AAS 346 (also HDFS 341):  
Asian American Youth  
Course Syllabus

Course time: M/W 11:30-12:50  
Professor: Soo Ah Kwon  
Place: 241 Everitt Lab  
Email: sakwon@uiuc.edu  
Credit: 3 hours  
Office phone: 333-5781  
Semester: Fall 2007  
Office: 233 Bevier Hall  
Office Hours: Tues 10:00-11:00

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 cultural production, youth culture,  
education, politics and activism, and community formations. These experiences will be examined  
within larger historical, economic, racial, social and political forces in the United States.  
This course seeks to understand the cultural production and discursive and material  
positioning of “youth” in society. Rather than approach the study of youth through a developmental  
psychological model of adolescence, this course will examine youth as a historically and culturally  
specific social formation. We will engage with texts that draw from different academic disciplines to  
provide us with theoretical, historical, and ethnographic perspectives of young people. 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.

This course is part of The Ethnography of the University Initiative (EUI) www.eotu.uiuc.edu. EUI is a  
campus-wide project. EUI is 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. We will be using Moodle as an  
on-line environment in which you can document (input/upload) your research process. Throughout  
the semester your work will be visible by the entire class; at the end of the semester you will have the  
option to archive your EUI project (either with your name or with a pseudonym) or to have your EUI  
project not archived.

You will conduct ethnographic (field research and/or archive based) project that takes up  
some aspect of Asian American youth at the U of I. The culmination of your work will not be a long  
research report but instead a proposal in which you chart out a course of research based upon the  
preliminary work/exercises that you will have done for class. 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; it is critical that we uphold these as well  
as your own ethical standards as we conduct research on campus. Tim McDonough, EUI
Coordinator, will introduce you to these protocols in class; Tim is also available for assistance with moodle (tmcdonou@uiuc.edu). More information will be given in the course of the class.

Required Readings:
- All required course readings are available in a course reader available for purchase at Notes-n-Quotes at 502 E. John Street

It is very important that you bring the appropriate readings to class so that we can refer to them during class time.

Course requirements and grading:
Students must complete all course requirements to pass the class.
- Bi-weekly attendance and participation
- 7 reading reflections (1-2 pages each)
- EUI research project assignments entered in moodle
  - (This also includes an oral or poster presentation and attendance at the EUI student conference scheduled for Thursday, November 29, 2007)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and participation</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 reading reflections (1-2 pages each)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>250</td>
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<tr>
<td>EUI project assignments</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>400</td>
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<td>(10 assignments worth 40 point each)</td>
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<tr>
<td>EUI project “comment group” postings (at least 4 times)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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Attendance and participation:
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. 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.

Reading responses:
In order to facilitate class discussion there will be **seven** reading responses due throughout the semester. The purpose of these responses is for you to develop your thoughts about the text we will be engaged with for each particular week.

You may choose which weekly set of readings you would like to write a response for, but you must complete seven before the end of the semester. [IMPORTANT NOTE: Do not do reading
responses for the readings marked “Research Reading”]. Your reading responses will always be due on a TUESDAY of the week incorporating the readings assigned for that day. You must draw on all the readings assigned. Please come to class with a typed 1-2 page response (no longer) 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 comment group**
Your **EUI project assignments** are indicated below with detailed instructions for each **EUI project assignment**. Due dates for EUI project assignments are also indicated in the syllabus. Please note that the **EUI project** is a cumulative project; there is no way to “cram” the **EUI project** and there are frequent assignments “due”. Please make sure to complete your **EUI project assignments** on time.

**EUI project assignments are due before class on the specified Thursday** due date. Throughout the semester I will be asking you to periodically speak from your **EUI project** in class (i.e., share with the class where you are at).

### THURS, 9/13

**Assignment #1—EUI Links**

Exploring EUI archives for studies of Asian Americans at U of I

*Enter under “EUI Links”; Label your entry as ‘Exploring EUI archives’ and date it.*

Please browse the EUI archives at [http://www.ideals.uiuc.edu/handle/2142/755](http://www.ideals.uiuc.edu/handle/2142/755) to view archive materials that deal directly or indirectly with Asian Americans at the U of I. This can be of any archive materials (including inquiry pages, study write-ups, video presentations, maps, audio clips, etc. After choosing your material, write a short analysis of it (2-3 paragraphs). In the analysis you should pay attention to how what you choose reveals about the broader research project it was part including: (1) the research questions; (2) methods used; (3) findings and implications for U of I; (4) what intrigues/interests you about this
study/archive material. For some of you this assignment will inaugurate your ethnographic project (for others of you this will NOT be the case and that is no problem).

THURS 9/20
**Assignment #2—An Early Question**
*Enter under “Question”; Label your entry as “Early Question” and date it.*

In a short paragraph raise a question that you think you might in some way be able to explore locally. What would such an exploration teach us about Asian American youth and about the U of I? Feel free to draw here from your reading responses if you have done any.

THURS 9/27
**Assignment #3—Data Observation and Refine Question**

(1) An observation
*Enter under “Data (observation)”*

Write a 1-page report about an observation that you conducted that is in some way related (it can be loosely related) to the question you began to explore in your #2 “Early question” entry. 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 in #2 “Early question.”

(2) Refine question.
*Enter under “Question” (beneath your “Early Question) and date it.*

Please look over your question. Has your question changed/been refined? Indicate no if it has not.

THURS 10/11
**Assignment #4—An Initial Plan**
*Enter under “Plan”; Label your entry as “Initial Plan” and date it.*

Write a short entry in which you begin to sketch out a possible project, including a few (2-3) preliminary investigations (i.e., during the course of this semester) that you might conduct to get ready to do such a project.

THURS 10/25
**Assignment #5—Interview and Revisit Plan**

(1) An Interview
*Enter under “Data (Interview)”*

Write a 1-2 page synopsis of an interview you conducted that is in some way related to the question you began to explore in your #2 Assignment entry. Please integrate quotes from your interview.

(2) Revisit Plan
*Enter under “Plan” underneath previous entry “initial plan” and date it.*

Please look over your plan and add a new entry under plan. Has your plan changed at all by now?
THURS 11/1
Assignment #6—Analysis
Enter under “Analysis”

In 1-2 pages please review your primary findings on the basis of your ethnographic/documentary/archival exercises so far. Please link your findings with at least 4 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 (likely you will have completed this assignment already from the “relate” entries of your reading responses).

THURS 11/8
Assignment #7—EUI Links
Enter under “EUI links” underneath previous entry; Label as “EUI Links” and date it.

Please link your findings with at least 2 or more previous EUI projects that you find at IDEALS archives. (You should have been searching the archive throughout the semester to incorporate past student research into your own research development by now). How do your findings relate to (agree with, refute, extend, challenge) the findings/arguments of previous projects?

THURS 11/15
Assignment #8—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 4 in total) from the semester. (Look over previous assignments where you made these links already). The Proposal should include a bibliography.

THURS 11/29
Assignment #9—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 your 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.

THURS 12/6
Assignment #10—Reflect
Enter under “Reflect”

This is a space for you to record your reflections on the process/experience of research What did you think about doing this EUI project? Was this a new experience for you? What did you like/dislike? How could the course have better prepared/guided you in this project, etc. Please also reflect on the EUI research process such as recording the research process (moodle), working in an on-line environment, conducting interviews and observations, searching archives, compliance with IRB, the possibility of archiving etc. Any/all comments welcome.

DUE ONGOING
EUI project comment group postings
This assignment should be done periodically (at least 4 times throughout the semester) throughout the semester.

I will also ask you to form “comment groups” of 3 – these are not research groups; rather the 3 of you will be responsible for periodically looking at and commenting on one another’s EUI projects (at least 4 times over the course of the semester). Groups to be assigned.

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)
Films and 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 of the course. You must refer to at least one of the course readings in your write up.

Other various extra credit opportunities will be available throughout the semester. I will announce and forward talks and events that you may attend on and off campus that are relevant to the themes and content of the course. After attending such events you are required to do a 1 page write up of the event. It should include a short summary of the content of the event, i.e. what was the talk about, or main points discussed in the panel, etc. It should also include YOUR analysis or critique of the material presented. All extra credit assignments are worth 10 points.

Minor and diversity requirements
This course fulfills one of the requirements for a minor in Asian American Studies as well as the diversity requirement in Human Development and Family Studies. The following information describes requirements for a minor in Asian American Studies.

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
Viveka Kudaligama, Assistant Director of Asian American Studies
1208 W Nevada St, MC-142
217 265 4086
kudaliga@uiuc.edu
CLASS SCHEDULE:

Introduction: Who are the second-generation?

Introduction

Thurs 8/23: Introduction to the course and to each other

Immigration and the new second generation

Tues 8/28

Thurs 8/30:

Tues 9/4:
• Watch film Kelly Loves Tony in class

Thurs 9/6:
• Class will meet in at computer lab (location TBA) with EUI program coordinator, Tim McDonough for to go over EUI moodle website and archives. Human subjects procedures will also be reviewed.

Social construction of adolescence and representations of youth

Tues 9/11:

Contemporary representations of youth

Thurs 9/13:

EUI project Assignment #1 Due

Tues 9/18: Historical Asian American youth practices

Thurs 9/20:

**EUI project Assignment #2 Due**

**Identity Formations**

Tues 9/25:
• Park, Kyeyoung. ""I Really Do Feel I'm 1.5!": The Construction of Self And Community by Young Korean Americans." *amerasia journal* 25.1 (1999): 139-63.

Thurs 9/27:

**EUI project Assignment #3 Due**

Watch Film *Harold and Kumar* (optional outside of class)

Tues 10/2:

Thurs 10/4:

Tues 10/9: 
• Stacey Lee, Chapter 2 “‘Traditional’ and ‘Americanized’”, Up Against Whiteness, New York: Teachers College Press, 2005, 50-86.


Watch film in class: AKA Don Bonus

**Youth Culture**

Thurs 10/11:

• Sarah Thornton, “General Introduction” from The Subcultures Reader.


Watch in class: Selected Youth Media Clips

**EUI project Assignment #4 Due**

Asian American youth culture:

Tues 10/16:


Thurs 10/18:


Film night to watch Fast and Furious: Tokyo Drift

Tues 10/23:


Thurs 10/25:

EUI project Assignment #5 Due

Education

Tues 10/30:

Thurs 11/1:

EUI project Assignment #6 Due

Watch Film: Better Luck Tomorrow [optional outside of class]

Juvenile (In)justice

Tues 11/6:

Thurs 11/8:
• Butterfield, Fox (2000) Racial bias cited throughout juvenile justice system, San Francisco Chronicle, April 26

Watch Film in Class: Books Not Bars

EUI project Assignment #7 Due

Political Activism
Asian American Activism

Tues 11/13:

Thurs 11/15:

Watch Film in class: *On Strike! Ethnic Studies 1969-1999*

**EUI project Assignment #8 Due**

Tues 11/20 and Thurs 11/22: **Thanksgiving Holiday**

Tues 11/27:
- Toxic Avengers (to be handed out in class).

Thurs 11/29: No class session—Attend EUI Student Conference 2:30-8:30 pm at 126 GSLIS

**EUI project Assignment #9 Due**

Tues 12/4 and Thurs 12/6: Project presentations
- Each student will present his/her *EUI project* this week on either Tues or Thurs.

Thurs 12/6: **EUI project Assignment #10 Due**