

WOMENSST 392H/592AA - Asian American Feminisms

Meeting Time and Place:	Thurs 2:30-5pm Bartlett 203
Instructor:	Miliann Kang
Office:	Bartlett 73 (basement in wing near Goodell)
Office Hours:	Tues and Thurs 1-2pm & by appointment
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Course Description

How have the figures of the Chinese bachelor, the geisha, the war bride, the hermaphrodite, the orphan, the tiger mother, the Asian nerd, the rice king /queen, and the trafficked woman shaped understandings of Asian Americans, and how have these representations been critiqued by Asian American feminist scholars and writers? Is there a body of work that constitutes “Asian American feminism(s)” and what are its distinctive contributions to the fields of Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies and Ethnic Studies? How does this body of work illuminate historical and contemporary configurations of gender, sexuality, race, class, nation, citizenship, migration, empire, war, neoliberalism and globalization? In exploring these questions, this course examines Asian American histories, bodies, identities, diasporic communities, representations, and politics through multi- and interdisciplinary approaches, including social science research, literature, popular representations, film, poetry and art.

The course is open to graduate students and advanced undergraduates (contact the professor if you have any questions about eligibility). The course will operate as a seminar based on in-depth reading and critique of texts, rigorous thinking, independent research and most importantly, informed discussion and active participation in building an intellectual community (in class and on-line). It fulfills the critical race feminisms or transnational feminisms requirement for graduate feminist certificate students and undergraduate majors and minors. It also fulfills honors requirements for undergraduates (as it will involve in-depth readings, presentations and research) but is also open to non-honors students who are willing to work hard. Finally, it counts toward the Asian & Asian American Studies Certificate (for the full list of courses see <http://www.umass.edu/asianasianamstudies/courses.html>).

Course Requirements

- Regular attendance and active, informed participation in the seminar is required. An attendance sheet will be circulated at the beginning of class.
- Reading assignments must be completed BEFORE the class period for which they are assigned.
- You will be asked to comment and give feedback to other students. Peer responses should be constructive and respectful. With this understanding of peer feedback, students should decide for themselves what topics they feel comfortable writing about and how they wish to explore these

topics. It is the responsibility of everyone to foster as safe a space as possible for people to challenge themselves and take risks in their writing.

- We will follow all university policies on issues of Academic Honesty, Grading, Attendance, Examinations, and Absences due to Religious Observance.
- You are responsible for knowing when assignments are due and handing them in on time. Dates of major writing assignments are below.

Summary of Assignments and Due Dates (hard copies due at beginning of class)

- Attendance and Participation (Ongoing, includes Moodle posts): 30%
- Two Short Reflection Papers on Readings (you sign up for which weeks to respond Post to Moodle by 5p On Wed before class) 2 x 10% = 20%
- Prospectus and Bibliography for Final Project (Due November 7): 10%
- Final Portfolio: Analytical Paper OR Research Proposal
AND Final Course Reflection (Due Dec 6 by 4pm, hard copy in my mailbox): 40%

Attendance, Class Participation and Moodle Posts 30%

Attendance and participation in the seminar is required. You are expected to contribute to the discussion, and to support your colleagues in participating as well. You are also expected to participate actively on Moodle and respond with questions and comments to reflection papers (you must respond at least 5 times during the semester by 10 am Thurs and you should save and turn in a hard copy of these posts in a single word document). Because we only meet once a week, each class session is important and any unexcused absences will result in your grade being marked down. Non-attendance will result in an “F” in the course. For an excused absence you must: 1) provide an official note excusing your absence; 2) submit a 2-3 page additional reflection paper based on the readings or film assigned for that week, due at the beginning of the next class; and 3) complete any exercises assigned for that class period, due at the beginning of the next class. If you know that for extenuating circumstances you will need to miss a class, please let me know in advances as it is always helpful in terms of planning the seminar.

Two Short Reflection Papers 2 x 10% = 20%

3-4 double-spaced pages posted by 5p Wed, bring hard copy to class (comments posted by Thurs 10am) You will write two short reflection papers on the readings . While these need not be formal essays, they should be succinct, cogent and well-organized. Each paper should: 1) identify and critique key concepts and debates in that week’s assigned readings (you do not have to discuss all the readings equally but should address themes that emerge across readings); 2) draw connections to issues in your own research; and 3) pose questions for further reflection and discussion. If you post a reflection paper after the deadline of Wed 5pm, it will not count. Every week that you have posted a reflection, you should read responses to your paper and be prepared to dialogue with students who have commented. Whether or not you post a reflection paper that week, you should read all the other reflection papers and come to class prepared to discuss them. Peer comments should be clear, respectful and constructive and refer specifically to points in the papers. It is fine to agree or disagree with others’ arguments, but these critiques must focus on intellectual debates and refrain from ad hominem attacks. Please keep a file of your comments over the semester and hand it in at the end of the semester.

Prospectus for Final Project: Due November 7

10%

You will pick one of the two options for the Final Paper outlined below and you will provide an abstract, outline, bibliography and steps and schedule for completion. Your prospectus (3-4 double-spaced pages not including bibliography) should address the following questions: 1) What is your topic; 2) Why is it important for understanding Asian American feminist thought; and 3) How will you design and carry out your project? In addition, you will include an annotated bibliography (annotations explaining the importance of each text for your project).

Final Project Portfolio: 1) Analytical Paper OR Research Proposal

AND 2) Final Course Reflection Due Dec 6 by 4pm, hard copy in my mailbox 40%

You will pick ONE of the following choices for the final project: (8-12 pages)

- 1) Analytical Paper - You will pick course readings (at least 5) and discuss key themes, connections, debates and disagreements.
- 2) Research Proposal – You will design a plan for researching an issue relevant to Asian American feminist thought. You will make the case for why this research project is important, how you would carry it out, and what original knowledge it would contribute.

Whichever option you pick, you will also write a final course reflection (3-5 double spaced pages) discussing which themes in the course most spoke to you, how they have changed your thinking and how you plan to apply them.

General Course Policies

HARD COPIES of papers are due at the beginning of class on the assigned deadlines. They should be printed in 12 pt font, stapled, proofread and have proper citations and bibliography in APA format.

INCOMPLETES will not be given except in documented circumstances of health or family emergency.

LATE PAPER POLICY – late assignments will be marked down (10% for each day they are late). Deadlines for in-class or on-line exercises will be announced and assignments handed in more than 24 hours after the deadlines will not receive credit. Paper assignments will not be accepted after a week past the deadline.

RESPONDING TO EMAIL: I aim to respond to questions sent by email within 48 hours on weekdays. Please do not expect a response on the weekend. Please make use of office hours to ask questions in person. You can also use your colleagues and the TA as resources.

STUDENT COLLABORATION: I encourage you to exchange ideas and discuss course readings and assignments with each other. However, all written work must be your own and you must give appropriate credit to any relevant sources, properly cited using APA format.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Plagiarism will result in failing the class and will be referred to the Academic Honesty Board. Ignorance of academic honesty policies is not an excuse for violating them. Academic dishonesty, in any form, will not be tolerated and you are responsible for educating yourself about the

University's official policy on academic honesty. Following is a summary (you can read it in full at: http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/code_conduct/acad_honest.htm)

If an instructor finds that a student has violated the University's Academic Honesty Policy, the instructor has the right to lower the student's grade, or even to fail the student for the course. Students have the right to appeal such a grade penalty by an instructor. The University Academic Honesty Board, which must be notified by instructors of any grade penalty, reviews all student appeals. The Board may sustain or recommend modification of the penalty given by the faculty member, or may recommend sanctions exceeding those originally given, such as suspension or expulsion from the University. The Board may also recommend sanctions for offenders who have committed multiple violations of the Academic Honesty Policy but who have not appealed the faculty members' decisions. The Updated Student Academic Regulations can be read at: <http://www.umass.edu/registrar/media/academicregs.pdf>

ACCOMMODATIONS: Please let me know as early as possible if you require accommodations due to illness or disability and make sure to coordinate with other university offices as necessary.

READINGS will be posted on Moodle. I have also ordered the book *Ingratitude: The Debt-Bound Daughter in Asian American Literature* by erin Khue Ninh (NYU Press) from Amherst Books (please support your local bookstores and buy from them if at all possible).

COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNED READINGS (I reserve the right to make changes as appropriate. Any changes will be announced -please refer to Moodle for updates.)

Tentative Course Schedule

<i>Week & Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Assignment</i>
Week 1 – Sept. 5	Course Introduction:	Course Overview, Self-Introductions
Week 2 – Sept. 12	Theorizing Asian American Feminisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowe, L. “Work, Immigration, Gender” • Parrenas, R. “The Derivative Status of Asian American Women” in <i>Force of Domesticity</i> • Yamada, M. “Invisibility is an Unnatural Disaster”
Week 3 – Sept. 19	Gendering and Sexualizing Asian American Immigration Histories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chou, R. Intro, <i>Asian American Sexual Politics</i> • Hune, S. “Chinese American Women in U.S. History” • Reddy, C. “Asian Diasporas, Neoliberalism and Family”
Week 4 - Sept. 26	Legacies of U.S. Wars and Empire in Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imada, A. Intro, <i>Aloha America</i> • Cho, G. Chap 1, <i>Haunting the Korean Diaspora</i>

Week 5 – Oct. 3	Orientalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Said, E. excerpts, <i>Orientalism</i> • Uno, K. “Unlearning Orientalism: Locating Asian and Asian American Women in Family History”
Week 5- Oct. 10	Challenging Model Minority Mythologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ninh, E. <i>Ingratitude: The Debt-Bound Daughter in Asian American Literature</i>, Intro, Chapters 1 and 2
Week 6 – Oct. 17	Subjection and Subjectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ninh, E. <i>Ingratitude: The Debt-Bound Daughter in Asian American Literature</i>, Chap 3-4, Afterward
Week 7 – Oct. 24	Asian American Racialized Femininities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pyke and Johnson, “Asian American Women and Racialized Femininities” • Cho, S. “Asian Pacific American Women and Racialized Sexual Harassment”
Week 8- Oct. 31	Asian American Racialized Masculinities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eng, D. <i>Racial Castration: Managing Masculinity in Asian America</i>, Intro and Epilogue • Manalansan, M. <i>Global Divas</i> excerpts
Week 9- Nov. 7	Asian American Body Politics <i>Prospectus due at beginning of class</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaw, E. “Medicalization of Racial Features: Asian American Women and Cosmetic Surgery.” • • Lieu, N. “Remembering ‘the Nation’ through Pageantry” • Cummins and Lehmann, “Eating disorders and body image concerns in Asian American women: assessment and treatment from a multicultural and feminist perspective”
Week 10 – Nov. 14	Reproductive Politics in Asia and Asian America	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kim, E. Intro, <i>Adopted Territory: Transnational Korean Adoptees and the Politics of Belonging</i> • Fujiwara, L. Intro, <i>Mothers Without Citizenship</i>
Week 11 - Nov. 21	Asian American Women and Racialized Mothering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kang, M. <i>Mother Country: Asian American Women, Tiger Mothers and Racialized Mothering</i> (work in progress)
Week 12 – Nov. 28	Thanksgiving – No Class	
Week 13 – Dec. 5	Asian American Feminist Pedagogies Final Papers due Fri Dec 6 by 3pm – hard copies in my office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lee, R. “Notes from the (non)Field: Theorizing and Teaching ‘Women of Color’” • Kim, N. “The General Survey Course on Asian American Women: Transformative Education and Asian American Feminist Pedagogy”