

**Asian American Identities and Images:
Living Learning Community**

01:050:281 Topics in American Studies (Fall 2018)
Friday, 1:40 pm – 3:00 pm
Asian American Cultural Center, Livingston Campus

Instructor: Mi Hyun Yoon | **Email:** yoon.mihyun@rutgers.edu

Office Hours: Friday at the Asian American Cultural Center, by appointment only

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The Asian American Living-Learning Community (AALLC) seeks to enhance students' knowledge of the diverse lived experiences of Asian Americans and other peoples of Asian descent in the United States. Students will research, analyze, and discuss issues and debates relating to the Asian American experience as depicted and lived in U.S. American society during contemporary times, with an eye toward historicizing as well as critiquing current events and popular expressions, and will have opportunities to creatively interpret, express and produce their learning.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students will gather weekly to have informed and thoughtful conversations about Asian American experiences. They will share creativity in thinking, analysis and expression. The course is designed with the following learning outcomes in mind:

- Students will generate and share knowledge about important issues and concepts in Asian American Studies and experiences.
- Students will engage in critical social and cultural analysis of course readings, cultural outings, and popular culture in group discussions with one another.
- Students will evolve critical thinking and writing skills as well as the ability to communicate effectively about the events and media they will and already engage in, through exercises and written/performed assignments.
- Students will build an intellectual and creative community with peers and develop connections with scholars, professionals, and activists through course participation, guest speakers, field trip(s), engagement with social/cultural events, growing familiarity with the Asian American Cultural Center, and a collective final course project.

COURSE MATERIALS:

All required readings will be posted on Sakai under "Resources." You do NOT need to purchase any books for this course.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING:

Attendance and Participation (40%): Attendance and active participation in class discussion and exercises is mandatory. **More than three absences will result a Not Pass for the course.** Arriving later than 1:50 pm will count as an absence. You are expected to come to class fully prepared; this means that you should have done all the assigned readings and begun to develop your own thoughts or questions. You *will* be called on during class discussion to contribute your ideas.

You are permitted to have laptops or tablets in class, but only to use them to refer to the assigned

readings. Keep in mind that that for each time you are seen using electronic devices in a manner not related to the class (such as checking social media, online shopping, or playing games), you will lose one point on your final grade. Phones are NOT allowed in class at any time, and they should not be visible during class.

Cultural Component (10%): Students are required to attend two events organized by the Asian American Cultural Center and write a 200-word analytic review of each event to be posted on Sakai within three days after the event. The following three elements must be addressed in the written piece:

1. Historical background of the organization/institution/artist/scholar/writer presenting the event/exhibit/performance: Why does the organization exist? Or what is the philosophy or artistic/cultural intention of the creator? (Short information interviews, website research, or program information might be helpful here.)
2. Cultural elements: Describe briefly how are they presenting or performing cultural identity. What can you identify as cultural in the event/performance/exhibit?
3. Aesthetics: Describe one or two specific details that stand out in the way the event is depicting cultural identity. (For example: setting, music, characters, visuals, language, dress, etc.)

You can earn up to 5 extra points toward your final grade (one point for each event) by posting photos or short video clips of the event with a detailed caption on your social media account and the class social media account. However, you cannot earn the extra point without having written the review for the event, unless you have already completed both review assignments.

In addition to the two events, you will have the opportunity to attend a scheduled cultural field trip to the play [*India Pale Ale*](#). If you are able to attend, you do NOT have to write a review for this event. (NOTE: Cultural field trip may be subject to change.)

Summary: In a small Wisconsin town, a tight-knit Punjabi community gathers to celebrate the wedding of a traditional family's only son, just as their strong-willed daughter announces her plans to move away and open a bar. As they come together for feasts filled with singing and dancing, one generation's cherished customs clash with another's modern-day aspirations, and ghosts and pirates from the family's past linger in everyone's thoughts – until one sudden event changes everything.

Location: Manhattan Theatre Club at New York City Center/Stage I

Date and Time: Sunday, October 28, 2018 at 7 pm

On November 21, we will have a class discussion of *India Pale Ale* and the events held by the Asian American Cultural Center and how they pertain to the topics and issues addressed in class. Be advised that you must attend two events and write the two reviews before the start of class on this date to receive full credit for the cultural component.

Midterm Project and Presentation (20%): Working in pairs, each group will research and present on one of the following ethnic groups that is represented in the Asian American community (in order of most populous): Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, Thai, Laotian, Bangladeshi, Burmese. The presentation should be 8-10 minutes long, have visual components, and answer the following questions:

- When/How/Why did people of various Asian descent come to the United States?
- What are the major events affecting their histories in the United States?

Final Project and Presentation (30%): Working in groups of 3 or 4 people, each group will share their unique and diverse perspectives by imagining, developing, and creating a story that reflects the modern Asian American experience. The story can be told through in a number of formats, provided that you obtain instructor approval. (Some format examples include short story, comic book, play, film, interpretive dancing, podcast.)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Be sure to cite your sources properly. Rutgers University has a policy on academic integrity that addresses plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, and so on. The formal legal procedure outlined in this policy will be followed in the case of a violation, along with a failing grade. You can refer to this link for more information: academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy.

ACADEMIC AND WELLNESS SUPPORT:

Rutgers University offers various academic and wellness support for everyone. You can check out and take advantage of the following resources:

- [Rutgers Learning Centers](#): Their resources including peer tutoring, academic and writing coaching, and academic success workshops.
- [Counseling, ADAP and Psychiatric Services \(CAPS\)](#): Provides mental health services including individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, and referrals.
- [Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance \(VPVA\)](#): Provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling, and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking.
- [Scarlet Listeners](#): A free and confidential student-run peer counseling and referral hotline. 732-247-5555 (Sunday – Thursday, 6 pm – 12 am)

ACCOMMODATIONS:

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 9/7	Introduction “You know you’re Asian American when...”
Week 2 9/14	Who is Asian American? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robert Chang, “Introduction: Becoming Asian American,” <i>Disoriented: Asian Americans, Law, and the Nation-State</i>. Caitlin Yoshiko Kandil, “After 50 years of ‘Asian American,’ advocates say the term is ‘more essential than ever’,” NBC News, May 31, 2018.
Week 3 9/21	Asian Americans as Model Minority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robert Lee, “The Cold War Origins of the Model Minority Myth,” <i>Asian American Studies Now: A Critical Reader</i>. (145-161 only) John Eligon, “Asian-Americans Face Multiple Fronts in Battle Over Affirmative Action,” <i>New York Times</i>, June 16, 2018.
Week 4 9/28	Immigration and Exclusion in the Making of Asian America <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walter A. Ewing, “Opportunity and Exclusion: A Brief History of U.S. Immigration Policy,” Immigration Policy Center, January 2012. Jose Antonio Vargas, “My Life as an Undocumented Immigrant,” <i>The New York Times Magazine</i>, June 22, 2011.
Week 5 10/5	<u>DUE</u>: Midterm Project Presentations When/How/Why did people of various Asian descent come to the United States? What are the major events affecting their histories in the United States?
Week 6 10/12	<u>CONTINUE</u>: Midterm Project Presentations
Week 7 10/19	Asian American Histories Finish up presentations and create class timeline of historical events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ronald Takaki, “From a Different Shore,” <i>Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans</i>. Tom Gjelten, “The Immigration Act That Inadvertently Changed America,” <i>Atlantic</i>, October 2, 2015. <p><u>DUE</u>: Final Project Proposals on Sakai</p>
Week 8 10/26	Civil Rights and Political Activism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vincent Who? Kevin Chang, “What Role Do Asian Americans Have in the Campus Protests?,” <i>Atlantic</i>, December 8, 2015.
Week 9 11/2	Asian American Stereotypes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Grace Lee Project.
Week 10 11/9	Asian American Representations & Asian Americans in the Music Industry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amanda Hess, “Asian-American Actors Are Fighting for Visibility. They Will Not Be Ignored,” <i>New York Times</i>, May 25, 2016. Mireya Navarro, “Missing: Asian-American pop stars,” <i>New York Times</i>, March 4, 2007. Isha Aran, “America Is in Love With Asian Music, but Asian American Artists Still Can’t Catch a Break,” <i>Splinter</i>, March 1, 2018.

	<u>DUE</u> : Introduce an Asian American musician to the class. Why did you choose this artist? How did you find out about this artist? What about the artist and/or their music appeals to you?
Week 11 11/16	Teach-In: Asian American Studies Initiative Details TBA
Week 12 11/21	Cultural Component Discussion How do the events held by the Asian American Cultural Center pertain to the topics and issues addressed in class?
Week 13 11/30	DUE: Final Project Presentations **Final projects MUST be submitted on Sakai before the start of class. Stories reflecting the modern Asian American experience
Week 14 12/7	Focus Group Guest Facilitator: Ariel Leget, Assistant Director, Living-Learning Communities and Academic Initiatives, Residence Life