

**ENG 245 Introduction to Asian Pacific American Literature**  
**CRN 21940/Winter 2009**  
**MWF 12-12:50am; Condon 260**  
**Professor Tolentino**  
**Office hours: WF 10-11:30pm, 444 PLC**  
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### **Content**

This course examines how racialized ideas about gender and sexuality have shaped Asian Pacific American literature and culture. We begin by studying the ways that Asian immigration has been central in defining Asian Pacific American communities, citizenship, and cultures. Using novels, short stories, illustrations, film, historical essays, and poems, we will look at how twentieth century writers use notions of visibility, embodiment, and voice to broaden and question definitions of Asian America.

### **Evaluation**

•Preparation and Participation (20%)

Please bring the assigned readings to class and be prepared to discuss them. I will occasionally check during class to see if you have your texts and notes. Also, you may be asked to offer a brief summary of or response to the assigned readings during class discussions.

•Two papers, 3-4 pages each. Due in class on Friday, January 23 and Friday, February 27 (50%)  
Topics will be provided at least one week before the due date. You are expected to write nuanced and analytical essays. If you want to write on a different topic, please consult with me at least 3 days before the due date. Papers are due at the beginning of class - hard copy only, no e-mail attachments. Papers that have not been spellchecked/proofread or that are submitted late will be marked down one letter grade. No papers will be accepted more than one week after the due date.

•Midterm in class on Friday, Feb. 20 (20%) The exam will cover Weeks 1-7 (multiple choice, passage identification, short response questions).

• Short response question assignment on Weeks 8-10 (In class, Friday, March 13 (10%)

• Attendance Policy: After three unexcused absences, your grade will be lowered by 1/3 of a letter for each absence. (B- becomes C+). You are no longer eligible for a grade if you miss more than six classes (excused or unexcused). Repeated tardiness or leaving before class is over will also lower your grade.

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make an appointment to meet with me soon.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

Books are available for purchase at the University of Oregon Bookstore or on 2-hour loan from Knight Library Course Reserves:

Maxine Hong Kingston, The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts (1976)

Brian Royle, American Son (2001)

Karen Tei Yamashita, Tropic of Orange (2001)

Lois Ann Yamanaka, Saturday Night at the Pahala Theatre (1993)

Articles are available from the Course Documents folder on the Blackboard site for ENG 245/CRN21940. You will need to use your UO Duck ID and password to log into Blackboard.

## SCHEDULE

### PART I: ASIAN/AMERICAN

Week 1

M 1/5 Introduction

W 1/7

Hisaye Yamamoto, "Wilshire Bus." Seventeen Syllables and Other Stories. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2001. 34-38. B

Illustrations: "How to Tell Your Friends From the Japs." Time, 22 December 1941. B

"How to Tell Japs from the Chinese." Life, 22 December 1941. B

Ginu Kamani, "Ciphers." Jungle Girl. 1-14. B

F 1/9

Film: "Rabbit in the Moon" (1999, dir. Emiko Omori, 85 min.)

Hisaye Yamamoto, "The Legend of Miss Sasagawara." Seventeen Syllables and Other Stories. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2001. 20-33. B

Week 2 History and Memory

Weekend Assignment for Jan 12 class: Visit the Japanese American Memorial in downtown Eugene, next to the Hult Center (W. 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. at Willamette St.). How does it depict the Japanese American internment? Are there aspects of internment that are emphasized/downplayed/omitted?

M 1/12

Film: "History and Memory: For Akiko and Takashige" (1991, dir. Rea Tajiri, 32 min.)

C.B. Munson, "Japanese on the West Coast." Asian American Studies: A Reader. 84-92. B

Caroline Chung Simpson, "Internment." Keywords for American Cultural Studies. Eds. Bruce Burgett and Glen Hendler. New York: New York University Press, 2008. 137-139. B

W 1/14

Lonny Kaneko, "The Shoyu Kid." Amerasia Journal, 3,2 (1976): 1-9. B

Ginu Kamani, "Just After Just Between Indians" and "Just Between Indians." Contours of the Heart: South Asians Map North America. Eds. Sunaina Maira and Rajini Srikanth. New York: The Asian American Writers' Workshop, 1996. 353-380. B

F 1/16

1899 Political Cartoons Reflecting U.S. Images of the Philippines B

Mae Ngai, "From Colonial Subject to Undesirable Alien: Filipino Migration in the Invisible Empire." Re/collecting Early Asian American History. Ed. Josephine Lee. Philadelphia: Temple UP, 2002. 111-126. B

Film: "Savage Acts" (1995, dir. Pennee Bender, 30 min.)

Week 3

M 1/19

No class – Martin Luther King, Jr.

W 1/21

Bienvenido Santos, “Scent of Apples” and “The Day the Dancers Came.” Scent of Apples: A Collection of Stories by Bienvenido N. Santos. Ed. Leonard Casper. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1967. 21-29; 113-128. B

F 1/23

Film: “The Fall of the I-Hotel” (2005; dir. Curtis Choy; 57 min)

### **Paper 1 due in class**

## **PART II: VISIBILITY, AUTONOMY, AGENCY**

Week 4

M 1/26

Brian Roley, American Son

W 1/28

Brian Roley, American Son

F 1/30

Brian Roley, American Son

Film clip: “La Visa Loca” (2005, dir. Mike Meily)

Week 5

M 2/2

“Success Story of One Minority Group in the U.S.” From U.S. News and World Report. Asian American Studies: A Reader. 158-163. B

Film: “The Grace Lee Project” (2005; dir. Grace Lee; 68 min)

W 2/4

Sigrid Nunez, “Chang.” A Feather on a Breath of Good. 3-28. B

Film: “My Life as a Poster” (1996; dir. Shashwati Talukdar; 8 min)

F 2/6

No class – Professor Tolentino at an academic conference

Please read the entire book of The Woman Warrior for the next class

Week 6

M 2/9 Storytelling; mothers and daughters

Maxine Hong Kingston, The Woman Warrior

W 2/11 Sisters; The Racial Shadow

Maxine Hong Kingston, The Woman Warrior

F 2/13 Being a Writer  
Maxine Hong Kingston, The Woman Warrior

Film: "The Stories of Maxine Hong Kingston" (1994; dir. Leslie Clark; 60 min)

Week 7

M 2/16

Ronald Takaki, "The Sugar Kingdom: The Making of Plantation Hawai'i." Asian American Studies: A Reader. 21-34. B

Lois Ann Yamanaka, Saturday Night at the Pahala Theatre

W 2/18

Lois Ann Yamanaka, Saturday Night at the Pahala Theatre

Film: "Fishbowl" (2005, dir. Kayo Hatta, 28 min.)

F 2/20

Midterm

### **PART III. BORDERLANDS**

Week 8

M 2/23

Karen Tei Yamashita, Tropic of Orange

W 2/25

Karen Tei Yamashita, Tropic of Orange

F 2/27

Karen Tei Yamashita, Tropic of Orange

Film clip: "The Host" (2007; dir. Bong Joon-ho, 119 min.)

#### **Paper 2 due in class**

Week 9

M 3/2

Linda Trinh Vo, "The Vietnamese American Experience: From Dispersion to the Development of Post-Refugee Communities." Asian American Studies: A Reader. 290-307. B

Film: Art 21 segments on An My Le's photographs (Season Four: Protest)

W 3/4

Minh Duc Nguyen, "Tale of Apricot." Asian American Studies: A Reader. 505-516. B

Linh Dinh, "Letter to My Bed"; "The Dead." Watermark: Vietnamese American Poetry and Prose. 1998. 16; 122. B

F 3/6

Film: "Kelly Loves Tony" (1998, dir. Spencer Nakasako, 57 min.)

Ka Vang, "How Ms. PacMan Stole My Gang Life." Charlie Chan is Dead 2. Ed. Jessica Hagedorn. New York: Penguin, 2004. 488-494. B

Week 10

M 3/9

Sui Sin Far, "The Story of One White Woman Who Married a Chinese." Mrs. Spring Fragrance and Other Writings. Eds. Amy Ling and Annette White-Parks. Champaign-Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995. 66-77. B

Film clip: "Slaying the Dragon" (1987, dir. Deborah Gee, 60 min.)

W 3/11            On Cultural Authenticity

Shani Mootoo, "Out on Main St." Contours of the Heart: South Asians Map North America. Eds. Lavinia Shankar and Rajini Srikanth. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998. 54-63. B

Jhumpa Lahiri, "Interpreter of Maladies." Interpreter of Maladies: Stories. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1999. 43-69. B

F 3/13

In-class assignment