

Yonsei International Summer School 2024
IEE2042-01 Asian American Literature

Jim Lee (he/him)

Period 1 (9-10:40 am)

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Summer 2024

Classroom:

Office hours: By appointment

Course Description

Take a cursory glance at recent critical work on Asian American Studies, and you'll notice immediately how often the term "Asian America" appears, as if such a formation actually exists. Less a claim to take actual territory from the United States than a broad appeal to grant Asians a place at the American table of citizenship and national belonging, the literature of Asian Americans can be productively read alongside persistent yet often divergent, even contested, visions of Asian America. This course is designed to trace one such trajectory in the creation and recreation of Asian America through literature. Paying special attention to the political, economic, and social constraints during the time of their production and reception, we will examine how Asian American literary work both reflected and transformed the social protocols of their day, and in doing so helped to reimagine what it means to be "Asian," or "American," and everything else in between.

Grading Policies

Please keep in mind that while it is arithmetically possible to skip an assignment and pass the course, failure to complete any of the required work will result nonetheless in a failing grade. Grades are not negotiable.

Class participation:	20%
Blog postings and comments:	15%
Midterm examination:	25%
Final paper:	40%

Course Material

You can download the course material on LearnUs. Alternatively, I can email you the texts as PDF files.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance/Class participation. Attendance is mandatory. Yonsei University policy states that students missing more than 1/3 of the classes will automatically receive an F for the course, regardless of how you perform in other assignments. Absences will adversely affect your grade. Letting me know that you will miss class is very considerate of you, but is not a legitimate criterion for an excused absence. This course will consist of lectures and class discussions; your active and informed participation is crucial for the success of the course. You should come to class having read all the reading assignments and having thought of the major themes and important questions that the readings raise. Indeed, you are required to contribute to the class blog, in which you will comment on the assigned readings in advance of class. *No late assignments will be accepted and the midterm and final exams cannot be made up.*
2. Blog entries. *Once* a week, you must post a brief, 250-word blog entry that responds to one aspect of the week's readings. While these essays are not strictly formal, they should each contain in them a definitive position on an issue that you raise. (They should also be composed with appropriate

grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure.) You should not try to grapple with all of the readings, nor should your critical response attempt to take on a big topic. Rather, you should focus your analysis to a specific passage in the work. You may refer to personal experience to illuminate your consideration of the reading. These short blog entries will not be graded, but depending on the quality of your writing and thought, I may deem them satisfactory or unsatisfactory: if the latter, you will not be given credit for your entry. Be prepared to use these blog postings in class to generate discussion. In fact, you are also required to comment on at least one blog posted by one of your classmates. Blog entries must be posted by 11 p.m. every Tuesday evening; comments to blogs must be posted by 11 p.m. every Wednesday evening. The blog web address is <https://asianamericanliteratureyiss2024.wordpress.com/>.

3. Midterm exam: The mid-term will take place in class on **Wednesday, July 17th**. It will consist of a combination of multiple choice responses and short answers to questions.

4. Final: The final is an essay, and is due on **Tuesday, August 6th at 4 pm**. It must be typed, double-spaced, in a standard 12-point font, with one-inch margins all around. There is no set page limit, but the essay should be approximately 1500-2000 words in length (about five to seven full pages). I will not accept late submissions. Submit your essay as a Microsoft Word attachment or PDF file to my email address: jimleuciyiss@gmail.com.

5. Conferences: I want to be as accessible to you as possible. I encourage you to set up appointments with me at times most convenient for me and for you. Please feel free to e-mail me as often as you would like: I check my e-mail at least once, generally twice, a day.

6. Inclusive language and accessibility issues. I am committed to an inclusive classroom. My pronouns are he/his/him. If you would like, please let me and the class know what your pronouns are when we address you. In addition, I am committed to an accessible classroom. I would be happy to work with you and Yonsei's Disability services to make the class work for you; please let the YISS staff if you require an accommodation.

7. Miscellaneous concerns.

- Show up on time. Coming late to class is more disruptive than you think.
- Respect all in the class. Criticize your colleague's ideas, not her/his personal character.
- Please do not pack up your belongings before it is time to go.
- Please do not engage in extraneous side conversations.
- Electronic devices are to be used only for classroom purposes. If you are found to use them for other reasons, you will be marked as absent for the day.
- Please do not be boring. Boring students make boring classes, and I hate boring classes. I'll try my best to make the class interesting. You do the same.

A Special Note about Plagiarism

The Modern Language Association (MLA) defines plagiarism as “the act of using another person’s ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source.... to plagiarize is to give the impression you have written or thought something that you have in fact borrowed from someone else.”¹ (Please note the modeling here.) In others words, if you lift a sentence, phrase, or even an

¹ Joseph Garibaldi and Walter S. Achtert, eds. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (New York: MLA, 1988), 21.

idea for your own paper without acknowledging the source, you are plagiarizing. This rule applies to copying verbatim as well as paraphrasing. Plagiarism is considered a grave academic offense, a “sin” which results automatic notification to the YISS office, and could constitute failure of the course or even academic suspension/expulsion. If you have any questions, consult the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. Feel free also to speak to me.

Course Schedule (please note that the schedule is subject to change)

Week One

- Angel Island poems
- Bret Harte, “Plain Language from Truthful James”
- Edith Eaton (Sui Sin Far), “Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of a Eurasian”
- Edith Eaton (Sui Sin Far), “Mrs. Spring Fragrance”

Week Two

- Bulosan, *America Is In the Heart*

Week Three

- Okada, *No-No Boy*

Wednesday, July 17

Midterm Examination

Week Four

- U.S. News & World Report, “Success Story of One Minority Group in the US”
- Tanaka, “I hate my wife for her flat yellow face”
- Mirikitani, “Firepot”
- Lum, “Minority Poem”
- Inada, “Amache Gate”
- Lee, *Native Speaker*

Week Five

- Lahiri, *The Namesake*, pp. 1-96

Week Six

Monday, July 31

- Revoyr, *Southland*

Tuesday, August 6

Final paper due at 4 pm. Email as a Microsoft Word or pdf attachment to jimleeuciys@gmail.com.