

ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES

Courses

AAST 2528. Asian American Art. (4 Credits)

What does it mean to study "Asian American art"? Although the term Asian American is itself relatively new, having emerged through activist movements in the 1960s, work by artists of Asian descent has long circulated in the Americas, from the 1565 opening of the Manila-Acapulco Galleon trade onward. This class explores the diverse histories of Asian American art in what is now known as the United States, across a range of topics and themes, including mercantile trade networks and "export art"; immigration, exclusion, and diaspora; Orientalism; World's Fairs; modernism, abstraction, and postmodernism; and popular culture. Throughout, we will pay special attention to the work of Asian American artists in New York, both historical and contemporary, with visits to museums, galleries, and studios in the city. Note: Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

Attributes: AHGL, AHMO, PLUR.

AAST 3000. Introduction to Asian American Studies. (4 Credits)

This course surveys major touchstones in the interdisciplinary field of Asian American studies, including perspectives from history, literature, sociology, gender and sexuality studies, and other disciplines. Moving beyond the Black-white binary, it examines the specificities of Asian racialization in a variety of contexts: U.S. war and empire in Asia and the Pacific Islands, settler colonialism, global capitalism, migration and diaspora, and popular culture. What does it mean to be Asian American? How has "Asian America" as a political construction changed over time? How can various academic disciplines add to our understanding of Asian American identity as a historical process, a social relation, an analytical method, and a political project? Note: Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

Attribute: PLUR.

Mutually Exclusive: ENGL 3356.

AAST 3280. Representing Asians in Journalism and Media. (4 Credits)

From traditional to social media, from the "yellow peril" stereotype in the 19th century and the model minority discourse in the 20th century to #StopAsianHate during the COVID-19 pandemic in the 21st century, the media have played and continue to play an important role in the history of Asian Americans. Media activities, whether in the processes of media production, representation, or consumption, have largely shaped how the Asian American identity is perceived and how the Asian American community is evolving. At the same time, many Asian Americans are media producers themselves, telling their stories across media platforms. Through class materials, discussions, and projects, this course provides an opportunity for students to study the roles and practices of various mediums, such as news media, popular media, and digital media, as well as their implications for Asian Americans and beyond. Note: Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

Attributes: CELP, CMST, COMC, DTEM, JETH, JOUR, JPLH, PLUR.

AAST 3357. Writing Asian America. (4 Credits)

What does it mean to be Asian American? How have Asian Americans grappled with the racist assumptions about Asian-ness imposed by US national culture? What ethical modes of being have Asian Americans imagined, what global histories have they uncovered, what social and political possibilities have they dreamt of, and what can they teach us about the historical present? What does it mean to write Asian America? Fulfills the Pluralism and Advanced Literature Core requirements of the core curriculum. Note: Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

Attributes: ACUP, ADVD, ALC, AMST, ASLT, COLI, ENRJ, PJRC, PJST, PLUR.

AAST 3359. Asian Diasporic Literatures. (4 Credits)

This course will introduce students to some key works of Asian diasporic literature, as well as to some crucial debates in Asian American studies. Some matters we may consider include the origins of the Asian American movement; the transnationalism debates; the intersections of race, gender, and sexuality; and the emergence of an Asian American avant garde. Authors may include Maxine Hong Kingston, Chang-rae Lee, Li-Young Lee, Ha Jin, Young-Jean Lee, Jon Hau, Tan Lin, and others. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

Attributes: ACUP, ADVD, ALC, AMST, ASHS, ASLT, COLI, ENRJ, EP3, INST, ISAS, ISIN, PJRC, PJST, PLUR.

AAST 3428. Asian American Immigration and Community Organizing. (4 Credits)

This course explores the birth of Asian American studies within the lens of U.S. immigration policy and race-based exclusion. The first portion of the course will review the institutional exclusion and discrimination that Asians faced within the U.S. immigration system prior to the 1960s. We will examine Asian agricultural laborers, specific court cases, anti-miscegenation laws, naturalization, and the lack of family reunification. The second portion will examine the political and ethnic organizing that led to the birth of the term "Asian American studies" in the 1960s. Special attention will be given to the ties to cross-racial coalition building, community organizing, and examining major events such as the LA Uprisings and the murder of Vincent Chin. The last portion of the course will evaluate what the Asian American studies movement has achieved in the last fifty years and the future of the movement. Note: Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

AAST 3618. Asian America in New York City: An Ethnographic Exploration. (4 Credits)

New York City is home to an estimated 1.2 million Asians and Asian Americans, or 14% of the city's population. This course explores the vast diversity of Asian American life in New York City, from iconic neighborhoods (e.g., Chinatown(s), Koreatown, Jackson Heights) to a range of topical themes such as historical community formation, immigration status, gentrification, post-911 surveillance and policing, public education, and community organizations and activism. The course will also incorporate at least two city site visits, depending on the semester, to neighborhoods, museums, political events, and cultural institutions. Note: Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

Attributes: ASSC, PLUR.

AAST 3647. Seeing Stories: Reading Race and Graphic Narratives. (4 Credits)

This course reveals how American writers of color (Asian American, Native American, African American, Latinx, etc.) have transformed the genre of the graphic narrative to speak to issues of racial difference and social inequality. How do these authors both entertain us and push us to engage in rigorous, critical interpretations of their wildly fanciful texts? Some potential course selections include: Thi Bui's "The Best We Could Do," Kyle Baker's "Nat Turner," Mira Jacob's "Good Talk," Lila Quintero Weaver's "Darkroom," and Jonathan Nelson's "The Wool of Jonesy." Note: Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

Attributes: ACUP, ADVD, ALC, AMST, ASLT, ENRJ, LAHA, LALS, PJRC, PJST, PLUR.

AAST 3838. Postcolonial Literature and Film. (4 Credits)

This class introduces students to creative works of literature and film from formerly colonized nations in South Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean. How do such works respond to, critique, and resist the continuing effects of colonialism? How do they navigate the tensions between colonial and indigenous traditions of representation? By the end of the semester, students will understand the cultural, political, and historical contexts of these works, as well as key concepts in postcolonial studies, such as identity, hybridity, discourse, power, and migration. Authors and filmmakers may include Arundhati Roy, Bapsi Sidhwa, Tsitsi Dangarembga, Wole Soyinka, Jamaica Kincaid, Shani Mootoo, Mira Nair, Deepa Mehta, Hanif Kureishi, Stephen Frears, and others. Note: Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

Attributes: ALC, ENRJ, PJRC, PJST.

AAST 3929. History of Chinese in the Americas. (3 Credits)

In this course, students explore the history of Chinese people and culture in the Americas from a wide range of perspectives. Units will examine the history of Chinese migrations to North and South America from East and Southeast Asia, representations of Chinese in American media, diasporic Chinese gender identities, diasporic Chinese cuisines, Chinese-American literature, labor history, and the history of Chinese people and culture in New York City, among other topics. This course will embed the history of Chinese in the Americas in a global history of political, economic, and cultural flows and open up questions of "Which China?" and "Which America?" to historical scrutiny. Students will engage with primary materials to conduct original research and collaborate with others to apply historical methods.

Attributes: ACUP, ADVD, AHC, AMST, ASHS, CNST.

AAST 4150. Race and Contemporary Film. (4 Credits)

This course examines contemporary cinema in an effort to understand the racial present. Drawing on theories and methods from sociology, anthropology, history, and literary theory, we will develop a provisional model of interdisciplinary cultural analysis that will help us better understand how representations of race function in our own historical moment. At the same time, we will investigate exactly what constitutes "our own historical moment." What is the historical present? How and why does it differ from one racial group to the next? And how do these competing racial temporalities affect present-day racial politics? With such questions in mind, we will conduct a series of case studies in racial representation. Each case will be organized around a recent film, and each film will be examined from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, with particular emphasis on how various academic disciplines both illuminate and obscure various aspects of the racial representation at hand. NOTE: Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

Attributes: COLI, ENGL, ENRJ, ICC, PJRC, PJST, PLUR.

AAST 4600. Anger in Asian American Literature and Culture. (4 Credits)

Ever since the first Chinese immigrant carved a protest poem into the walls of the Angel Island detention center, Asian American literature has been suffused with anger—both the anger Asian Americans feel as minoritized subjects and the anger they are forced to absorb in a virulently racist, white supremacist society. Drawing on scholarship from philosophy, psychology, anthropology, and literary and cultural studies, this interdisciplinary course asks what Asian American anger can teach us about both the lived experience and the structural conditions of race. Treating anger less as a character flaw than as a social product, we will explore several interrelated questions. How does the production of anger relate to the processes of racialization? How might Asian American anger complicate the Black-white binary that dominates U.S. racial discourse? In what ways might it enable a global understanding of race? What aesthetic and ethico-political problems does it pose? What possibilities does it open up? How have Asian American artists and writers grappled with those problems? And how have they sought to actualize the possibilities of Asian American anger? Note: Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

Attributes: ACUP, ADVD, AMST, ASLT, COLI, ENRJ, ICC, PJRC, PJST, PLUR.

AAST 4603. Asian American Critique. (4 Credits)

This capstone course explores canonical and cutting-edge research in the interdisciplinary field of Asian American Studies. Examining the field's interventions in disciplines such as history, sociology, media studies, and literary studies, we will discover how Asian Americanists have enunciated a distinct set of themes, methods, analyses, historical narratives, and ethico-political projects. Topics may include Asian American critiques of racial capitalism; neoliberalism; biopolitics; environmental devastation; human-animal relations; contemporary aesthetic categories; the Asian Century; and the intersections of race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability. This course fulfills the ICC and pluralism requirements of the common core. Previous exposure to ENGL 3356, "Approaches to Asian American Studies," or ENGL 3359, "Asian Diasporic Literature," is encouraged but not required. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

Attributes: ACUP, ADVD, AMST, ASLT, COLI, ENRJ, ICC, INST, ISAS, ISIN, PJRC, PJST, PLUR.

AAST 4616. Contemporary Issues in Asian America. (4 Credits)

This course examines historical and contemporary issues facing Asian Americans from the 1960s to the contemporary moment. By drawing on empirical and ethnographic studies, the course will illuminate Asian Pacific American experiences in the U.S. and globally. Major themes include race, class, gender, sexuality, marriage/family, health, aging, work, and transnationalism. Note: Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

Attributes: ANTH, ICC, PLUR.

AAST 4999. Tutorial. (4 Credits)

This course will include independent research and readings with supervision from a faculty member.