronunciation if it's difficult to pronounce)?** Pat Le
- (2) **SID#:** 123 456 789
- (3) **Email:** PAT.O.LE.10@CSUN.EDU {Please use CAP for easy reading}
- (4) **Years at CSUN and Academic Standing Status:** 3rd year; Sophomore, Enrolled
- (5) **Major/Minor/Interests:** Double major in Engineering and Art; I am into anime!
- (6) **What have you learned about Asian Americans?** I took a history class that covers a section on Asian Americans in high school. I learned about the transcontinental RR that was built by Chinese Americans and the Japanese American Internment . . .
- (7) **Why are you taking this course and what topics interest you?** For GE requirement. Also, I want to know more about other groups besides the Chinese and Japanese in the US. I want to explore what it means to be Chinese/Vietnamese living in the US as compared to other Chinese Americans . . .
- (8) **How does race affect your life?** I have received negative comments from people for being Asian because . . .
- (9) **How does ethnicity affect your life?** I identify as Chinese although I was born in Viet Nam. There are cultural practices that . . .
- (10) **What other social markers affect your life?** My gender expression often confuses people and they treat me differently when they perceive me as a woman versus as a man. Being of working class background, I'm greatly affected by the budget cut. . .
- (11) **What are you most proud about your background?** I actually have two unique cultural heritages that shape my worldview . . .
- (12) **One lesson I learned that helped me to survive/succeed in life and that I can share with the class is:** Perseverance is 90% of success.
- (13) **Anything else you want the Professor to know about you?** I am hard of hearing . . .