

AAS 199 Discovery:
Asian American Youth
Course Syllabus

<u>Course time:</u>	T/Th 2-4:20pm	<u>Professor:</u>	Soo Ah Kwon
<u>Place:</u>	30 Wohlers Hall	<u>Email:</u>	sakwon@uiuc.edu
<u>Credit:</u>	3 hours	<u>Office phone:</u>	333-5781
<u>Semester:</u>	Spring 2009	<u>Office:</u>	233 Bevier Hall
<u>Office Hours:</u>	Tues 12:30-1:30 & by appointment		

Course Description:

Asian and Pacific Islander (API) youth make up one of the fastest growing populations in the United States. According to the 2000 census, approximately 90% of the API population are either foreign born or are second-generation with immigrant parents. A large portion of this population are the 1.5 and second-generation who have come of age in the 21st century in the post 1965 immigration era. These API youth represent an extremely heterogeneous population including Cambodian, Chinese, Hawaiian, Filipino, Japanese, Indian, Korean, Laotian, Mien, Samoan, Thai, Tongan, and mixed race youth. We will explore the ways that second-generation youth are actively shaping the U.S. landscape in terms of identity formation, youth culture, and education. These experiences will be examined within larger historical, economic, racial, social and political forces in the United States. We will also compare and situate the unique (and not so unique) experiences of API youth with young people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds.

In addition to an engagement of texts from different academic disciplines to provide us with theoretical perspectives of young people, this course will provide students with first hand research experience as part of *The Ethnography of the University Initiative (EUI)* by engaging students in the research process and meaningfully interrogate the U of I. EUI is a campus-wide project committed to engaging students in the research process and to meaningfully interrogate the U of I. It is also committed to the creation of an on-line database that allows students to draw on and contribute to other students' research. Students will conduct ethnographic (field research and/or archive based) project that takes up some aspect of Asian American youth at the U of I. In conducting field research you will need to observe IRB (Institutional Review Board) protocol that are designed to protect that rights of those who become the "human subjects" of your research.

A desired outcome of the course is that engagement with both theory and research practice of issues concerning youth, and Asian American youth in particular, will allow students to gain a fuller understanding of race, class, culture, diversity, and gender in U.S society. Moreover, in conducting research related to Asian American youth on campus such as student organizations, sororities or fraternities, student housing life, religious life, and cultural houses, the course will provide students with the opportunity to closely examine issues of student racial diversity at the University of Illinois. Also as part of the EUI project, students will critically examine an institution that is closest to their daily experience: their university. As such, students will investigate the role of the university in student life and different purposes and outcomes of college education.

Possible EUI research topics:

- Asian American student organizations (ethnic-specific, i.e. Chinese Students and Scholar Association, or pan-ethnic, i.e. Asian American Pacific Coalition)
- Asian American sororities and fraternities
- Student housing spaces
- U of I Asian American student “hang-outs” or social spaces, i.e. restaurants, bars, specific campus areas, cafeterias, etc.
- History of Asian American studies (or other ethnic studies programs) at U of I
- Asian American churches, temples, college-church groups, prayer groups, etc.
- Oral history project of Asian American studies faculty and staff
- Asian American Cultural Center
- Asian American students in relation to Asian American communities off-campus in Urbana-Champaign area
- Asian American studies students (undergraduate minors or graduate students)

ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES MINOR REQUIREMENTS

The Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences will certify that a student has completed the program for the Minor upon recommendation by the Director of the AAS. An advisor will approve a student's course program and monitor the student's progress in meeting course requirements. A student's plan of courses for the minor must be approved by AAS. A minimum grade point average of 2.75 is required for completion of courses taken in this program.

The minor requires 21 hours of courses selected from each of the following categories. No course may be used to satisfy more than one requirement. Only two courses at the 100-level may be counted toward the minor. (a) Asian American Studies 100 (Introduction to Asian American Studies) (3 hours) (b) One course in the Humanities (100- or 200-level) from the approved course list (see appendix). (3 hours) (c) One course in the Social Sciences (100- or 200-level) from the approved course list (see appendix). (3 hours) (d) Two courses at an Advanced Level (300 or 400-level) from the approved course list (see appendix). (6 hours) (e) Two courses from the following three groups. (6 hours) The two courses may not be selected from the same group.

- (1) One Additional AAS Course at the 200- 300- or 400-level from categories (b), (c) or (d) above.
- (2) One approved Comparative Course in Ethnic or Women's Studies from the approved course list (see appendix).
- (3) One approved 200- 300- or 400-level seminar (offered by a department on a one-time basis) Readings, Special Topics, or Internship (AAS 290) course. Total 21 hours

For more information please contact
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Class Requirements

Required Readings:

All required course readings are available on line through the library reserve system. **It is very important that you bring the appropriate readings to class so that we can refer to them during class time.**

Course requirements:

Students must complete all course requirements to pass the class.

Requirements	%	points
Attendance and participation	40%	400
In class assignments (5 worth 30 points each)	15%	150
Reading reflections (2 worth 50 points each)	10%	100
<i>EUI project</i> assignments (7 worth 50 points each)	35%	350
Total	100%	1000

Letter Grade Breakdown:

Points	Grade	Points	Grade
980-1000	A+	730-769	C
930-979	A	700-729	C-
900-929	A	670-699	D+
870-899	B+	630-669	D
830-869	B	600-629	D-
800-829	B	↓ 599	F
770-799	C+		

Attendance and participation:

Attendance is mandatory! Students are expected to attend class regularly, participate in class discussions and activities, keep up with course readings, and come to class prepared to discuss assigned readings. This also means being on time! Because this course is designed as a discussion seminar, your contribution is essential. Moreover because the course occurs over an intensive 8 week period, each class period is extremely critical. If you think you will have to miss a course you should reconsider taking this course!

Participation means speaking up in class, actively listening during class discussions, and partaking in class activities. If you tend to be an active participant in other courses, this should not be a problem for you; for those who tend to be shy or would rather choose to stay quiet in class, this class will challenge you in a good way (I hope). A good rule for active and passive participants and talkers is to be conscious of “stepping-up” or “stepping-down.” By this I mean, if you realize you have not said a word in class or have not been an active participant, you might want to “step-up”; and the opposite for those of you who know you talk too much, you might want to “step-down” and give space for others to participate.

In class assignments: There will be various in class assignments that will vary in activity. Please note that not all in class activities are indicated on the syllabus. **There are no make ups for missed in class assignments.**

Reading responses:

In order to facilitate class discussion there will be **two** reading responses due throughout the course. The purpose of these responses is for you to delve deeper into the required readings.

You may choose which weekly set of readings you would like to write a response for, but you must complete three before the end of the semester. You must draw on all the readings assigned (unless there is only one reading for that week), please come to class with a typed 1-2 page double spaced response (no shorter, no longer). Reading responses will be due on **Wednesday** of the week you choose to do them. Reading responses in which you introduce one of the following:

1. Something (argumentative and/or empirical—argumentative is the more powerful) that surprised or deeply interested you (i.e., something that challenges a prior understanding you had, something that you would have previously found hard to believe etc.) (Your entry should also indicate why you are surprised). **SURPRISE**
2. Something that confirms something you already knew (i.e., something that doesn't surprise you at all) (your entry should indicate why you are not surprised). **CONFIRM**
3. Something you would like to know more about (you might in conjunction suggest one more cited sources (i.e., from the bibliographies) that intrigue you). **CURIOUS**
4. A term/phrase/idea (perhaps a theoretical construct) that you find helpful/inspiring (Your entry should include your understanding of the selection). **HELP**
5. Something that you don't understand: this could be a term, an idea, an argument, a passage (feel free to list page and paragraph #) etc. (If you do not have something for this entry that is fine –i.e., do not force yourself to be confused!) **CONFUSE**
6. Something that you would personally like to research (or at least are curious about) at the U of I that draws on one of the readings. **RELATE**

Please use the bolded terms above to introduce each entry. We may use your responses in class so it is critical that you have these prepared before class.

EUI Research project assignments and due dates:

EUI project assignments are to be submitted on-line on moodle. They must be completed **before the start of class** on the date indicated. **You must complete all EUI assignments to pass the course.** You will be deducted 10 points for every 24 hours you are late in turning in an EUI assignment.

Due Mon 3/30

Assignment #1—A Plan and Question

Enter under "Plan"

Write a short entry in which you begin to sketch out a possible project, including a few (2-3) preliminary investigations that you might conduct to get ready to do such a project.

Enter under “Question”

Write a guiding research question for your research project.

Due Wed 4/8

Assignment #2—Data Observation

An observation

Enter under “Data (observation)”

Write a 1-page report about an observation that you conducted that is related to your research project.

Please note that at any point you are welcome to go back and add to an earlier entry; some of you might at this point want to extend or refine the question you asked. If you do revise entries, please do not erase previous entries but rather add a new entry under your old one with a new date.

Due Wed 4/15

Assignment #3—Interview

An Interview

Enter under “Data (Interview)”

Write a 1 page synopsis of an interview you conducted that is related to your research project. Please integrate quotes from your interview.

Due Wed 4/22

Assignment #4— Analysis

Enter under “Analysis”

In 1-2 pages please review your primary findings on the basis of your ethnographic exercises so far. Please link your findings with at least 3 of the readings from the course. How do your findings relate to (agree with, refute, extend, challenge) the findings/arguments of class reading selections. You may also feel free to link to readings that were not assigned.

Due Wed 4/29

Assignment #5—Research Proposal

Enter under “Research Proposal”

The research proposal is in many ways the culmination of your *EUI project*. Please write a 2-3 page proposal in which you propose a semester of field research on a topic related to Asian American youth at the U of I. You should have a (1) question and (2) research plan that draw on your (3) preliminary findings (i.e., from the semester’s observations/interviews). And you should link your question and proposed research to readings and previous EUI projects (at least 3 in total) from the semester. (Look over previous assignments where you made these links already). The Proposal should include a bibliography.

Due Wed 5/6

Assignment #6—Overview and Recommendations

(1) Overview

(1a) Enter under “About the Author”

Here you decide what you would like readers to know about you; this often allows you to think about what personal characteristics they think are relevant to their role as investigator.

(1b) Enter a “Title” for you project

(1c) Enter under “Keywords”

Here you decide on keywords that characterize your project. The words can be thematic, theoretical, and/or methodological.

(1d) Enter under “Abstract”

Here you describe your research question/s, method/s, and findings succinctly. No more than 100 words.

(2) Recommendations to the University and/or others

Enter under “Recommendations”

Do you have recommendations to make on the basis of your research? Think carefully about the implications of your findings for the U of I or elsewhere and state them.

Mon 5/4 and Wed 5/6

Assignment #7—Project presentation

Extra Credit

There are several optional films listed in the syllabus that are relevant to the course material. You are encouraged to watch these films and write a 1 page analysis of the film. The write-up **should not** be a summary of the movie, but an analysis of how it relates to themes and concepts covered in the course. You must refer to at least one of the course readings in your write up. *All extra credit assignments are worth 25 points with a maximum of 2 total assignments.*

Class Policies

Email: Please limit your emails to important and necessary matters. Many answers to your questions may be in the syllabus. Please consult your syllabus before emailing me regarding “quick questions.” I will not answer emails which inquires about information which can be found in the syllabus. Please also use AAS 199 as the subject heading in your email inquires.

Classroom Etiquette: Please be prompt to class and please do not leave early, or pack up before class is over. PLEASE DO NOT sleep, talk (unless asked to engage in a discussion), talk on your cell phone, text, etc during lecture or section. MAKE SURE TO SILENCE OR TURN

OFF ALL CELL PHONES, BEEPERS, ALARMS, or any other gadgets that may disrupt others during class time. If you must bring your lap top computer to take notes during the course, than please also refrain from checking email, surfing the web, doing other assignments or anything not related to the course. Please also silence all alert sounds such as beeps or whistles from your computer during class time.

Class Schedule

Introduction

Mon 3/16: Introduction to the course and to each other

Conducting research

Wed 3/18:

- Nathan, Rebekah. **Chapter 1.** *My Freshman Year: What a Professor Learned by Becoming a Student.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005. 1-18.
- Rebecca Nathan, **Afterword: Ethics and Ethnography,** *My Freshman Year: What a Professor Learned by Becoming a Student.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005. 158-168.
- Chapter 2 optional

In class: EUI moodle website and archives and review of human subjects procedures

Mon 3/23 and Wed 3/25: No Classes—Spring Break

Post 1965 Second generation

Mon 3/30:

- Lee and Zhou, “Coming of Age at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century: A Demographic Profile of Asian American Youth.” In Asian American Youth: Culture, Identity, and Ethnicity. New York: Routledge, 2004, 33-50

In class: Watch film *Kelly Loves Tony*

Due Mon 3/30 *Assignment #1*—A Plan

Wed 4/1:

- Emerson, Robert M., Rachel L. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes.* Chicago: Chicago University Press 1995. 1-16; 100-107.

In Class: Observation exercise

Model minority

Mon 4/6:

- US News and Report, (1966) Success Story of One Minority Group in U.S. 26 December
- Newsweek (1982) Asian-Americans: A “Model Minority”, 6 December
- David Brand (1987) “The New Whiz Kids.” *Time.* August 31.
- Pintado-Vertner, Ryan, and Jeff Chang. "The War on Youth." *ColorLines* 2, no. 4 (2000).
- Melissa Hung (2002), “The Lost Generation” *East Bay Express*, June 12.

In class: watch film *AKA Don Bonus*

Race and Identity

Wed 4/8:

- Kibria, Nazli. "College an Notions Of "Asian American": Second Generation Chinese and Korean American Negotiate Race and Identity." amerasia journal 25.1 (1999): 29-51.

In class: Interview

Due Wed 4/8 *Assignment #2*—Data Observation

Mon 4/13:

- Rebecca Kim. "Made in the USA: Second-generation Korean American Campus Evangelicals." Asian American Youth. Edited by Jennifer Lee and Min Zhou. New York: Routledge, 2004, 235-250.

In class: watch film *Better Luck Tomorrow*

Wed 4/15:

- Maira, Sunaina, Chapter 3, "Nostalgia" Desis in the House. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002. READ ONLY PAGES 83-106

Due Wed 4/15 *Research Assignment #3*—Interview

Mon 4/20:

- Maira, Sunaina, Chapter 3, "Nostalgia". READ REST OF PAGES 107-143.

In class: watch film *Debut*

Wed 4/22: **NO CLASS**

Due 4/22 *Research Assignment #4*— Analysis

Youth Culture

Mon 4/27:

Watch *Fast and Furious Tokyo Drift*

Wed 4/29:

- Kwon, Soo Ah (2004) "Autoexoticizing: Asian American Youth and the Import Car Scene" from *Journal of Asian American Studies*, 7(1).

Due Wed 4/29 *Research Assignment #5*—Research Proposal

Mon 5/4 and Wed 5/6:

Final research project presentations in class

Due Wed 5/6 *Research Assignment #6*—Overview and Recommendations

Due Mon 5/4 or 5/6 *Research Assignment #7*—Final project presentations