

Asian Americans in Higher Education:  
The Racial Politics of the Model Minority Myth  
Ethn 189

Summer Session I  
2010

**Instructor:** Angela W. Kong

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**Mailbox location:** Department of Ethnic Studies, Social Science Building, Room 201

**Class Meets:** T/TH 11am – 1:50pm, Social Science Building, Room 103

**Office hours:** Tuesday and Thursday 2pm – 3:30pm and by appointment at SSB 241

**Course Description/Purpose:**

The course examines how Asian American students, labeled as the model minority are centered in the discussion of diversity policy-making. Tracing student movements from the 1960s to present, the course addresses how racial politics in higher education impact the discourse around access, opportunity, and equality at California's public universities. The course will cover activism, Asian American student experiences, racial politics, and diversity policies.

*\*Instructor reserves the right to make changes as needed.*

"This course contains ideas that are illegal in the state of Arizona:  
todos somos Arizona."

**Required Texts:**

Asian Americans in Higher Education (Ethn 189) Course Reader available at Cal Copy, 3251 Holiday Court La Jolla, CA 92037-1803 - (858) 452-9949.

Additional readings will be made available by instructor.

**Evaluation:**

Attendance.....	10%
Class participation.....	10%
Journal.....	10%
Research paper.....	30%
Media project.....	20%
Final.....	20%

**ADA Statement:** If you have a disability or condition that compromises your ability to complete the requirements of this course, you should inform me as soon as possible of your needs. I will make all reasonable efforts to accommodate you. If, as a result of a disability, you cannot accept the content or terms of this syllabus, you need to notify me in writing within one week of receiving it.

**Attendance and Class Participation:**

You are required to attend every class. This means you are expected to come to class on time, for its entirety, and be prepared for discussion. You are expected to actively engage in class discussions and encourage others to speak without dominating the conversation. You are required to bring in one question and one comment to share with the class in regards to each reading. They should reflect a deep and thoughtful engagement with the readings. These will be collected at the beginning of each class. Your participation and investment is necessary for the success of the course.

**Journal:**

This assignment requires you to keep a journal to reflect on the ways in which the construction of the model minority myth is reflected in the media. Think about the ways in which Asian Americans in universities are simultaneously constructed as hyper-visible and invisible. How does this impact their college experiences? Similarly, how do they relationally shape the experiences of other students? Think about how the media informs society about Asian American students. Reflect on your own experiences in relation to the assignment. Relate your journal entries to course readings when you feel it is necessary. There is a minimum of two entries per week. You can be creative with the design of your journal. This will be collected at the beginning of class on July 8 and 29.

**Research paper:**

You are required to select one California public university campus represented in the California Community College (CCC), California State University (CSU), or University of California (UC) to discuss the ways in which the university addresses Asian Americans students, staff, and/or faculty issues on their campus. You will need to define the population you are researching, discuss university policies in relation to the group, and address the ways in which Asian Americans are a part of the diverse campus community. A detailed description of what the research paper entails will be handed out in class.

Paper proposal (5%), 1-2 pages due July 6

Rough draft (5%), 3-4 pages due July 15

Final paper (20%), 7-9 pages due July 27

**Media project (group):**

Due to the misconceptions that arise from the depiction of Asian Americans as the model minority, their hyper-visibility and invisibility in California's public universities results in the erasure of their experiences. The assignment requires you to use media to create a documentary film, public service announcement, workshop, or any type of educational piece that addresses one of the many issues Asian Americans face in higher education. Each group will have 2-3 students. Group project proposals will be turned in to the instructor on July 13. All media projects need to be approved by the instructor before the group can work on the

project. A detailed description of what the proposal entails will be handed out in class. Media projects will be presented during the last day of classes, July 29.

**Final:**

The final exam will be held on Friday, July 30, 2010 from 11:30am to 2:29pm in the Social Science Building, Room 103.

**Late and Make-up Assignments Policy:** No make-ups allowed. You have ample time to prepare for the assignments. Review the syllabus thoroughly to plan accordingly.

**Grounds Rules:** The number one rule is to respect each other. There will be a vast range of opinions expressed during the course of the class therefore harsh language and offensive behavior will not be tolerated. It is paramount to provide constructive comments, questions, and critiques that offers a critical analysis of the course material.

**Principles of Community:**

You are part of a supportive learning community that respects the diversity each student brings to the classroom. To read further on UCSD Principles of Community visit: <http://www-vcba.ucsd.edu/principles.htm>

**Academic Integrity:**

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. "Integrity of scholarship is essential for an academic community. The University expects that both faculty and students will honor this principle and in so doing protect the validity of University intellectual work. For students, this means that all academic work will be done by the individual to whom it is assigned, without unauthorized aid of any kind." ~ (UCSD Policy on Academic Integrity). In other words, you are expected to cite your work when you are borrowing an idea or when you are directly quoting from an author, researcher, or an individual's work.

**Majoring or Minor in Ethnic Studies at UCSD**

Many students take an Ethnic Studies course because the topic is of great interest or because of a need to fulfill a social science, non-contiguous, or other college requirement. Often students have taken three or four classes out of "interest" yet have no information about the major or minor and don't realize how close they are to a major, a minor, or even a double major. An Ethnic Studies major is excellent preparation for a career in law, public policy, government and politics, journalism, education, public health, social work, international relations, and many other careers. If you would like information about the Ethnic Studies major or minor at UCSD, please contact Yolanda Escamilla, Ethnic Studies Department Undergraduate Advisor, at 858-534-3277 or [yescamilla@ucsd.edu](mailto:yescamilla@ucsd.edu).

## SCHEDULE

### ***Week 1 ~ Higher Education Literature***

June 29 (Tuesday)                      Introduction

July 1 (Thursday)

- Readings:      Bowen, William G. and Derek Bok. 1998. Academic outcomes. In *The shape of the river: Long-term consequences of considering race in college and university admissions*, 53-90.
- Massey, Douglas S., Camille Z. Charles, Garvey F. Lundy, and Mary J. Fisher. 2002. The puzzle of minority underachievement. In *The source of the river: The social origins of freshmen at America's selective colleges and universities*, 1-19.

### **Week 2 ~ Activism/Coalition Building**

July 6 (Tuesday)                      Research Paper Proposal due

- Readings:      Mariscal, George. 2005. "To demand that the university work for our people." In *Brown-eyed children of the sun: Lessons from the Chicano movement, 1965-1975*, 210-246.
- Maeda, Daryl J. 2005. Black Panthers, Red Guards, and Chinamen: Constructing Asian American identity through performing Blackness, 1969-1972. *American Quarterly* 57(4): 1079-1103.

July 8 (Thursday)                      Journal due

- Readings:      Fujino, Diane C. 2008. "Who Studies the Asian American Movement?: A historiographical analysis." *Journal of Asian American Studies* 11(2): 127-169.
- Umemoto, Karen. 1989. "On strike!" San Francisco State College strike, 1968-69: The role of Asian American students. *Amerasia Journal* 15(1): 3-41.

### **Week 3 ~ Asian American Experiences in Higher Education**

July 13 (Tuesday)

Media Group Project proposal due

Readings: Espiritu, Yen L. 2008. "Asian American panethnicity: Challenges and possibilities." In *The state of Asian America: Trajectory of civic and political engagement: A public policy report*, edited by Paul M. Ong, 119-136.

Chhuon, Vichet and Hudley, Cynthia. 2008. Factors supporting Cambodian American students' successful adjustment into the university. *Journal of College Student Development* 49(1): 15-30.

Duldulao, Aileen A., David T. Takeuchi, and Seunghye Hong. 2009. Correlates of suicidal behaviors among Asian Americans. *Archives of Suicide Research*, 13, 277-290.

Maramba, Dina C. 2008. Immigrant families and the college experience: Perspectives of Filipina Americans. *Journal of College Student Development* 49(4): 336-350.

National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education. 2010. Federal Higher Education Policy Priorities and the Asian American and Pacific Islander Community, i-34.

July 15 (Thursday)

Research Paper draft due

Readings: Chou, Rosalind and Joe R. Feagin. 2008. Everyday racism: Anti-Asian discrimination in schools and workplaces (Chapter 3). In *The myth of the model minority: Asian Americans facing racism*, 55-99.

Chou, Rosalind, and Joe R. Feagin. 2008. The many costs of Anti-Asian discrimination (Chapter 4). In *The myth of the model minority: Asian Americans facing racism*, 100-137.

### **Week 4 ~ Racial Politics of the Model Minority Myth & Diversity Issues**

July 20 (Tuesday)

Readings: Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics (LEAP) Asian Pacific American Policy Inst. 1996. In *In Support of Civil*

*Rights: Taking On the Initiative. LEAP (Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics, Inc.) Special Report, Proposition 209, "The California Civil Rights Initiative.", 2-9.*

Takagi, Dana. 1992. Affirmative action and its discontents: Asian victims and black villains (Chapter 5). In *The retreat from race: Asian American admissions and racial politics*, 109-139.

Chong, Sylvia S. H. 2008. "Look, an Asian!": *The politics of racial interpellation in the wake of the Virginia Tech shootings. Journal of Asian American Studies* 11(1): 27-60.

July 22 (Thursday)

Readings: Abelman, Nancy. 2009. Introduction. In *The intimate university: Korean American students and the problems of segregation*, 1-19.

Chang, Mitchell J. 2002. Preservation or transformation: Where's the real educational discourse on diversity?. *The Review of Higher Education* 25(2): 125-140.

## **Week 5 ~ Possibilities**

July 27 (Tuesday)

Research Paper due

Readings: Hurtado, Sylvia. 2007. Linking diversity with the educational and civic missions of higher education. *The Review of Higher Education* 30(2): 185-196.

Pope, Raechele L., John A. Mueller and Amy L. Reynolds. 2009. Looking back and moving forward: Future directions for diversity research in student affairs." *Journal of College Student Development* 50(6): 640-658.

Osajima, Keith. 2007. Replenishing the ranks: Raising critical consciousness among Asian Americans. *Journal of Asian American Studies* 10(1): 59-83.

July 29 (Thursday)

Journal due  
Media Group Project Presentation and Potluck