FYS 31: Introduction to Asian American Studies
Fall 2014
MW, 8-9:15 am
Medbury Hall 115

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Office: as arranged
Office hours: by appointment

Course Description
Who are Asian Americans? What is the purpose of Asian American Studies and other ethnic studies programs? This course attempts to answer these questions through an interdisciplinary introduction to the academic field of Asian American Studies. It provides a broad overview of how Asian American Studies incorporates research in the social sciences, humanities, arts, and popular culture.

We will also address the legal statutes, politics, and events that have affected Asian Americans historically. “Asian American” changes meaning during different historical moments; at one moment Asians are considered aliens ineligible for citizenship, but during another Asians are upheld as the model minority. In this class, we will not take the “Asian American” racial category as a given, but rather we will examine how the notion of “race” has been socially constructed throughout our nation’s history.

Required Texts
1. Asian Americans: An Interpretive History by Sucheng Chan
3. Articles posted on Blackboard.

FYS Learning Outcomes
Critical Thinking
The First Year Seminar will focus on the development of student’s critical thinking skills. This is part of the Drake Curriculum’s intentional effort to guide students to acquire the skills for rational analysis and argumentation that is purposeful, rigorous, self-reflective, and based on a careful consideration of evidence. Students will learn to:
• clearly define a question or problem.
• gather information that is relevant to that problem.
• rigorously identify assumptions and preconceptions, including their own, that influence analysis of that problem.
• organize and prioritize the information to develop a rational argument that states a clear claim or thesis, provides reasons for holding that claim, provides relevant evidence to support each reason, and considers alternative explanations in reaching a conclusion.
• communicate that reasoned argument effectively in speech, writing, or other medium as appropriated.
• realize that results are tentative and open to revision.

Written Communication
Drake students will learn to read with discrimination and understanding and to write persuasively. Drake students will learn to shape their writing according to subject, purpose, medium, context and intended audience.
Information Literacy
Drake students will learn to acquire, analyze, interpret, and integrate information, employing appropriate technology to assist with these processes, and to understand the social and ethical implications of information use and misuse. Drake students will use appropriate sources, including library and internet resources, to process and evaluate information. Students will gain an understanding of the social and ethical issues encountered in a networked world, an ability to assess the quality of information, and learn appropriate ways to reference information sources. Students will be able to:

1. Navigate and integrate scholarly resources into their research and reflection.
2. Articulate the social and ethical implications of information use and misuse.
3. Evaluate information resources and identify quality resources relevant to the problem or issue investigated.
4. Select and employ the appropriate method and data for disciplinary research, problem-based learning, experiential-based research, and/or reflective/integrative coursework.
5. Articulate the basic implications of information use and misuse related to issues of academic honesty and plagiarism and pursue their educational goals with a high level of academic integrity.

Teaching and Learning Responsibilities
“Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the one-who-teaches, but one who is himself [or herself] taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow.”

- Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed

Student-teacher Responsibilities: You are responsible for coming to class prepared. This means completing all the assigned readings and being ready to discuss them during each class. Sometimes you may need to read the chapters/articles more than once. If you don’t understand something, take note of it so that you can ask about it in class. Since class will be structured around discussion of the readings, it is important that you bring the readings to class as a reference. Expect to move around in class if we do group work. Be a good group member—participate, listen and ask questions.

You will be expected to check Blackboard for announcements, assignments, and readings. Most course documents will be uploaded onto Blackboard; I will rarely distribute hard copies in class. Grades will be posted in the Grade Center. You are responsible for making sure assignments have been received and grades have been recorded. In addition, some assignments will be turned in through Blackboard.

Teacher-student Responsibilities: This does not ignore the reality that within the structure of the university, I have certain “authority” (e.g. grades) and responsibilities. This means I have institutional responsibility for ensuring a constructive learning environment. I expect demonstrations of respect for your fellow students, yourselves and your professor. Debate is important and can be fun; however, personal and/or prejudiced attacks in discussion or otherwise unproductive behavior that stifles the participation of others will not be tolerated. Students who instigate personal and/or prejudiced attacks will be asked to leave class.
Course Policies

1. Consistent disruptions in class will impact your classroom participation grade. This includes stepping in and out of the classroom once class begins; using cell phones/texting; packing up before class is dismissed.

2. No laptops.

3. Missed classes: In the event of absences, you are responsible to catch up on any materials you might have missed. Get to know your classmates. Make-up work may be assigned and may include additional papers or class presentations. It is your responsibility to ask about make-up work. You may make-up up to 5 classes only. You cannot pass the class if you miss more than 5 classes.

4. Late assignments: You will receive a 1 point deduction for each day an assignment is late. If you do not take the midterm on the scheduled date, there is an automatic letter grade deduction.

5. Academic integrity: You are responsible for knowing the definitions and penalties for Drake’s Academic Integrity Policy: http://www.drake.edu/studentrecords/PoliciesandProcedures/Academicintegritypolicy.php. Ignorance of the policy will not serve as an excuse for infractions.

   Academic dishonesty is an encompassing term involving any activity that seeks to gain credit for work one has not done or to deliberately damage or destroy the work of others. Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting another’s ideas, phrases, discourse or works as one’s own. Cheating is defined as the act, or attempted act, of giving or obtaining aid and/or information by illicit means in meeting any academic requirements, including examinations. If it is determined by the instructor that the student is guilty of academic misconduct, it is the prerogative of the instructor to assign the appropriate penalty in the course. Included among the possible penalties that may be imposed by the instructor are a failing grade, or dismissal from the course with a failing grade.

Campus Services

Disability Accommodations. Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. If you are not yet registered as a student with a documented disability, please contact Drake’s Student Disability Services.

Student Disability Services
2507 University Ave.
107 Old Main
515-271-1835

University Counseling Center. The UCC offers to all currently enrolled Drake students a variety of counseling services. Depending on the student’s need, individual, couple, family, or group counseling may be provided. The UCC is available for workshops, training, psychological testing, and for referral information. In addition, they offer consultation services to students, staff, and faculty who might have questions about student mental health issues or topics.

Drake University Counseling Center
3116 Carpenter Avenue
(515) 271-3864
M-F, 8:00am to 5:00pm
**SEMESTER SCHEDULE**

The professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus.

### August
- **25** Introductions
- **27** Discussion

### September
- **1** Labor Day – no class
- **3** Sucheng Chan, Chapter 1
- **8** Chan, Chapter 2
- **10** Film screening: *Race: The Power of an Illusion*
- **15** Chan, Chapter 3
- **17** Information Literacy Workshop, Cowles 45
- **22** Chan, Chapter 4
- **24** Jennifer 8. Lee, Prologue & Chapter 1
  - Film screening: *Who Killed Vincent Chin?*
- **29** Reader’s Choice: Chan, Chapter 5 or Chapter 6

### October
- **1** Reader’s Choice presentations
- **6** Midterm review
- **8** Midterm
- **13** Fall Break
- **15** Fall Break
- **20** Chan, Chapter 7
- **22** Lee, Chapters 2-3
- **27** Chan, Chapter 8
- **29** Lee, Chapters 4-5
  - Final paper description due

### November
- **3** No class - American Educational Studies Association conference
- **5** Lee, Chapters 6-11
  - Film screening: *Divided We Fall*
- **10** Lee, Chapters 12-14
  - Final paper update due
- **13** Lee, Chapters 15-18
- **17** Reader’s Choice: Keith Osajima or Mike Murase (posted on BB)
- **19** Reader’s Choice presentations
- **24** Research Presentations, Day 1
- **26** Thanksgiving Break

### December
- **1** Thanksgiving Break
- **3** Research Presentations, Day 2
  - Scheduled Final Research Presentations, Day 3
Course Assignments

Homework & In-class Assignments – 30 points
Each assignment will be evaluated as follows:

✓+ Your writing demonstrates thoughtful readings skills and reflects a high level of engagement with the reading.
✓ Overall, you demonstrate thoughtful reading skills; however, you come to some inaccurate conclusions from the reading, and/or you demonstrate a weak grasp of some concepts/theories from the reading.
✓- Your writing demonstrates a superficial understanding of the reading (i.e., skimming). Many of your statements demonstrate a weak grasp of the author’s main concepts/theories. Or, you did not complete the assignment.

You will receive a grade for the collection of your homework & in-class assignments, depending on the quality of your work throughout the semester.

Midterm – 20 points
The midterm will be an open note, open book in-class exam. The exam will consist of short answer and/or essay questions.

Research Paper – 20 points
As you read the course texts, take note of any events/people/issues that you would like to learn more about or any questions that the reading brings up for you. You will write a 5-7 paper that answers this question (or explores a topic you’re interested in). You can work individually or with a partner. Guidelines for the paper will be distributed Week 4.

Research Presentation – 15 points
Prepare a 10 minute presentation of your research. Feel free to be creative! You will also facilitate a 5 minute Q/A session after your presentation.

Questions – 5 points
You will be required to write down and hand in one question for each of your classmate’s presentations. You will be called on to ask your question for at least two presentations.

Class Participation – 5 points
5 Superior. Active, engaged involvement in each class by raising questions and issues, listening and responding respectfully to others, and participating in group work. Comments and questions are grounded in course texts, demonstrating thoughtful reading of texts.
4 Good. Regular involvement in class by raising questions and issues, listening and responding respectfully to others, and participating in group work. Comments and questions are grounded in course texts, demonstrating thoughtful reading of texts.
3 Adequate. Occasional involvement in each class but student listens actively during discussion and is respectful of others. Comments and questions are sometimes not based in course texts.
2 Inadequate. Rare or no involvement in class, or student is disrespectful during discussions. Comments and questions are usually not based on course texts.
0 Failing. Disruptive attitude in class, which involves texting, browsing the internet, or any other disrespectful actions. Comments and questions are not based on course texts.
**Self-evaluation – 2 points**
Use the Class Participation rubric to write a 50-100 word evaluation of your class participation. Submit to Blackboard.

**Attendance – 3 points**
Attendance is mandatory. This portion of your grade will be determined by the rubric below:

3 Superior. No more than one excused absence, and student arrives to class on time and stays for the full time.
2 Adequate. No more than two absences. Or, student sometimes is not present for the full class time.
1 Inadequate. No more than three absences. Or, student regularly disrupts class by being late, leaving early or stepping out of the classroom during class.
0 Failing. More than three absences.

**Summary of Projects and Grades – Total 100%/ points**
- Homework Assignments: 30 points
- Midterm: 20 points
- Research Paper: 20 points
- Research Presentation: 15 points
- Questions: 5 points
- Class Participation: 5 points
- Self-evaluation: 2 points
- Attendance: 3 points

**Assignment Grade Scale**
- 98-100 A+
- 94-97 A
- 90-93 A-
- 87-89 B+
- 83-86 B
- 80-82 B-
- 77-79 C+
- 73-76 C
- 70-72 C-
- 67-69 D+
- 63-66 D
- 60-62 D-
- 59 and below Fail

**Final Grade Scale**
- 90-100 A
- 80-89 B
- 70-79 C
- 60-69 D
- 59 and below Fail