

## ***WOMENSST 392 Spring 2016 - Asian American Feminisms***

Meeting Time and Place:	Tues 2:30-5pm Bartlett 312
Instructor:	Miliann Kang
Office:	Bartlett 73 (basement in wing near Goodell)
Office Hours:	Tues 12-1pm & by appointment
Email:	mkang@wost.umass.edu
TA:	Martha Balaguera, mbalague@polsci.umass.edu

### **Course Description**

How have the figures of the tiger mother, the Asian nerd, the rice king /queen, the trafficked woman, the geisha, the war bride, the Chinese bachelor, the hermaphrodite, and the orphan emerged to represent Asian Americans, and how have Asian American feminists responded to these problematic tropes? 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 scholarship 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 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 WGSS undergraduate majors and minors. It also counts toward both the UMASS Asian & Asian American Studies Certificate and the Five College API 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, in-class exercises): 25%
- Reflection Paper and Presentations on Readings (you sign up for which week to respond Post to Moodle by 5p On Mon the day before class) 20%
- Event Paper (attend approved event, analyze using course readings, discuss in class due one week after event) 15%
- Prospectus and Annotated Bibliography for Final Project (Due March 29 on Moodle): 10%
- Final Portfolio: Analytical Paper OR Research Proposal and Class Presentation 25%
- AND Final Course Reflection (Due May 3): 5%

***Attendance, Class Participation and Moodle Posts*** **20%**

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 noon Tues and you should save and turn in a hard copy of these posts in a single word document at the end of the semester). Because we only meet once a week, each class session is important and any unexcused absences will result in your grade being marked down. Three unexcused absences will result in an “F” in the course. For an excused absence you must: 1) provide documentation; 2) submit a 2-3 page additional reflection paper based on the readings and/or supplemental films/sources assigned for that week, due before class if you know in advance you will miss, or if not, due by the next class; and 3) complete any in-class 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 advance.

***Reflection Paper and Class Presentations*** **20%**

3-4 double-spaced pages posted by 5p Mon, bring hard copy to class. You will pick a week to write a reflection paper on the readings. Essays should focus less on summary and more on analysis and be succinct, and well-organized. Each paper should: 1) describe 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) identify at least one argument or concept that you agree with/find compelling and at least one that you disagree with/find unconvincing; and 3) pose questions for further reflection and discussion. If you post a reflection paper after the deadline of Mon 5p, it will make it difficult for students to read and comment on before class, and you will be substantially marked down. 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.

### ***Event Paper***

**15%**

You will choose and attend an outside event related to the course material and write a short paper analyzing it by applying at least two assigned readings. On our Moodle site, events that are especially relevant to this class will be included in the calendar and the "Recommended Events for Events Paper Forum." You are free to post any relevant events or opportunities on the public forum after approving them with the professor.

### ***Prospectus for Final Project:***

**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 2) Research Proposal***

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.

**AND 2) Final Course Reflection** Whichever option you pick, you will also write a final course reflection (3-5 double spaced pages) discussing at least three key learning moments in the course where the material or discussion most spoke to you, how they changed your thinking and how you plan to apply these insights.

### **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 our TA Martha Balaguera 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](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: We are happy to work with you but 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. Please purchase 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 &amp; Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Assignment</i>
Week 1 1/19	Course Introduction:	Course Overview, Self-Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommended: Bow, L. “Asian American Feminisms”</li> </ul>
Week 2 1/26	Asian American Feminist Frameworks and Pedagogies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee, R. “Notes from the (non)Field: Theorizing and Teaching ‘Women of Color’”</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parrenas, R and Winnie Tam. “The Derivative Status of Asian American Women” in <i>Force of Domesticity</i></li> <li>• Yamada, M. “Invisibility is an Unnatural Disaster”</li> <li>• Recommended: Kim, N. “The General Survey Course on Asian American Women: Transformative Education and Asian American Feminist Pedagogy”</li> </ul>
Week 3 2/2	Gendering and Sexualizing Asian American Immigration Histories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lowe, L. “Work, Immigration, Gender”</li> <li>• Shah, S. “Slaying the Dragon Lady: Toward an Asian American Feminism”</li> <li>• Wu, J. “Was Mom Chung ‘A Sister Lesbian’? Asian American Gender Experimentation and Interracial Homoeroticism”</li> <li>• Recommended: Reddy, C. “Asian Diasporas, Neoliberalism and Family”</li> </ul>
Week 4 2/9	Legacies of Wars, Colonialism and Imperialism in Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imada, A. Intro, <i>Aloha America</i></li> <li>• Cho, G. Chap 1, <i>Haunting the Korean Diaspora</i></li> <li>• Mohanty, C. “Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses”</li> <li>• Kingston, M. <i>The Woman Warrior</i> excerpts</li> </ul>
Week 5 2/16	NO CLASS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tues is a Monday schedule at UMass</li> </ul>
Week 6 2/23	Orientalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Said, E. excerpts, <i>Orientalism</i></li> <li>• Uno, K. “Unlearning Orientalism: Locating Asian and Asian American Women in Family History”</li> <li>• “The legacies of Orientalism and the exoticizing of women” <a href="http://hampshirefeministcollective.co.uk/2013/08/03/the-legacies-of-orientalism-and-the-exoticizing-of-women/">http://hampshirefeministcollective.co.uk/2013/08/03/the-legacies-of-orientalism-and-the-exoticizing-of-women/</a></li> <li>• Recommended: Maira, S. “Indo-chic: late capitalist orientalism and imperial culture”</li> </ul>
Week 7 3/1	Asian American Racialized Femininities and Masculinities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pyke and Johnson, “Asian American Women and Racialized Femininities”</li> <li>• Cho, S. “Asian Pacific American Women and Racialized Sexual Harassment”</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eng, D. <i>Racial Castration: Managing Masculinity in Asian America</i>, Intro and Epilogue</li> </ul>
Week 8 3/8	Asian American Literary Subjectivities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ninh, E. <i>Ingratitude: The Debt-Bound Daughter in Asian American Literature</i></li> </ul>
3/15	NO CLASS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spring Break</li> </ul>
Week 9 3/22	Reproductive Politics in Asia and Asian America	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kim, E. Intro, <i>Adopted Territory: Transnational Korean Adoptees and the Politics of Belonging</i></li> <li>• Fujiwara, L. Intro, <i>Mothers Without Citizenship</i></li> <li>• Kang, M. <i>Mother Country: Asian American Women, Tiger Mothers and Racialized Mothering</i></li> </ul>
Week 10 3/29	Transnational Asian and Asian American Feminisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ong, A. <i>Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality</i> Intro and Chap 8</li> <li>• Manalansan, M. <i>Global Divas</i> excerpts</li> </ul>
Week 11 4/5	Asian American Body Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kaw, E. “Medicalization of Racial Features: Asian American Women and Cosmetic Surgery.”</li> <li>• Lieu, N. “Remembering ‘the Nation’ through Pageantry”</li> <li>• Cummins and Lehmann, “Eating disorders and body image concerns in Asian American women: assessment and treatment from a multicultural and feminist perspective”</li> </ul>
Week 10 4/12	Organizing Asian Americans Feminist Movements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noh, E. “Problematics of Transnational Feminism for Asian American Women”</li> <li>• National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum (pick one fact sheet/policy brief) <a href="https://napawf.org/resources/issue-briefs-factsheets/">https://napawf.org/resources/issue-briefs-factsheets/</a></li> </ul>
Week 11 4/19		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Presentations</li> </ul>
Week 12 4/26	Final class meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Presentations</li> </ul>
May 3	Final Papers due on Moodle	