Course Description

This course examines the nature and meaning of being Asian American in the United States with a particular focus on immigrant, refugee, second-generation, and adoptee communities that are unique to Minnesota and the Midwest. Students learn about the history, struggle, and success of Asian Americans. Drawing upon psychological theory and research, as well as interdisciplinary ethnic studies scholarship, the course engages students in a critical analysis of the ways in which race, ethnicity, and migration affect the everyday lives of Asian American individuals and families. To facilitate learning, students will work on a group book project on a chosen Asian American memoir/novel to learn how psychological research can inform our understanding of Asian American experiences.

Liberal Education

Liberal Education courses are designed to help students acquire knowledge and skills in the social sciences that have real-world application. Liberal Education courses provide students with an opportunity to understand the relevance of a particular field of study (e.g., psychology) and then to use the theories and methods of this discipline to address societal issues as educated, concerned citizens. In this course, students will learn about psychological theory and research within a broader social/historical context to understand the ways in which culture, ethnicity, and race affect the lives of Asian Americans.

This seminar fulfills the Diversity and Social Justice in the United States liberal education theme. Specifically, the course will explore prejudice and stereotypes, race relations, racism and discrimination, identity development, family relationships, dating/marriage, health disparities, education and employment, and other issues affecting Asian American communities.

Course Objectives

The three main objectives of this Freshman Seminar are (1) basic knowledge in psychological theory and research on Asian Americans (2) critical thinking and analysis (3) integration and expression of one’s ideas. To achieve these three objectives, this course will be conducted as a small group seminar. Students are expected to be active participants in the course – engaging in dialogue throughout the semester. Prior to the start of each class, students are expected to have read all assigned readings listed for that day and mentally prepared questions and comments for discussion. Students also are expected to participate in classroom activities that serve as a springboard for discussion and knowledge integration.
Office Hours
My office hours will be one hour before class each week. You also may schedule individual appointments with me by email. Note - When students email, be sure to write “Freshman Seminar” in the subject heading to ensure that the email will be read in a timely manner.

Required Readings (everyone)
There will be weekly journal articles and select book chapters to read for class. These articles will be made available via PDF files on a Moodle site.

Required Readings (small groups)

Recommended Reading/Viewing (not required)
Asian American news and popular culture at the following two websites:
http://blog.angryasianman.com/
http://youoffendmeyouoffendmyfamily.com/
https://www.youtube.com/user/ISATV
http://www.asamnews.com/

Course Requirements
1. Attendance – 10% – Because this course is small, is conducted as a seminar, and meets only once per week, attendance is critical for active learning. Attendance will be taken at the start of class. See below for the class policy on absences.

2. Participation – 10% – Students are expected to engage in a lively discussion each class period. The weekly reaction papers and classroom activities will serve as springboard for group discussion.

3. 1-page weekly response papers – 20% – You must complete a 1-page response paper to the weekly readings. A response paper is not a summary or synopsis of the readings. A response paper is not a personal opinion about the readings. A response paper is a thoughtful analysis and critique of the readings. I have provided some prompts below to help you think critically about the readings. I will provide feedback on the first two papers to make sure you are providing an analysis and critique.
All response papers must be submitted on the MOODLE website by 10:00 A.M. (central time) on the day of class. No papers will be accepted thereafter. The papers will not be graded but you must submit them each week to receive credit. **All papers should be formatted single-spaced with 1-inch margins, Times Roman 12-point font, and printed on white paper.**

*Hint #1.* Check out this website on six good reading habits that help you to interrogate text – [http://guides.hcl.harvard.edu/sixreadinghabits](http://guides.hcl.harvard.edu/sixreadinghabits).

*Hint #2.* Check out this website that provides tips on how to write a response paper – [http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/teaching/rst/pop5i.cfm](http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/teaching/rst/pop5i.cfm).

4. **Mid-term portfolio** – 20% – You must revise weekly response papers by incorporating new knowledge learned from class discussions and through an independent literature review. You are expected to find relevant psychology journal articles on the given topic and then integrate this information into the revised response papers. **Use of online websites and resources are not acceptable references.** The revised response papers should still be only 1-2 pages in length. At mid-semester, you must submit the original weekly response papers AND the revised response papers.

    **Format.** The compiled weekly response papers should be formatted single-spaced with 1-inch margins, use Times Roman 12-point font, and must be printed on white paper. They may be stapled or placed in a folder or small binder.

    **Grading.** Papers are graded equally on quality of content, analysis, and grammar/readability. If you make no or few changes to the original response papers, you will receive a “B” grade or lower. An “A” grade requires that you incorporate class discussions and additional literature into the revised papers.

5. **End-of-term portfolio** – 20% – The same rules and criteria from the mid-term portfolio apply to the end-of-term portfolio.

6. **Group book project** – 20% – Students will read one of four memoirs/non-fiction books. Working together as a group, you must identify relevant or pressing psychological themes or issues within the book, compare and contrast these issues with course readings and an independent literature review (using Google Scholar and PsycINFO), and then lead a 50-minute group discussion with the entire class. The group discussion in class should consist of the following components:

    a. **Concise synopsis of the book** – Describe the key characters, the plot or storyline,
    b. **Identify main psychological themes or issues and reference key passages throughout the book that highlight these psychological themes or issues**
    c. **Drawing upon the other course readings and literature review, analyze these themes or issues**
    d. **Present and facilitate questions for the entire class to answer about the themes and issues raised by the book**
e. Provide 2-3 page handouts to the class that highlight components a-d.

*Grading.* As a group project, you may divide the assignment in any way but each participant will be graded based on individual and group effort. As such, each student must present or lead a portion of the group discussion. Grading will be based on accurate summary of the reading, analysis of the main themes and issues using psychological theory and research, and class presentation (including Q&A and handouts).

**Absences**

Students are allowed **one unexcused absence** without penalty. Students also may be excused from class for emergencies with written documentation (e.g., death in family, university-sponsored mandatory event, physical injury).

**Students with Disabilities or Special Needs**

It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact their instructors [or TAs, etc.] early in the semester to discuss their individual needs for accommodations. You also must be registered with Disability Services (612-626-1333). Official documentation is needed for us to insure appropriate accommodations.

If you are a student with other non-disability concerns (e.g., English as a second language; child care), please see me at the start of the semester. There may be an opportunity for adjustments to be made in order to best accommodate you. You are still expected to complete all requirements.

**Student Mental Health and Stress Management**

As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via [http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu/](http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu/).

**Grading System**

Although each individual assignment will be awarded a grade based on a 100-point scale, the following letter grade system (with pluses and minuses) serves as the standard for final course grades.
“A” grade – Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.

“B” grade – Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements

“C” grade – Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect

“D” grade – Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements

“S” grade – Achievement that is satisfactory but no lower than a C- and requires that all assignments be completed

“F (or N)” grade – Represents failure or no credit and signifies work was either (a) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (b) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and student that the student would receive an incomplete grade

“I” grade – Incomplete grade assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances (e.g., hospitalization) a student is prevented from completing the coursework on time. Requires a written agreement between instructor and student.

**Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on assignment or examinations; plagiarizing; submitting the same work for 2 courses without approval; and depriving other students of necessary course material. Plagiarism is the misrepresentation of another person’s work as one’s own. Please see the attached document on plagiarism for more information.

Academic dishonesty in any portion of the academic work for a course shall be grounds for awarding a grade of F or N for the entire course. The student also will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity/Student Judicial Affairs for further action.

**Email Policy**

Email is my preferred method of communication (richlee@umn.edu). Note - When students email, be sure to write “Freshman Seminar” in the subject heading in order to ensure that the email will be read. I will respond to your message within 24 hours of receipt. If I have not returned your email within 24 hours, it means that I did not receive it and you are expected to resend your message. This policy also means that I may not respond until 24 hours after receiving the message. Thus, if you need an immediate response to a question, you must email me at least 24 hours before you need the response (e.g., don’t email me a question at 11:30pm about an assignment due the next day).

**Phones, Computers, etc.**
We are all accustomed to having our technology at hand, but only technology directly related to classroom activities is permitted. Using technology for personal reasons during class time is rude, disruptive, and disrespectful to the instructor and other students. In case of emergency or if you simply must take a call, please quietly leave the room and tend to your business.

The following procedures will be strictly adhered, pursuant with University Policy (see http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/CLASSROOMPED.html):

The first time the instructor sees you using a mobile phone or other device, you will receive a verbal warning. The second time, you will be asked to leave the classroom and will not receive credit for attendance for that day.

Laptops and tablets are permitted in the classroom for taking notes or any other function related to class activities. If the instructor suspects that the device is being used for other purposes, you will receive a verbal warning. The second time, you will be asked to leave the classroom and will not receive credit for attendance for that day.

The third time either of the above infractions occurs, you will be asked to leave the classroom and will be required to have a one-on-one meeting with the instructor to discuss the problem.
### WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

* Readings must be completed before class on that day

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Response Paper Prompts</th>
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| Sept 5 | Introductions  
Video: *Asia-America, Where have you gone?* | | |
| | Course overview and expectations  
Video: *An Asian American experience* | | |
| 12 | Asian American history  
**Guest lecture: Professor Erika Lee**  
● Osajima (2005) | ● Describe your first encounters with Asian Americans |
| | Asian American activism  
**Documentary: Vincent Who?** | ● Chang (1993) | |
| 19 | Asian American/Asian Minnesotan communities  
Video: *Tou SaiKo Lee* | ● *The Rise of Asian Americans*  
● *A Day in the Life of Asian Pacific America* | ● Describe your experiences with Asian Americans in Minnesota/Midwest |
| | **Guest lecture: Mu Performing Arts**  
(10:40-12:40) | | |
| 26 | Asian American psychology  
**Video: East of Main Street Asians Aloud** | ● Betancourt & Lopez (1993)  
● Okazaki et al. (2007) | ● If you could study something about Asian Americans, what would it be and how would you approach it? |
<p>| 3          | The States of Southeast Asian American Studies: Plenary Speaker Yen Le Espiritu (9:30-10:30 am | Location: Humphrey School of Public Affairs – West Bank), followed by Past/Future Organizers Plenary (10:45-12:00 noon) |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Stereotypes | Video: Eddie Huang and Yellow Peril and Model Minority                                                                                                                                     |
| 10         | Acculturation Video: Acculturation dissonance                                                                                                                                               |
|            | • Berry (1997)                                                                                                                                                                           |
|            | • Zhou &amp; Lee (2007)                                                                                                                                                                        |
|            | • How come some Asian immigrants adapt so easily to the U.S. and others face more difficulties?                                                                                             |
| 17         | Ethnic identity SUBMIT MID-TERM PORTFOLIO                                                                                                                                                |
|            | • What are some challenges that face Asian immigrants upon first arrival to the country?                                                                                                 |
|            | • Describe what is an Asian American                                                                                                                                                        |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Guest Lecture</th>
<th>Video</th>
<th>Relevant Readings</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Racism Part I</td>
<td></td>
<td>Chris Lollie arrest</td>
<td>Alvarez (2002), Pyke &amp; Dang (2003)</td>
<td>How is racism toward Asian Americans similar and different from other racial groups?</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Racism Part II</td>
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<td>Watch What Happens Next, “White fetish,” and Comedy or racism?</td>
<td>Cheryan &amp; Monin (2005), Pascoe &amp; Smart Richman (2009), David &amp; Okazaki (2006), Ching Chong essay</td>
<td>What are ways in which Asian Americans can cope with racism?</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>Education and model minority myth</td>
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<td>Where’d You Go</td>
<td>Asian Pacific Students in Minnesota (2012), Cheryan &amp; Bodenhausen (2000), Liew et al. (2014)</td>
<td>Describe the educational experiences of Asian Americans</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Romantic relationships</td>
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<td>My Hmong Life</td>
<td>Lau et al. (2009), Shiota et al. (2010)</td>
<td>What are the dating experiences of Asian Americans</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Family relationships</td>
<td>• Hughes et al. (2006)</td>
<td>• Describe Asian American parent-child relationships</td>
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<td>Video: East of Main Street Small Talk</td>
<td>• Lee et al. (2005)</td>
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<td><strong>Guest lecture: Mary Her (Family, education, mental health)</strong></td>
<td>• Kim et al. (2013)</td>
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<td>• Qin (2008)</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>• Berdahl &amp; Min (2012)</td>
<td>• What are the career choices and challenges for Asian Americans</td>
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<td>Videos: Anita Lo, Willy Santos, Julie Chen and Ann Kim</td>
<td>• Le (2012)</td>
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<td>• Ma et al. (2013)</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td><strong>Guest lecture: Professor Josephine Lee (Asian American literature)</strong></td>
<td>• Lowe (2005)</td>
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<td>No Class</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>International adoption</td>
<td>• Group project on Lucky Girl</td>
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<td>Hmong Minnesotans</td>
<td>• Group project on The Latehomecomer</td>
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<td><strong>Reflections, goodbyes, and teaching evaluation</strong></td>
<td><strong>SUBMIT FINAL PORTFOLIO</strong></td>
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