

ASIAN AMERICAN CULTURE & IDENTITY

ETHNIC STUDIES 122

Center Hall 217B

MWF 3:00 to 3:50PM

Dr. Lisa Ho

liho@ucsd.edu

Office Hours: Mondays from 4:00 to 5:00 PM & By Appointment

Office Location: Perks @ Price Center



COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines how Asian America has represented their identities, communities, struggles, and triumphs through different and diverse mediums. We will be analyzing how these expressions illustrate the varied divisions, subversions, conflict, and cohesion that exist within Asian America. By doing so, we can better understand how Asian America negotiates their identity and belonging through these moments. Also, we will be exploring and answering the following questions:

- 1) How do we define “Asian American culture”—what makes it “Asian American”?
- 2) How do different cultural mediums shape and frame how the experiences of Asian America are represented?

- 3) How do Asian American politicize themselves through their cultural expressions?
- 4) How do you practice an intersectional lens in the representation of Asian Americans?

The goal of the course is to explore the new and unique ways Asian America has chosen to represent itself. This course is interested in how these representations seek to make visible the joys, struggles, and power of being Asian American.

REQUIRED READINGS

All required readings will be made available via TritonED.

GRADE BREAKDOWN

Attendance & Participation: 10 Points

Weekly Posts: 40 Points

Final Project Proposal: 10 Points **(DUE WEEK FIVE)**

Final Project: 40 Points **(DUE FRIDAY OF WEEK TEN)**

Attendance & Participation: Your attendance is required. You are allowed miss two days of class with no explanation or an excuse. **If you miss more than two classes**, your grade for attendance and participation will be **lowered by one point (or a 1/3 of grade) each time**. If you are experiencing extenuating circumstances, please speak with me privately to discuss alternative ways you can make up your missing time.

Weekly Posts: Every Friday (from week two to week nine) I will be posting a specific question under the “Discussions” tab on the course’s TritonED page. The question will be unique to that week’s readings. Your response to the question must be a minimum of 250 words. **Your posts will be due by midnight on Sunday before the start of the next new week.** Each response will be graded for completion. However, if your response clearly shows you did not complete that week’s readings and/or your attendance of course lectures, you will receive a zero. You will receive an email directly from me if you do receive a zero on your response. Each response is worth five points. **NO MAKE-UPS.**

Final Project Proposal & Final Project: For your final project, you may decide to complete as an individual or in a group. You will need to create a cultural medium that expresses the experiences of Asian America. You may choose any cultural medium to do so such as: artwork, music, poetry, short story, film, podcast, or anything else related. With your projects, you are required to complete a three to five-page paper that makes connections to at least two course readings that centers your project. Further details will be provided during week three. However, you will need to create a proposal for your project that will be due during week five. You will receive directions for your proposal during week three as well. Lastly, your final projects will be displayed and shared in an art-gallery like setting during week ten.

YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL ASSIGNMENTS TO PASS THE COURSE.

Technology Policy

There is no use of electronics unless indicated by me. If you need to use a laptop to take notes, please check in with me first and you will be asked to sit in the front of the class.

Class Etiquette

"Everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about. Be kind. Always."

WEEK ONE

April 1, 3, 5

What is culture? What does it mean to be Asian American?

"Olympics" from *Superstore* (Season 2, Episode 1)—IN CLASS SCREENING

"Introduction": Lisa Lowe from *Immigrant Acts*

"Crazy Rich Asians and What We Lose in the Fight for Respectability": Ari Laurel

WEEK TWO

April 8, 10, 12

Before there were *Crazy Rich Asians*, there was *YouTube*

Yappie—IN CLASS SCREENING

"Shifting Receptions: Asian American Stereotypes and the Exploration of Comprehensive Media Literacy": Sun, Liberman, Butler, Lee, and Webb

WEEK THREE

April 15, 17, 19

"I don't want to lean in, I want to lie down": The Stand-Up of Asian America

Hard Knock Wife, Ali Wong (Netflix)

Model Minority, Joel Kim (Spotify)

"Joel Kim Booster on Finding the Comedy in Hurtful Queer Asian Male Stereotypes": Jessica Prois

"Ali Wong: 'Being able to joke about my miscarriage was a relief'": Hadley Freeman

"I'm an Asian American Stand-Up Comedian. What If I Could Just Be a Stand-Up Comedian?": Jenny Yang

WEEK FOUR

April 22, 24, 26

"I know I act rich but I'm broke, skin turn green 'cause the ring fake gold": Asian Americans & Hip Hop

Bad Rap, Netflix—IN CLASS SCREENING

"Rapping and Repping Asian: Race, Authenticity and the Asian American MC": Oliver Wang

WEEK FIVE

April 29, May 1 and 3

"From heaven to earth, I'll be conceited": KPOP & Asian America

"America Is in Love with Asian Music, but Asian American Artists Still Can't Catch a Break": Isha Aran

"Steve Aoki: K-Pop Bands Show Masculinity Is a Fluid Concept": Kimberley Yam

"Transnational Identities and Feeling in Fandom: Place and Embodiment in K-pop Fan Reaction Videos": Anna Lee Swan

WEEK SIX

May 6, 8, 10

"Almost Asian is Half-Asian. Half-White. 100% CONFUSED."

Almost Asian (YouTube Series)

<https://almostasian.com/White-Noise>

"Why Are You: Multiracial Asian Americans and the Question of Visibility" & "Tiger Woods and the Perils of Colorblind Celebrity": Lelani Nishime

WEEK SEVEN

May 13, 15, 17

Representing Queerness in Asian America

Gaysian—IN CLASS SCREENING

Interstate, Clips

"New pop-rock poetry musical shines a spotlight on queer Asian Americans": Kevin Troung

"Bad Asians: New Film and Video by Queer Asian American Artists": Eve Oishi

WEEK EIGHT

May 20, 22, 24

"I can't stand going into my own restaurants now...They're so fucking loud."—David Chang

"Fried Rice" from *Ugly Delicious*

"Model Minorities Can Cook: Fusion Cuisine in Asian America": Anita Mannur

"Twenty-First-Century Food Trucks: Mobility, Social Media, and Urban Hipness": Lok Siu

WEEK NINE

May 27th—No Class, Memorial Day

May 29 & 30

Subtle Asian Traits

“The Meme-ification of Asianness”: Nicholas Wu and Karen Yuan

“The Asian Meme Group Launched a Self-Stereotyping Debate”: Sandra Song

“Alllookslike”? Mediating Asian American Visual Cultures of Race on the Web: Lisa Nakamura

WEEK TEN

June 3, 5, 7

Wrapping Up & Final Projects