

Honors 391AH-35 / Fall 2022

# ASIAN AMERICANS IN MEDIA AND POPULAR CULTURE

## Course Information

**Professor** <PROF\_FULL\_NAME>, Department of  
**Office Location** Sociology Thompson 828  
**Office Hours** Generally before and after class, and by appointment  
<PROF\_EMAIL>- <PHONE>  
**Email & Number**

## Summary Description

This course introduces students to the history, content, and implications of how Asian Americans have been portrayed and represented in mainstream U.S. media and popular culture. The course will also introduce students to developing and applying their 'sociological imagination' -- a combination of theory, concepts, methods, and results of systematic and critical inquiry -- to explore specific topics such as the power of the media, the implications of the model minority image, anti-Asian suspicions, Orientalism, and contemporary social media. This course will also broaden students' knowledge, sharpen critical thinking, reasoning, and analytical skills, incorporate both objectivity and personal experiences, work collaboratively in small-groups, and to communicate effectively orally and in writing. Structured as a seminar, the emphasis will be on class discussion and student participation, rather than lecturing.

## Readings and Grading Criteria

### Grading Scale

- Attendance & Participation 25 pts.
- Weekly Online Writing & Reflections 35 pts.
- Final Project & Presentation 40 pts.

Total: 100 pts.

100 - 93 pts.: A

81 - 78: B-

65 - 63: D+

92 - 90: A-  
89 - 86: B+  
85 - 82: B

77 - 74: C+  
73 - 70: C  
69 - 66: C-

62 - 59: D  
< 59: F

## Required Textbook

- Davé, Shilpa, Leilani Nishime, and Tasha G. Oren (Eds.). 2016. **Global Asian American Popular Cultures**. ISBN: 147981573X or 9781479815739. Free e-book available at <https://www-jstor-org.5colauthen.library.umass.edu/stable/j.ctt18040jc>



## Attendance (10 points possible)

While attendance is crucial to participation in a Faculty First Year Seminar and therefore a significant factor in calculating your final grade in this course, extenuating circumstances may require you to miss a class meeting. Whether an absence is “excused” or counted in calculating participation grades is largely at the discretion of the instructor. Any student absent -- whether the absence is “excused” or not -- should contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss assignments missed, class discussion, etc.

Student athletes, members of the band, and on occasion, students who are members of other groups will be allowed to miss class for games and other special events and make up work will be assigned. See the University Registrar website for university policies on class absence and religious observance. ([www.umass.edu/registrar/students/policies-and-practices](http://www.umass.edu/registrar/students/policies-and-practices)). Starting Sept. 16 (after the last day to drop

without a ‘W’), five points will be deducted for every unexcused absence during the semester.

## Classroom Engagement & Participation (15 points possible)

In this course, some of the best learning that you’ll get will not be from me -- rather, it will come from listening to and talking with your classmates. To facilitate class engagement and discussions, you need to come to class on time, stay awake in class, pay attention to the material presented, turn off your cell phone or put them into silent mode, keep up with the readings, and come to class prepared with comments and questions. At the end of the course, students who have been consistently engaged and participated in class discussions will earn 15 points, those who were moderately engaged and occasionally participated will earn 7 points, and those who were rarely engaged/participated will not earn any points.

## Weekly Online Writing and Reflections (35 points possible)

During the course, you should write and submit through the Moodle course site a total of **seven** short essays

(about 250 words long) in which you will:

- a) Discuss how the material (classroom lecture and discussion and textbook articles) from the previous topic affects the Asian American community and U.S. society in general
- b) Find and incorporate one internet article (can be from news sites, blogs, etc.) or podcast episode that relates to the topic at hand into your discussion
- c) Reflect on how the material from the topic relates to your own life and personal experiences.

These writings can be creative, analytical, or a combination of both. Each weekly submission is due by the beginning of next week's class. Each of the seven submissions will be worth 5 points and you can choose which seven topics you want to write about. You can submit more than 7 if you want, but only the 7 highest-scoring ones will count.

### **Final Project & Presentation (40 points possible)**

Finally, you will conduct a final project that will bring together the course material, your personal experiences, and your creative/analytical skills. Your project can be **analytical** in terms of researching an issue related to the course material through administering a survey and analyzing the response data, or engaging in ethnographic/qualitative research by making observations on some aspect of campus life, analyzing movies, TV shows, Internet sites, or other media, conducting in-depth interviews or focus groups around a particular issue, etc. Alternatively, your project can be more **creative and expressive**, such as creating a video, brief play or performance, art, photography, poetry and creative writing, creating a website, zine, graphic novel, podcast, etc. Your final project can also combine analytical and creative elements. You also have the option of doing a solo project or in a group of up to three other classmates. You will also present your project (around 10 minutes or so) to the class at the end of the course.

## **P o l i c i e s   &   E x p e c t a t i o n s**

### **In-Person Classroom Policies**

Students are required to follow all UMass COVID-related policies <<https://www.umass.edu/coronavirus/>>. Currently, wearing masks indoors is now optional, rather than required. However, in the event that one or more of your classmates has an official medical accommodation through Disability Services, you may be asked to wear a mask inside the classroom. In general, students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the university's "Guidelines for Classroom Civility and Respect"

<[https://www.umass.edu/dean\\_students/campus-policies/classroom](https://www.umass.edu/dean_students/campus-policies/classroom)>.

## **Taking Lecture Notes & PowerPoint Slides**

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My in-class lectures and PowerPoint lecture slides are my intellectual property and are **legally protected by federal copyright law**. You are authorized to take notes in class for your personal use, but are not authorized to make audio or video recordings of my lectures or to sell these notes via an outside vendor without my prior written permission. I do not provide copies of my lecture notes to anybody for any reason.

## **Electronic Devices**

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You are allowed to bring a **mobile phone** to class -- if you put it in silent mode and put it away in your backpack, purse, etc. and refrain from using it while class is in session. Any instance in which you are seen using a mobile phone during class (without prior permission from me) may result in up to 20 points being deducted from your total points in the course. I am happy to accommodate exceptions such as if you need your phone to help you translate, or if you need your phone to monitor an urgent situation (such as involving your family, etc.) -- just notify me in advance. You are also allowed to use a **laptop** in class to take notes (except during midterm exams), but if you are seen using your laptop for purposes that are not related to class (including but not limited to checking email or social media, surfing the internet, shopping, etc.), up to 20 points may be deducted from your total points in the course.

## **Completion of Assignments**

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Make-up exams and extensions for any assignment will only be given if there is written documentation of an appropriate excuse from an acceptable source. Please refer to the "Attendance" section above on what is considered an **excused absence**. A late penalty/score deduction of up to 20 points will be assessed for make-up midterm exams or later papers that are not considered excused.

## **Accommodation Statement**

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The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability on file with Disability Services (DS), you may be eligible for reasonable academic accommodations to help you succeed in this course. If you have a documented disability that requires an accommodation, please notify me within the first two weeks of the semester so that we may make appropriate arrangements.

## **Harassment and Assault Statement**

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Students are encouraged to learn more about UMass's Title IX policies related to sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, along with information and resources, including how to make a report or file a complaint, at <http://www.umass.edu/titleix/>. You should also be aware of UMass's Survivor's Bill of Rights

<<https://www.umass.edu/titleix/survivors-bill-of-rights>> and its Sexual & Relationship Violence Resource Guide  
<[http://www.umass.edu/titleix/sites/default/files/documents/sexual\\_violence\\_resource\\_guide-09-15.pdf](http://www.umass.edu/titleix/sites/default/files/documents/sexual_violence_resource_guide-09-15.pdf)>.

Students can also contact UMass's Title IX Coordinator directly at [TitleIXCoordinator@umass.edu](mailto:TitleIXCoordinator@umass.edu).

### **Academic Honesty Statement**

Since the integrity of the academic institutions of higher education requires honesty in scholarship and research, academic honesty is required of all students at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating dishonesty. Appropriate sanctions may be imposed on any student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty. Any person who has reason to believe that a student has committed academic dishonesty should bring such information to the attention of the appropriate course instructor as soon as possible. Since students are expected to be familiar with this policy and the commonly accepted standards of academic integrity, ignorance of such standards is not normally sufficient evidence of lack of intent ([http://www.umass.edu/dean\\_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty](http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty)).

### **What You Can Expect From Me**

Many professors claim to practice total objectivity in their research and teaching. Other professors, including me, think that it is virtually impossible to keep one's personal beliefs completely separate from one's research or teaching. I feel that you as the student deserve to know what kinds of political and social views I may have, which tend to be liberal in nature. However, I will present the course material as straightforwardly as possible. The goal of the course is not for me to convince you that my beliefs are 'correct' or for me to get you to agree with everything I say. Rather, my goal is to introduce you to tools and resources for you to make sense of the course material and to critically examine our society, the important social issues of today, and your personal experiences.

### **Statement About Diversity and the Course Material**

Respect for diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, national origin, immigration status, gender, sexuality, disability, age, and socioeconomic status is fundamental to building and maintaining an equitable and inclusive campus community. In addition, this course is founded on highlighting and centering the histories and experiences of minoritized groups within each of these categories.

This course will explore sensitive and controversial topics. At times, these materials, issues, and our discussions may make you uncomfortable. However, it is important that you allow the material to challenge you. This is the first step in venturing beyond the safe, comfortable, and isolated -- toward new understandings and new knowledge.

Inappropriate or derogatory language or behavior will not be tolerated. We all share in the responsibility of creating

an inclusive environment where critical but constructive discussion and analysis of these issues can take place in a comfortable and civilized manner.

Unfortunately, incidents of bias or discrimination do occur, whether intentional or unintentional. The university encourages anyone who experiences or observes unfair or hostile treatment on the basis of identity to speak out for justice and support and to share these experiences using the following resources, within the moment of the incident or after the incident has passed:

- Office of Equity and Inclusion: [umass.edu/diversity](http://umass.edu/diversity), 413-545-5703, or [diversity@umass.edu](mailto:diversity@umass.edu)
- OEI Reporting Options: <https://www.umass.edu/diversity/reporting-options>
- Report an Incident Online Form: <https://www.umass.edu/diversity/incident-report-form>

## Tentative Course Schedule

Topic	Meeting Days	Readings
1. Introduction to the Course	Sept. 9	Introduction
2. The Power of the Media and Minority Representations	Sept. 16	Articles 6 & 14
3. Late 1800s Anti-Chinese Movement	Sept. 23	Articles 2 & 11
4. Pearl Harbor and Japanese Americans	Sept. 30	Articles 8 & 12
5. The Model Minority Image	Oct. 7	Articles 9 & 15
6. Gender and Orientalism: Women	Oct. 14	Articles 4 & 20
7. Gender and Orientalism: Men	Oct. 21	Articles 1 & 3
8. Anime, Manga, K-Pop, and Cultural Globalization	Oct. 28	Articles 7 & 19
9. Recent Representations in TV & Movies	Nov. 4	Articles 10 & 16
10. Self-Portrayals and New/Social Media	Nov. 18	Articles 5 & 7
11. The New Yellow Peril	Nov. 22	Articles 13 & 18
Final Project Presentations	Dec. 2 and Dec. 9	