

Asian American Studies R2A
Reading & Composition
Spring 2016

Lecture:
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Asian American Studies R2A is a course in critical thinking and writing in which students will gain a basic introduction to contemporary issues in the work of Asian American writers. For this semester, we will focus loosely on the theme of “labor.” We will address many questions that have no predetermined answers. For example, are there certain occupations within which Asian Americans have found a niche? When we examine the relationship of Asian Americans to these occupations, do we find specific patterns of behavior or conflicts? What might these conflicts reflect in terms of Asian American identity? Are they influenced by immigration, national boundaries and/or culture? More than anything, this course is devoted to your writing, so there will be a strong emphasis on learning to identify essay topics that interest you. You will write extensively in order to give power to your voice through the written word. You will spend a great deal of time reading and revising student work, as well as considerable attention to the mechanics of argumentative prose. To this end, you will learn how to analyze, with care and precision, such varied forms of writing as short stories, poetry, and novels.

BOOK LIST

Chang, Lan Samantha, *Hunger*
Lahiri, Jhumpa, *Interpreter of Maladies*
Lee, Chang-rae, *Native Speaker*
Roley, Brian, *American Son*
Truong, Monique, *The Book of Salt*
Yamamoto, Hisaye, *Seventeen Syllables*

Reader can be purchased from University Copy, 2425 Channing Way, Tel: 549-2335
Books can be purchased from Eastwind Books, 2066 University Ave, Tel: 548-2350
Additional Readings on reserve at Ethnic Studies Library / 30 Stephens Hall, Tel: 643-1234

REQUIREMENTS & GRADING

Papers 60% (3 papers): Paper #1 15% Paper #2 20% Paper #3 25%

You are required to revise your first two papers by the dates listed on the syllabus, while revision of paper three is not an option.

You will discuss your first draft with your grader in a mandatory conference, and your final draft with your peers on group editing day. Your revision will receive detailed comments and a grade. Keep in mind that your grade for each paper is based on the most recent revision of the paper you turn in, NOT the highest grade amongst the revisions. This means that you must RE-ENVISION your argument and not simply make cosmetic changes. Sometimes such superficial changes can actually result in a lower grade, so make your revisions worthwhile endeavors!

See also “Paper Format” and “Class Policies” below.

Paper format

- > typewritten
- > double-spaced
- > 12-point font
- > 1 inch margins
- > each page should bear your name and page number in the upper right-hand corner
- > all pages should be arranged in the proper order and STAPLED together
- > citations should be in the MLA format (we'll discuss this in class)
- > each paper should be submitted with all previous drafts

Group Presentation 15%

The class will be divided into five groups and each will present on one of the five key texts. You will be graded on how you engage with themes and issues the text raises. Your presentation should be at least 45 minutes and will be graded by the class and the instructors.

Participation 20%

Includes daily attendance, involvement in discussion, peer editing, journal, short response papers, quizzes, and viewing video/film and/or attending theater performances.

Directed Journal

The class will be divided into several small groups, and each group will keep a communal journal. In other words, each group will have on notebook, and each member of the group is to write one page of directed free-writing per week.

The directed journal is a cooperative effort and you will be graded as such. Since all writing will occur outside of class, a group must arrange it so that each member gets an opportunity to write in the journal.

You can approach these entries as conversations or as individual reflections. These journals can be very useful forums in which to raise and discuss significant questions you may have about the readings, test out your interpretations of a text, or bounce around paper ideas.

Group editing

You are required to have working copies of your paper for peer editors. While these papers are works in progress, they should be passing quality. They must be typed or written in ink, double-spaced. Missing or coming unprepared for draft day will result in a lowering of your grade. Students will critique each other's papers, writing comments on the draft. A marked draft with the peer editor's name must be turned in with the final copy. Your comments will be evaluated, although not graded.

Examination 5%

Short answer identification and essay reflecting synthesis of themes and readings.

CLASS POLICIES

- 1) All reading is to be completed by the day of open discussions. Quizzes will be given at random.
- 2) The late penalty for papers is 1/3 of a grade off (e.g. from B to B-) for every day late. Since this is an intensive course it is strongly recommended that you keep up with the work.
- 3) Student papers may be used, in full or in part, for group editing, whether in the current semester or in later semesters. The writer's name will be deleted. If you feel that a paper is too personal to be read by anyone other than the grader, indicate "No group editing" on the first page. Remember that learning to edit and revise is an integral part of learning to write. Overprotecting your ego won't help you learn!
- 4) Plagiarism will be severely penalized. Plagiarism on one assignment may result in an F for the entire course. University guidelines on dealing with plagiarism will be followed. If you are not sure what constitutes plagiarism, check with the instructor before you turn in the work

GENERAL REMINDER

- 1) Rather than being obsessed with grades on individual papers, it would be more productive for you to pay attention to your overall proficiency as well as to specific areas of improvement pointed out by the instructor.
- 2) If you miss class, you are responsible for finding out from classmates about the content of lectures and discussion sections as well as upcoming reading and writing assignments (including changes in the syllabus).
- 3) For extra safety, make copies before turning in papers and don't throw away any of your written work for the course until you have received the final course grade.