AAST 498G / WMST 498I
Advanced Topics in Asian American Studies:
Asian American Women and Gender (Fall 2012)
Mondays & Wednesdays 12:30-1:45pm, Susquehanna Hall (SQH) 1105
3 credits / Maximum Seats: 25 / No pre- or co-requisites

Instructor: Shuji Otsuka
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Course website: http://elms.umd.edu
AAST website: http://aast.umd.edu

Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays, 2-3pm & gladly by appointment in person or virtually through Wimba

Home Phone (before 9pm): TBA in class

Course Description
This discussion seminar examines the intersection of gender, sexuality, and race in the lives of Asian American men and women from the late nineteenth century to the present. Topics surveyed include migration and diaspora, empire and nationalism, family and community, Asian American masculinity and feminism, gay and lesbian experiences, and environmental racism. Weekly discussions, online lectures, and biweekly essay assignments will emphasize how encounters between diverse racial groups, in both domestic and international settings, structured gender relations as well as the role of the federal government and the media in defining those relations. Course readings will draw on a variety of disciplines with a special attention to how race and sexual orientation become interwoven aspects of Asian American experience and identity formation. Students are expected to complete all reading assignments, typically 150-200 pages per week, before class and write and submit four short essays for cumulative evaluation. Weekly short quizzes will ensure active student participation and timely completion of the readings.

Learning Objectives
Throughout the course, students will demonstrate increasing mastery of critical reading, public speaking, and writing skills: in class discussions, presentations, and writing assignments, students will locate the competing voices of Asians and Asian Americans in historical and cultural context, draw appropriate inferences and deductions from the evidence of the course texts, and raise relevant questions for further inquiry through student-driven research at the McKeldin Library.

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Grading
A student’s course grade will consist of four components:
40%  Cumulative total for essay #1 through #4 (10% each)
20%  Weekly quizzes
20%  Informed participation, including student critiquers and student lead class
     sessions during weeks Fourteen and Fifteen
20%  Final Exam

Grading Scale
The following grade ranges and descriptions show the minimum requirements for
the corresponding letter grades earned. There are no curves or preset grade
distributions in this course. The scale is adapted from UMCP’s established grading
system found in the Faculty Handbook at

A+/A/A-  Student grasps all major historical concepts, themes, and facts
         covered in the course. She or he demonstrates a keen analytical insight into all of
         the course readings as shown though the student’s consistently well-written and
         well-argued essays. In class discussion, the student raises relevant questions and
         engages classmates in intellectual debates by referring to specific page numbers and
         quotes from the assigned texts.

B+/B/B-  Student makes a genuine effort but shows less consistency, analysis,
         and depth than an A/A- student, especially in his or her essays and class
         participation levels. She or he makes some effort to improve on subsequent essays
         by submitting rough drafts.

C+/C/C-  Student meets the minimum academic standards for this course by
         completing all assignments but not participating in class discussions and failing to
         rectify a poor essay grade by subsequently working with me during my extra-help
         hours and the Writing Center.

D+/D/D-  Student does not meet minimum course requirements and fails to
         complete essay assignments in a timely manner. When in attendance, he or she
         shows very little interest in critical reading and oral participation.

F       Student fails to complete a majority of the course assignments.

XF      Student has engaged in academic dishonesty.

Required Texts
The following required books are available for purchase at the UMCP Bookstore. In
addition, you are welcome to purchase electronic versions if they are available as
well as from a different vendor using the ISBN of the books listed below:


**Recommended Background Readings in Asian American History**

These books are not required for this course but those of you who wish to extend your knowledge of Asian American History covered in class may wish to consult the following through the library or other means:


**Course Requirements**

1) **Weekly Quizzes**

   Based on that day’s readings, an open book quiz will be given each week at the start of either Monday or Wednesday class sessions. The format of these weekly fifteen-minute quizzes is three short answers: on the quiz sheet, you will be asked to identify and explain each of the author’s main argument and give an assessment of one or two examples that the authors use as evidence to support their claims. Plan to spend no more than five minutes answering each of the three questions and you may use the back page if needed. Please be sure to bring to class each week, the assigned readings along with your detailed reading notes so that you can reference answers to quiz questions within the allotted time period. No quizzes will be accepted after the time limit has been called. Using smart phones, emails, chats, each other, or the internet are strictly prohibited; if a student is caught engaging with these materials during the quiz, he or she will receive an automatic zero on the quiz and will be promptly reported to the UMD Student Honor Council (SHC). No bathroom breaks will be allowed during the quiz.
2) Informed Participation and Classroom Etiquette
As a student-led discussion seminar, your regular participation is a core requirement and vital to the success of this course. Based on the truism that writing is thinking, your job is to take ample reading notes and bring with you a set of your own key questions about each article and book. You may refer to your written notes during our discussions when we will analyze the readings in detail. The purpose of oral participation is to show me that you have read all of the assigned texts by asking questions about them and thinking critically out loud. As such, all students must complete the assigned reading before class. I may collect your reading notes -- without prior warnings -- for assessment. Sparring with the assigned texts, your professor, and especially with other students is highly encouraged and will quickly earn participation points. “Sparring” does not mean demeaning behavior such as name-calling, raising voices, and ignoring the person whose viewpoints differ from yours. Rather, it means listening (or reading) attentively to her or his thesis and paying particular attention to how your opponent marshals and interprets the evidence of the course readings. Listening carefully and respectfully will allow you to see the holes in anyone’s argument and perhaps even realize a different way to interpret the evidence. In short, know your opponent’s reasoning and evidence before mounting your alternative argument and interpretation. Disrespectful behavior such as sleeping, eating, chatting, reading, texting, knitting, internet surfing will not be tolerated and those found engaging in such behavior will be asked to leave the classroom. Turn off all cell phones, pagers, computers, and other multimedia devices before entering our classroom. If you must use a laptop, Ipad, or palm reader for note taking, do so by sitting in the front of class.

3) Weekly Student Critiquers
To help facilitate a student-centered learning environment, I have required one to two class members to serve as critiquers each week; every student must sign-up to be a critiquer for one week listed on the course schedule. Once the student has signed up for a specific week, she or he will be responsible for both the Tuesday and Thursday readings for that week. As critiquer, she or he will briefly summarize the main argument of the article or chapter and note possible objections, counter-arguments or counter-examples to what the author proposes and raise at least seven controversial issues or questions about the readings. In other words, refrain from stating blanket dismissals such as “this article was hard to read.”

4) Four-page Essay Requirements
I will be grading you not only on your knowledge of relevant facts but also your ability to think clearly, intelligently, and argumentatively about the course themes. To ensure equity and fairness, I have set-up the following essay requirements in descending order of importance:

a. **Topic:** Choose a specific essay topic and use it to formulate an original argument. You may choose to focus on the readings’ common themes, linkages, conflicts, distinctive critiques, levels of analysis, historical actors, historical contexts (social, political, cultural, and/or economic change),
clusters of issues, theoretical or conceptual approaches, etc., as you wish. We ask that you not simply repeat the contents of each author in the “he says, she says,” style. Your readings notes are good fodder for possible topics.

b. **Argument:** Develop an original argument and explicitly state it in your first paragraph using the phrase “I will argue...”. Your essay must make a logical and persuasive case for your position through the careful sifting and marshaling of primary and secondary evidence from the assigned readings. *Advancing an argument means you must take a position on a specific issue, develop analysis and use evidence to explain and justify your position.* In other words, a clear and focused argument is essential to a strong essay.

c. **Evidence:** Your essay must use all relevant and specific evidence from the course readings as indicated by the corresponding reading assignments on the essay due dates.

d. **Conclusion:** In your concluding paragraph, try to highlight the contributions or limits of the various works you use and provide a constructive framework for thinking about the readings as a whole. Avoid repeating your argument in the conclusion. Instead, try thinking about further avenues for research that the author does not pursue and ask why he or she does not do so.

e. **Title:** Always have a precise title that conveys your argument and main themes.

f. **Citation:** Your essay must include proper citation and use it consistently. For more details on different citation systems, please check the library website at [http://www.lib.umd.edu/ETC/Reference.html#style](http://www.lib.umd.edu/ETC/Reference.html#style) and click on the link “Style Manuals (APA, MLA, etc)”. For details on how to generate and manage a bibliography electronically, please follow this link: [http://www.lib.umd.edu/PUBSERV/citations/](http://www.lib.umd.edu/PUBSERV/citations/).

g. **Style:** Your essays must be double-spaced, paginated, spell-checked, proof-read, edited, stapled at the top left corner (not folded or paper clipped), and written in clear prose and legible script (double spaced, 12-point font) while staying within the **four-page limit** -- learn to pack a punch in a few words!

h. **Submission:** Turn in one electronic copy with your UMCP I.D. number at the top of the first page. Since I will be grading your essays anonymously, please do not write your name on them.

i. **Deadlines:** Essays are due **no later than noon on the due dates** listed below and on the schedule. Unless the student has an instructor approved absence or extension, late papers, including ones submitted at the middle or end of class, will not be accepted. Faxed or printed essays will also not be accepted. Only in the case of a campus emergency or inclement weather, the
essay due dates for everyone will move to the start of the next scheduled lecture meeting.

Essays that receive A+/A/A- will: state a clear and focused argument; define their terms; develop the argument with relevant evidence from the assigned texts; draw on the full range of applicable course materials (books, lectures, & handouts); note possible objections, counter-arguments or counter-examples and explain why they fail to rebut your argument; and draw well-reasoned conclusions. Essays that do not adhere to the above requirements will receive lower grades with C’s and D’s reserved for multiple violations. You are highly encouraged to show us rough drafts up to three days prior to the submission deadlines listed below:

Essays that receive A+/A/A- will: state a clear and focused argument; define their terms; develop the argument with relevant evidence from the assigned texts; draw on the full range of applicable course materials (books, lectures, & handouts); note possible objections, counter-arguments or counter-examples and explain why they fail to rebut your argument; and draw well-reasoned conclusions. Essays that do not adhere to the above requirements will receive lower grades with C’s and D’s reserved for multiple violations. You are highly encouraged to show me rough drafts no later than Tuesday noon prior to the Wednesday noon submission deadlines listed below:

9/19  Essay #1 on Mary Paik Lee, Quite Odyssey (all); Shirley Hune and Gail Nomura, the two Introductions and Parts I – II (pp. 1 - 117); Tai, S. “Environmental Hazards and the Richmond Laotian American Community”

10/10 Essay #2 on Naoko Shibusawa, America's Geisha Ally; Shirley Hune & Gail M. Nomura, Part III-IV (pp. 123 - 217)

10/31 Essay #3 on Martin F. Manalansan IV, Global Divas; Shirley Hune & Gail M. Nomura, Part V-VII (pp. 221 - 378); Leong, A. “The Struggle over Parcel C”; Julie Sze, “Asian American Activism for Environmental Justice”

Please note that I can only review one full draft for each of the four essays and that showing me a rough draft does not guarantee a good grade on your final draft.

5) Research at the McKeldin Library
In the spirit of further inquiry, all students are required to consult the abundant resources of UMD’s McKeldin Library for additional readings on Asian American Women and Gender history. For this assignment, each student, either in pairs or by themselves, must pick one article or a chapter from the Library that complements the themes covered throughout the semester. These readings should not exceed 40 pages and can be in any field, including literature (fiction). You must submit the article to me no later than week thirteen (11/19) either as a photocopy or electronically in pdf form so that in the subsequent week, we can all read them as a class. The student will prepare and give a ten-minute presentation during weeks Fourteen and Fifteen, explaining how and why you chose your materials and how
they contribute to advancing our knowledge of Asian American Women and Gender history. You will be evaluated on how effectively you communicate your library findings and how much interest the articles will spark amongst your classmates. Please do not procrastinate and visit the library as soon as a discussion topic speaks to you and do not hesitate seek out a librarian’s assistance.

6) Final Examination
The course final will be given on Tuesday, December 18, 8:00am – 10:00am and will test your cumulative knowledge of the major themes covered in the assigned readings and class discussions. Therefore, if you have completed all assigned readings, taken copious reading and discussion notes, and demonstrated consistent effort on your four essays, the final, although not a guarantee, should come as no surprise for you. The format of the exam will be three sections: 1) identifications, 2) short answers, and 3) essay questions. You will have some choices in each section and you should plan on spending 50% of your two-hour exam time on part 3, your essay question. I will give you a detailed study guide and announce the final exam room location later in the quarter. I have set aside a portion of Week Fifteen, our last regular class meeting, for reviewing course topics in preparation for your final the following week. Students who have more than three final exams in one day may opt to reschedule the exam but must let me know as soon as possible to avoid grade submission delays.

Online Requirements and Etiquette
All students are required to check and update their UMCP email accounts for important announcements regarding schedule changes, emergency procedures, and performance evaluations. Also, you must sign into ELMS (http://elms.umd.edu) and check it regularly to view and obtain course assignments, handouts, links, films, guest speaker information, and to participate in online discussion forums. Please treat online discussions and communications as you would classroom ones: no profanity, personalized attacks, or belittling of anyone. Emails to me and to each other should be professional; you must have a clear subject heading, opening address, and signature identifying you as the sender. Please allow 24 hours for me to respond to your emails and 48 hours on weekends.

Attendance and Make-up Work
Since our class meets twice a week, missing more than one class session will negatively impact your overall participation grade. This includes excessive tardiness to and early departures from class. An excused absence will be given for medical emergencies, participation in authorized University sponsored activities, inclement weather, religious observances, and other compelling circumstances beyond the student’s control. Except in the cases of inclement weather and campus emergencies, students must request, in writing and in advance, the reason for her or his absence and supply official documentation such as a doctor’s letter, athletic department notice, counseling appointments, job interview requests, etc. In the case of religious observances, a student must provide written notification to me within the first two weeks of the semester: the student must hand deliver the
written notification identifying the religious holiday (s) and date (s) to me (campus mailbox deliveries and email will not be accepted). For full participation credit, the excused student may write a one page summary of the missed reading assignment to be submitted no later than the following class meeting and if need be, arrange with the instructor to reschedule her or his missed class presentation. No participation credit or make-up work will be given to unexcused absences. As stated in UMCP’s official attendance policy, it is the student’s responsibility to inform me of any intended absences in advance and make arrangements for make-up work. Prior notification is especially important when missing the final exam, since failure to reschedule the final before the conclusion of the examination period may result in loss of credits during the semester (http://www.testudo.umd.edu/soc/atedasse.html).

Inclement Weather and Campus Emergencies
In the event of a severe weather or a campus emergency, the course will follow the official UMCP schedule on closing and delays as announced on the campus website (http://www.umd.edu/emergencypreparedness/weather_emer) and adjustments to the course schedule will be announced in class, via email, and on blackboard. For example, in the case of a 2pm delayed opening, we will still meet for the remaining one and a half hours (2-3:30pm); in the case of a 2pm early closing, we will still meet for the prior hour (1-2pm).

Office Hours
All students are strongly urged to take advantage of my office hours. Please bring whatever problems or concerns you may have, including routine academic issues such as help with writing essays, reading difficulties, extending our weekly seminar conversation outside the classroom, and the like. If you wish to receive detailed feedback on your essay, please bring a hard copy so that I can go over it with you. I am more than happy to set aside a separate time and day to go over your essay drafts.

Writing Center
In addition to my office hours and accommodated appointments, students at all stages of their writing are encouraged to utilize the English Department’s Writing Center (http://www.english.umd.edu/academics/writingcenter) located at 1205 Tawes Hall. There is always room for improvement and the writing advice you will receive will benefit you in whatever career path you pursue. You may contact the Center at writadmin@umd.edu or 301-405-3785. The Center sends an email informing me when a particular student has consulted this resource.

Plagiarism and Other Forms of Academic Dishonesty
In conjunction with the Student Honor Council’s policy of building a community of trust on the College Park campus, this seminar is based upon that very trust between student and professor. Any form of plagiarism including but not limited to knowingly borrowing someone’s words, ideas, conceptions or narrative frameworks without proper citation and acknowledgment of the original source is a violation of
the University’s Code of Academic Integrity (http://www.shc.umd.edu/code.html) and will be promptly reported to the Honor Council. Other forms of academic dishonesty such as purchasing papers and class notes, forging signatures, knowingly submitting fraudulent documents, hiring others to take an exam, and submitting the same or similar paper for credit in two courses without authorization will also be reported to the Council (http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/whatis.html). Students found guilty of these types of behavior may receive a course grade of “XF” denoting failure due to academic dishonesty. To insure compliance with the University’s Honor Code, the Student Honor Council suggests that all students write the following honor pledge on all submitted essays, reading notes, and final examination:

*I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (or assignment).*

For further guidelines, please familiarize yourself with UMCP’s official policy on cheating and plagiarism at http://www.testudo.umd.edu/soc/dishonesty.html.

**Special Accommodations**

Please inform me at the beginning of the semester if you require special needs due to disabilities. I will be happy to make proper accommodations for you.

**Course Copyright Protection**

Please be aware that all course matter, including lectures and discussions, are copyright protected; written instructor consent is required for reproduction and distribution of your lecture and discussion notes, especially if they are for commercial use. Unless it is for personal academic use and with instructor’s permission, the selling, reproducing, and distributing of course material is illegal and maybe considered a violation of the University’s Student Code of Conduct.

**Schedule**

Readings and essays are to be completed at the start of class on the day that they are listed. Note that I reserve the right to change this schedule to accommodate guest speakers, films, and other educational needs. You are responsible for knowing these changes announced ahead of time in class and on-line via ELMS.

Week One: Women’s History as Gender History?

**Readings:** 8/29 in-class handout on Joan W. Scott excerpts, course syllabus, and complete attached student profile.

**Critiquer:** everyone

Week Two: Re-envisioning and Recovering Women’s History
Week Three: From Environmental Justice to Environmental Racism

**Readings:** 9/5 Shirley Hune & Gail M. Nomura, the two Introductions & Part I & II (pp. 1-117)

**Critiquers:** ____________________________

Week Four: Women and Diaspora

**Readings:** 9/10 Mary Paik Lee, Introduction & Chapters 1-8 (pp. 1-67)


**Critiquers:**

Due at the beginning of Wednesday’s class: Essay #1 on Mary Paik Lee, *Quite Odyssey* (all); Shirley Hune and Gail Nomura, the two Introductions and Parts I – II (pp. 1 - 117); Tai, S. 1999. “Environmental Hazards and the Richmond Laotian American Community: A Case Study in Environmental Justice,” *Asian Law Journal* 6.

**Critiquers:**

Week Five: Feminist Writing, “Hybrid Lives,” and Female Agency

**Readings:** 9/24 Shirley Hune & Gail M. Nomura, Chapters 7-10 (pp. 123-185)

9/26 Shirley Hune & Gail M. Nomura, Chapters 11-12 (pp. 188 - 217)

**Critiquers:**

Week Six: America’s Geisha Ally?

**Readings:** 10/1 Naoko Shibusawa, Introduction & Chapters 1-3 (pp.1 – 139)

10/3 Naoko Shibusawa, Chapters 4-5 (pp. 140 – 212)

**Critiquers**
Week Seven: Gender Relations as Foreign Relations

**Readings:**  
10/8 Naoko Shibusawa, Chapters 6-7 (pp. 213 – 287)  
10/10 Naoko Shibusawa, Epilogue (pp. 288 – 296)

*Due at the beginning of Wednesday’s class: Essay #2 on Naoko Shibusawa, America’s Geisha Ally; Shirley Hune & Gail M. Nomura, Part III-IV (pp. 123 - 217)*

Critiquer:

Week Eight: Cultural Resistance and Community Building

**Readings:**  
10/15 Shirley Hune & Gail M. Nomura, Part V (pp. 221 - 266)  
10/17 Shirley Hune & Gail M. Nomura, Part VI (pp. 271 - 312)

Critiquer:

Week Nine: Imagining a Queer Diaspora

**Readings:**  
10/22 Martin F. Manalansan IV, Introduction & Chapters 1-3 (pp. 1 - 88)  
10/24 Shirley Hune & Gail M. Nomura, Part VII (pp. 319 - 379)

Critiquer:

Week Ten: Alternatives to Modernity and Citizenship

**Readings:**  
10/29 Martin F. Manalansan IV, Chapters 4-6 (pp. 89 – 183)  
10/31 Martin F. Manalansan IV, Conclusion (pp. 184 – 191)

*Due at the beginning of Wednesday’s class: Essay #3 on Martin F. Manalansan IV, Global Divas; Shirley Hune & Gail M. Nomura, Part V-VII (pp. 221 - 379)*

Critiquer:

Week Eleven: “Covering” Race, Gender, & Sexuality

**Readings:**  
11/5 Kenji Yoshino, Covering (Preface & pp. 3-107)
11/7 Kenji Yoshino, *Covering* (pp. 111-164)

Critiquer:

Week Twelve: Ecofeminism in the Post-Civil Rights Era?

**Readings:** 11/12 Kenji Yoshino, *Covering* (pp. 167 – 201)


*Due at the beginning of Wednesday’s class: Essay #4 on Kenji Yoshino, Covering* (all); Leong, A; Julie Sze

Critiquer:

Week Thirteen: Queering Transnational Adoptions

**Readings:** 11/19 PDF article on ELMS: David L Eng, “Transnational Adoptions and the Queer Diaspora” *Social Text* 76, Vol. 21, No. 3, (Fall 2003)

11/21 Shirley Hune & Gail M. Nomura, Chapter 23 (pp. 385 - 400) and please bring course syllabus to class.

*Due at the beginning of Thursday’s class: McKeldin Library articles/chapters*

Critiquer:

Week Fourteen: Student Directed Class Sessions

**Readings for 11/26:**

1)__________________________________________________________

2)__________________________________________________________

3)__________________________________________________________
Readings for 11/28:

4)_______________________________________________________________

5)_______________________________________________________________

6)_______________________________________________________________

Critiquer:

Week Fifteen: Continuation of Student Directed Class Sessions

Readings for 12/3:

7)_______________________________________________________________

8)_______________________________________________________________

9)_______________________________________________________________

Readings for 12/5:

11)_______________________________________________________________

12)_______________________________________________________________

13)_______________________________________________________________

Critiquer:

Readings for 12/10: Final exam study guide

Final Exam: Tuesday, December 18, 8:00am – 10:00am (location TBA).
AAST 498G Student Profile
After carefully reading the above syllabus, please fill out the seven questions below. You may use additional pages as needed. After you are finished, either email me your responses or tear this page from the syllabus and submit your responses to me in class. Completing this profile acknowledges that you have read and understood the syllabus and agree to abide by the stated course policies.

1) First and Last Name ________________________________

2) Grade-level ________________________________

3) Major(s) and minor(s): ________________________________

4) Do you have questions about the course grading criteria, requirements, and the like?

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

5) What motivated you to take this class (be honest)?

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

6) At the end of the semester, what do you expect to have learned from this course?

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

7) What specific aspects of Asian American Women and Gender are you interested in?

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

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