The class meets in 1023 Humanities at 4:00 – 5:20PM on Tuesday and Thursday.

Course description:
What have been the historical experiences of Asian Americans and how have these experiences shaped their identities? How might we understand Asian Americans as a “race” represented historically through their literature and prose? Why are the cultural works of Asian Americans important to their racial formation? In this course, we will read a survey of literary works by various Asian American subgroups (Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean, Vietnamese, and South Asian). We will examine the literature in the social contexts of important moments in Asian American history: the emergence of Chinatowns in urban enclaves, the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, the Filipino condition under Spanish and U.S. colonialisms, the early generation of exiled and immigrant Koreans in California, the Vietnamese refugee experience in the United States, and recent immigration of South Asians to North America. We will also read secondary materials and comic books and view a short documentary film to help us situate the literature in social and historical contexts.

The following 7 units comprise the course:

1. Introduction to Asian American History and Chinese Global Migration and Settlement in the US
Chapters in Sucheng Chan’s history book, *Asian Americans: An Interpretive History*, will help us to understand the racial formation of Asian Americans. Please be prepared to discuss assigned readings from Chan’s book and the readings in Blackboard during class meetings. In our first unit, we will read Maxine Hong Kingston’s *China Men*. Kingston’s memoir depicts three generations of Chinese migrant men living in both China and the United States (1860s – 1970s). We will pay particular attention to Kingston’s depictions of labor, class mobility, generational difference, gender, citizenship, and sexuality.

2. Japanese Americans and Internment During World War II
One of the most important early Asian American novels is John Okada’s *No-No Boy*. Okada’s novel is a moving story about Japanese American men during and after internment in U.S. relocation camps (1942 – 48). We will examine the novel’s depiction of racism against Japanese Americans during WWII, and also pay close attention to issues of gender and the way Okada criticizes the stereotypical perception of Japanese Americans as “unassimilable aliens” and “perpetual foreigners.”
3. **Filipino Americans and the Postcolonial Condition**
Carlos Bulosan was a Filipino immigrant in America in the 1930s-50s. He worked in the canneries and farms of Alaska, Washington, and California. Bulosan was also a writer whose short stories, essays, and acclaimed autobiography *American Is in the Heart* are classic works in Asian American literature. We will read some of Bulosan’s short stories and essays to introduce us to the lives of early Filipino immigrants in the United States.

4. **Exiles and Immigrants: The Early Generation of Korean Americans**
Ronyoung Kim’s *Clay Walls* is a novel about the early generation of Korean exiles and immigrants living in southern California (1910s – 1940s). Kim’s novel is divided into three parts narrated respectively by an immigrant wife, her exiled husband, and their American-born daughter. *Clay Walls* is also a powerful indictment of Japan’s imperialist occupation of Korea in the decades preceding WWII. We will focus on the social conditions of patriarchy, sexuality, class disparities, family tradition, and labor during times of colonialism and war as depicted in the Kim’s novel.

5. **Vietnamese Refugees in the United States**
Andrew Pham’s *Catfish and Mandala* is a memoir about a Vietnamese American’s journey back to his ancestral home in Vietnam. Pham tells his story about escaping from Vietnam in 1977 with his family after the Communists arrived in Saigon in 1975. In the United States, Pham and his family navigate an often incomprehensible American culture while struggling to make a living in an alien country. Twenty years later (1997), when Pham is nearly 30 years old, he returns to Vietnam alone to ride his bicycle throughout the country to visit and reconcile with his childhood home.

6. **Asian Indians in America: South Asian American Experience**
Jhumpa Lahiri’s *Interpreter of Maladies* is a recent addition to the growing canon of South Asian American literature. Lahiri’s collection of short stories is, among other things, about South Asian immigrants and their American-born children living in both America and India during the 1960s to the present. We will discuss meanings of assimilation, generational conflict, and the immigrant experience as they apply to South Asian Americans in Lahiri’s stories.

7. **Asian Americans in Comics and Graphic Novels**
In two recent Asian American comic books, GN Tran’s *Vietnamerica* and Derek Kirk Kim’s *Same Difference*, we will continue to examine issues of racial identity, cultural tradition and inheritance in the American-born generation, and self-acceptance as they apply to young Asian Americans.

This class is discussion focused. Although I will provide some brief lectures, our class will operate as a seminar in which you listen to others’ perspectives, ask productive questions, and articulate ideas with nuance and clarity. You must come to class prepared to discuss all readings on the days they are listed in the class schedule.

**Learning outcomes:**
This class meets most of the requirements for the following learning outcomes: Humanities (HUM) to “Address Problems Using Critical Analysis and the Methods of the Humanities,” Global Studies (GLO) to “Engage Global Issues,” and American Studies (USA) to “Understand the Political, Economic, Social, and Cultural History of the United States.”
Note on subject matter:
This course includes subject matter that some may consider discomforting. A primary objective is to have a classroom atmosphere that promotes full and free discussion, the aim of which is to provoke healthy intellectual discomfort and the critical inquiry that ought to be its consequence. The aim of the course is consistent with the Undergraduate Bulletin. By enrolling in this course, you therefore understand and accept its requirements. You must submit every piece of written work to be eligible to pass the course. Moreover, academic policy and regulation at the university prohibits making any “special” arrangements with individual students who have problems with course materials (with the exception of a documented physical or learning disability). If any student in the course has a problem with any text or other course material, the student needs to drop the class before September 9, 2014, the last day to drop classes without a “W” (withdraw) on student records.

Required books:
Sucheng Chan. Asian Americans: An Interpretive History
Maxine Hong Kingston. China Men
John Okada. No-No Boy
Carlos Bulosan. On Becoming Filipino: Selected Writings of Carlos Bulosan
Ronyoung Kim. Clay Walls
Andrew X. Pham. Catfish and Mandala
Jhumpa Lahiri. Interpreter of Maladies
GB Tran. Vietnamerica
Derek Kirk Kim. Same Difference

The books are available at the Stony Brook University Bookstore.
The articles and essays available in PDF format are in our course website on Blackboard.

Course website in Blackboard:
I will post the syllabus and reading materials (articles, essays, and book chapters) in our course website on Blackboard. On occasion, I may include in our course website any visual materials or images for discussion in class.

Work requirements
In this course, you will undertake a range of assignments that take several forms to bring course materials, media depictions, and everyday life into the class while you export your “book learning” and theoretical ideas outside, as you live in the world. This class provides you with a range of learning tools—through reading written texts, critically engaging with these texts and films, assembling a creative visual project, and delivering a proficient and substantial (10-12 minute) oral presentation for the class using appropriate media.

Note about final course grades: all course grades are final. After I have determined and submitted your final course grade, you cannot request a grade change. Absolutely no exceptions will be made. The grade you receive will be based on the effort you put into all of the work requirements for the course. Grade-grubbing and begging for make-up tests, extra credit, and higher grades will have a negative affect on your course grade.
Regular attendance and active participation in class: 20%
As mentioned above, this class will mainly engage in vigorous class discussion. Your daily preparation and willingness to actively participate in discussion are central to the quality of the course. Come prepared to talk about the issues covered that day. If you are a shy or reserved person who does not speak in class, I may on occasion call on you to contribute to discussion. Class attendance is mandatory. Class attendance and posting a question on Blackboard are mandatory. More than four absences will lower your participation grade; more than five will lower your overall course grade. Coming late to class repeatedly or leaving early will count toward absences. Attendance is required during all oral presentations; see below.

Leading class discussion with a posted question on Blackboard (included as participation)
We will begin discussion with questions presented by members of the class. On the evening before we begin the class, one or two members will formulate one question about the reading. We will use the question to initiate and lead discussion. Be sure that your question refers to specific passages in the text. In your question, you are required to comment on the reading in a way that expresses your analysis of it in relation to the topics in our class. You can pose a question that will lead us to examine closely the language in the reading or compare it to other readings in the course. Your question can also express what you find most intense, meaningful, or puzzling about the reading.

Students will take turns formulating and posting a question throughout the semester based on the alphabetical order of last names. If you are working with another class member to post a question, you must contact each other (by email, phone, or meeting outside of class) to plan your question that one of you will then post on Blackboard in advance of the class meeting. I will screen your question in class on the day you both are to present it. I will take into account the quality and effort you both put into your question when factoring your participation grade.

Quizzes: 10%
Occasionally, I will give a quiz based on the reading assigned for class that day. These quizzes are to make sure that everyone is keeping up with scheduled readings. They will include questions about plot developments, characters, and style. Quizzes may also include questions about Chan’s Asian Americans: An Interpretive History. There will be four quizzes. I will drop your lowest quiz grade when I calculate your average. I will not give make-ups for quizzes; you need to be in class to take them.

Analytical essay on one book (5-6 pages) and prospectus (1-2 pages): 20%
Write an essay of close analysis on any one text in the course prior to the date the paper is due in class. You are required to come up with your own argument (thesis) that you must demonstrate and support through close analysis of passages (block quotes) from the book. You may refer to our class discussions and the posted questions in Blackboard for help to come up with your argument (thesis) for your essay. David Rodriguez and I are glad to meet with you individually in our office hours to discuss your argument. We will not discuss your essay’s argument via email. You must schedule an appointment ahead of time to discuss your essay with either one of us in person. Send us an email to schedule an appointment.

Instructions for the prospectus:
The prospectus (a typed written plan of 1 - 2 pages) for your essay is due in class on Thursday, Sept. 25. In your prospectus and under your name do the following: (1) Write the author’s name
and the title of the book you’ve chosen for your essay. (2) Write your essay’s provisional thesis statement (2-3 sentences). (3) Type a block quote from the book that you’ve chosen to analyze in your paper. (4) Under the typed block quote, write a brief paragraph of close analysis of some details (words, terms, or language) in the quote. In your analysis, be sure to put quotation marks around the details from the quote that you are analyzing closely. (4) Write an argument (i.e., a topic sentence) about the block quote that you have generated through your analysis of the details. Write your argument (the topic sentence) above the block quote.

This paper is an essay of close analysis. You do not need to refer to secondary materials in your paper. However, if you like, you can include historical context from Sucheng Chan’s *Asian Americans: An Interpretive History*. If you do include anything from Chan’s book in your paper, you must cite Chan and her book in a bibliography (Works Cited) section. Use MLA style format.

**Essay format.** Your essay must be typed and double-spaced on an 8-1/2” x 11” paper. **Number your pages** and use 12-point Times New Roman font. Collate and staple your paper. See the Style Guide for English Papers in Blackboard.

**Late paper policy.** The analytical paper must be turned in by the due date. I’ll make exceptions in cases of medical or family emergency, but in general I’m holding fast to this rule. If you anticipate a problem, I need to hear about potential lateness before the due date. See the Brief Style Guide for English Papers in Blackboard.

**Note: hand in a hard copy of your paper.** Emailed papers will not be accepted.

**Portfolio (of 5 block quotes, analysis, and images spanning 10-12 pages) and prospectus: 25%**

For the portfolio, you must select five block quotes from any of the required books in class and write two pages of analysis of each quote. Also, you must include a visual image from outside our class that you will discuss as part of your analysis of the block quote. At least three of the quotes must be from different books and all of the images must be from different sources.

1. For each block quote in your portfolio, begin by introducing the author and the book, and give context and your argument (a topic sentence) about the quote. Then, type the whole block quote under your argument about it.
2. Under the block quote, analyze it closely in relation to Asian American and/or immigrant experience, identity, and/or historical and social issues (the topics of our class).
3. Include and refer to your selected image as part of your analysis of the block quote. Explain how the image relates to the quote. In other words, analyze details in the image to explain how it relates to the quote. Be sure to give context for the image and also explain where you found it (i.e., explain its source).
4. You must have at least 2 pages (double-spaced) of argument and analysis for each block quote and image. Staple or clip your portfolio together, and include a cover page that states your name and the title of your portfolio. You do not need to put your portfolio inside a binder.

Possible sources: you can choose images from newspapers, magazines, advertisements, movies, television shows and commercials, hip-hop, rock or pop music, videos on YouTube, etc.) This is your chance to be creative! The goal of the portfolio is to engage with media in order to draw connections between issues and concepts we are using in class and visual culture materials circulating in the world outside the classroom.

The grade you receive will be based on the quality of the following in your portfolio:
1. The block quote (its relevance in relation to our class and the quality of your analysis).
2. The image (the originality and quality of the image, its citation, and your explanation and analysis of the image in relation to the quote).

The prospectus (written plan) of 1-2 pages is due on Thursday, November 6 in class. In your prospectus, give a quote you’ve chosen to include in your portfolio. Cite the book containing the quote properly. Then, give an image that relates to the quote. Analyze some details in the quote, and also explain the image in relation to the quote.

**Oral presentation (included in the Portfolio grade):**
During the last three weeks of the semester, you will present in class for 10-12 minutes just one image from your portfolio. While you are free to include a range of images and themes in your portfolio, the material you show from it during your presentation should at least partly address a unit that is covered in class. I will pass around a sign-up sheet for you to choose a time slot for your oral presentation. You will have access to the Internet and computer screening projection for your presentation.

The portfolio is due on Tuesday, December 9 by 3pm in my mailbox in the English Department. **Note: hand in a hard copy of your portfolio. I will not accept your portfolio through email or in a flash drive.**

**Take-home final exam (close analysis of passages from books; 8-10 pages typed):** 25%
In the take-home final, you will select five of eight passages or images (illustrations from the graphic novels) that I will list from our required books. You will write close analysis of each of your selected passages or images. For each of your selected passages, you will analyze important details that are relevant to explaining the meaning of the passage or the image. In other words, explain the meaning of the passage or image by examining closely its language, literary or visual devices, style, narrative and rhetorical forms, symbols and/or metaphors that help explain its meaning. **In your exam, write close analysis of details, not plot summary.**

In total, your analysis of passages and images will locate, evaluate, synthesize and incorporate relevant primary materials and secondary materials (Sucheng Chan’s *Asian Americans: An Interpretive History*) in an 8-10 page paper that comprises a thesis-driven, interpretive essay.

The take-home final exam is due on the last day of class. **Note: the passages that you analyze in your final exam must be different from the block quotes you analyze in your portfolio. You cannot analyze the same quotes in both your portfolio and your final exam.**

**Academic integrity:**
Plagiarism on one assignment will result in an F for the entire course. University guidelines on dealing with plagiarism will be followed. Although I encourage you to read websites, articles, and books about the course material, you must be careful to avoid plagiarism in your paper, portfolio, and final exam. Plagiarism is using others’ ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information. Plagiarism, intentional or unintentional, is considered academic dishonesty and all instances will be reported to the Academic Judiciary. To avoid plagiarism, you must give credit whenever you use another person’s idea, opinion, or theory; any facts or any other pieces of information that are not common knowledge; quotations of another person’s actual spoken or written words; or paraphrase of another person’s spoken or
written words. Citing all sources and putting direct quotations in quotation marks are required. For further information on the policies regarding academic dishonesty see http://ws.cc.stonybrook.edu/uaa/academicjudiciary/

**DSS assistance:**
If you have a physical, psychological, medical, or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services at (631) 632-6748 or http://studentaffairs.stonybrook.edu/dss/. They will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

Students who require assistance during emergency evacuation are encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors and Disability Support Services. For procedures and information go to the following website: http://www.sunysb.edu/ehs/fire/disabilities.shtml

**Course etiquette:**
The use of laptop computers and cell phones are prohibited during class meetings. However, you may bring your laptop computer (or iPad / Kindle) to class only if you are using it to read the course texts in electronic form. If you violate this rule, you will be asked to leave the class.

Inattentiveness during class will negatively affect your grade.

**Tentative class schedule**
Be ready to discuss all readings on the days they are listed below. I may have to change or cut some of these readings. I will inform the class of these changes in advance.

* This reading is available in pdf format in Blackboard under Articles and Book Chapters.

**PQ: Posted Question on the reading by one or two class members for discussion in class.**

**Week 1**
T, 8/26  
Introduction: course mechanics and syllabus.
Handout for discussion: Maxine Hong Kingston, excerpt from “The Father from China”

Th, 8/28  
PQ Maxine Hong Kingston. *China Men* (up to p. 73)

**Week 2**
T, 9/2  
Labor Day holiday. No class.

Th, 9/4  
PQ *China Men* (up to p. 162)
Sucheng Chan. *Asian Americans: An Interpretive History* (chapters 1, 2, and 3)

**Week 3**
T, 9/9  
PQ *China Men* (up to p. 260)
Chan. *Asian Americans: An Interpretive History* (chapters 4 and 5)

Th, 9/11  
PQ *China Men* (have finished the book)
| Week 4       | T, 9/16 | PQ John Okada. *No-No Boy* (up to chapter 5)  
|             |        | Chan. *Asian Americans* (chapter 7)  
|             | Th, 9/18 | PQ *No-No Boy* (up to chapter 9)  
| Week 5      | T, 9/23 | PQ *No-No Boy* (have finished the book)  
|             | Th, 9/25 | *Prospectus (written plan) for the analytical essay due*  
|             |        | PQ Carlos Bulosan. “Passage into Life,” “The Story of a Letter,” and “Be American” in *On Becoming Filipino*  
|             |        | Film screening in class of *Dollar a Day, Ten Cents a Dance: A Historic Portrait of Filipino Farmworkers in America* (29 minutes)  
| Week 6      | T, 9/30 | PQ “As Long as the Grass Shall Grow,” “Life and Death of a Filipino in America,” “How My Stories Were Written,” “My Education,” and “Freedom from Want” in *On Becoming Filipino*  
| Week 7      | T, 10/7 | *Analytical essay due*  
|             |        | PQ Ronyoung Kim. *Clay Walls* (read up to p. 67)  
|             |        | Chan. *Asian Americans* (chapter 6)  
|             | Th, 10/9 | PQ Ronyoung Kim. *Clay Walls* (read up to p. 182)  
| Week 8      | T, 10/14 | PQ *Clay Walls* (have finished the book)  
|             | Th, 10/16 | PQ Andrew Pham. *Catfish and Mandala* (read up to p. 93)  
| Week 9      | T, 10/21 | PQ *Catfish and Mandala* (read up to p. 212)  
|             |        | Chan. *Asian Americans* (chapter 8, first half)  
|             | Th, 10/23 | PQ *Catfish and Mandala* (read up to p. 294)  
|             |        | Chan. *Asian Americans* (chapter 8, second half)  
| Week 10     | T, 10/28 | PQ *Catfish and Mandala* (have finished the book)  
<p>|             | Th, 10/30 | PQ Jhumpa Lahiri. “A Temporary Matter” and “Interpreter of Maladies” in <em>Interpreter of Maladies</em> |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Week 11</th>
<th>T, 11/4</th>
<th>PQ “Mrs. Sen’s” “This Blessed House,” and “The Third and Final Continent” in <em>Interpreter of Maladies</em> Chan. <em>Asian Americans</em> (chapter 9 and conclusion)</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Th, 11/6</td>
<td>PQ GB Tran. <em>Vietnamamerica</em> (read up to p. 157) <strong>Prospectus</strong> (written plan) for the portfolio due</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>T, 11/11</td>
<td>PQ <em>Vietnamamerica</em> (have finished the book)</td>
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<td>Th, 11/13</td>
<td>PQ Derek Kirk Kim. <em>Same Difference</em> (have read up to p. 67)</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>T, 11/18</td>
<td>PQ Derek Kirk Kim. <em>Same Difference</em> (have finished the book) Portfolio Presentations (1 to 5)</td>
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<td>Th, 11/20</td>
<td>No class.</td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
<td>T, 11/25</td>
<td>Portfolio Presentations (6 to 12) <strong>Take-home final exam handed out in class</strong></td>
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<td>Th, 11/27</td>
<td>Thanksgiving recess. No class.</td>
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<td>Week 15</td>
<td>T, 12/2</td>
<td>Portfolio Presentations (13 to 19)</td>
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<td>Th, 12/4</td>
<td>Portfolio Presentations (20 and 25) <strong>Take-home final exam due in class</strong></td>
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<td>T, 12/9</td>
<td><strong>Portfolio due by 3pm in my mailbox in the English Department Mail Room</strong> (2095 Humanities)</td>
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