

Writing 101: Academic Writing
Asian American Narratives: Literature, History, and Activism
Spring 2022

Section 101.47 TTh 8:30-9:45, Bivins 109

Section 101.48 TTh 12:00-1:15, Classroom Building 125

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What does it mean to be Asian American in the twenty-first century? How are Asians and Asian Americans represented in popular culture, and how do writers and activists resist and complicate these narratives? Asian American writers have employed various genres to make meaning of their lives and the lives of others, including fiction, autobiographical essays, creative nonfiction, graphic memoirs, and film. Through these texts and your own writing, we will explore how literature, history, and theory can help us better understand key issues in Asian American studies such as the “model minority,” gender and sexuality, food and culture, refugee experiences, and anti-Asian violence. Our reading and weekly writing about these topics will culminate in three major projects for the class. In the first project, a 4-5 page essay, you will explore Asian American representation in a text of your choice. The second project will consist of a 4-5 page literary analysis that considers how a text responds to a key issue in Asian American studies. The final assignment is an exploration of Asian American oral histories through narrative. For the last project, you will decide the best form—essay, multimedia presentation, graphic novel, etc.—in which to convey an aspect of Asian American history through the lens of a single person’s story.

GOALS AND PRACTICES OF THE THOMPSON WRITING PROGRAM:

Academic writing is a conversation, and the goal of all Writing 101 courses at Duke is to enable you to join the conversation as writers, researchers, and scholars. In our class you will learn to engage scholarly arguments in the fields of literature, history, and cultural studies. You will also learn to articulate a position, analyze texts, and situate your writing for a specific audience.

Good writing is more than just a *product*. It is also a *process*, involving research, workshopping, revising, and editing. In addition to the course texts, we will be using your writing and the writing of your classmates as texts to analyze, workshop, and revise. Classes will be taught using a workshop approach that promotes interactive, experiential learning (as opposed to a lecture format). As a reflection of Duke’s commitment to intellectual inquiry, this course will not only serve as an introduction to literary criticism and theory; it will provide a foundation for you to learn new kinds of writing, identify relevant questions, and articulate sophisticated arguments outside Writing 101 as part of your future work, both inside and outside the university.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

Engaging Representation: Your own research and writing will be a central component of the course. Your first project will examine how Asian Americans have been portrayed in popular film, literature, television, art, or news media. In a 4-5 page essay, you will draw on our theoretical and historical texts to explore a particular representation or set of representations (e.g., Orientalism, the model minority, tiger

mothers). What is this trope? What is its history? How does it misrepresent or oversimplify real issues? The goal of this assignment is to allow you to engage with the work of others, learning to make fair, generous, and assertive use of others' arguments.

Textual Analysis: Your second graded assignment asks you to practice close reading skills. How does Asian American writing or film convey important histories to its audiences? How does the form of a particular piece do the work of telling a particular story? In this 4-5 page exercise in close reading, you will choose one of the texts that we have encountered in class to analyze what it has to say about an aspect of Asian American history. Writing in the humanities relies on being able to analyze texts, and the goal of this assignment is to build awareness of conventions and expectations within humanistic disciplines.

History through Narrative: The final project asks you to produce a narrative of your own. In this project, you will explore an aspect of Asian American history through the telling of a single person's story. Your primary sources for this project could be a personal interview, an oral history (we will be looking at several online oral history collections), a diary, letters, or other archival material. How can this person's story help us better understand an aspect of Asian American history? For this project, you must decide the best form – essay, multimedia presentation, graphic novel, etc. – in which to convey this narrative. Non-essay projects must be accompanied by a reflection explaining the project's intent and source material.

Homework Assignments: In addition to the three course projects, you will be responsible for weekly homework assignments; many of these will be posted on Sakai and take the form of a discussion. Unlike your other work, these assignments will not receive a letter grade, but will be graded on a contract basis. If you complete each assignment thoroughly and on time, you will receive credit for having submitted the work, resulting in an A for 20% of the course grade. Most of these assignments can be revised and developed into more substantial assignments. They are meant to allow you a space to practice writing and experiment with new ways of expressing ideas, while still giving you credit for effort.

Participation: This course is designed to be engaging, collaborative, and challenging. You will be required to think critically, contributing to group discussions and workshops. Therefore, you must not only be present and on time to each class, but also be prepared to participate enthusiastically. As detailed in Duke's policy on Class Attendance & Missed Work, responsibility for class attendance rests with individual students. A student who has excessive absences, such that she/he is no longer able to meet the learning objectives of the course, will be referred to the student's academic dean and may be required to withdraw from the course or be given a failing grade.

Absences from class and missed work are accommodated (excused) in five circumstances: 1) illness, 2) personal instances of distress or emergency, 3) religious observance, 4) varsity athletic participation, and 5) required court or legal appearances.

Students are encouraged to discuss any absence (planned or unexpected) with me to determine whether accommodation is possible. For example, if you are placed in quarantine, please contact me so that I can Zoom you into class if you feel well enough to join us.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Jacob, Mira. *Good Talk*.

Kingston, Maxine Hong. *The Woman Warrior*.

Bui, Thi. *The Best We Could Do*.

Kao Kalia Yang. *The Latehomecomer*.

Lee, Erika. *The Making of Asian America* (optional).

Required texts will be available at Duke University stores and can also be checked out at Lilly Library under 3-hour course reserves. Articles and supplemental materials, including required excerpts from Lee's book, will be posted under Resources on Sakai. You are welcome to purchase these texts as physical books or as ebooks.

GRADES: Assignment	% of Grade
Assignment 1: Representing Asian/Americans	20%
Assignment 2: Textual Analysis	20%
Assignment 3: History through Narrative	30%
Homework Assignments	20%
Participation Grade	10%

Unless I have approved a deadline extension in advance, late submissions will be lowered by a full letter grade. For instance, the maximum grade for an essay submitted after the deadline will be "B." Homework assignments submitted late will receive a "check-minus," which will lower your overall homework grade. Submissions received more than a week late will receive half-credit.

In accordance with Thompson Writing Program policy, all Writing 101 students are evaluated on a grading scale of A-F. Writing 101 students, therefore, will be unable to request or get approval for S/U grading.

SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS:

All written assignments should be submitted electronically to Sakai. Please refer to the assignment prompt for detailed instructions. **Please submit all documents in MS Word format.** It is your responsibility as a scholar to present your work in a clear, transparent, and careful manner. Aspects of professional-quality academic documents include:

- 12-point Times New Roman font (or equivalent)
- One-inch margins

- Careful proofreading and editing
- Double line spacing
- Titled, with page numbers and your name on the document

TECHNOLOGY:

Please bring your laptop to class every day. However, when not referring to an article for class, please leave your laptop closed. Other electronic devices such as cell phones should be turned off and not accessed during class time.

INTEGRITY:

Academic writing is seldom self-contained with respect to its ideas and proof. Quoting and citing sources strengthens your writing by explicitly situating your argument within an ongoing conversation and body of evidence. There are several systems for documenting sources. In this course, we will learn to employ MLA citation, a style widely used in the humanities. We will discuss quotation, paraphrase, and citation in class. Plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, weakens your integrity as a student and writer and prevents you from engaging properly with other scholars through writing. Plagiarism also carries serious consequences. If I suspect anyone of plagiarism, I am obligated to report it to the Duke University Office of Student Conduct. Plagiarism can result in failure of the course, suspension from all classes, or expulsion from Duke University.

The Duke Community Standard states that: 1. I will not lie, cheat, or steal in my academic endeavors, nor will I accept the actions of those who do; and 2. I will conduct myself responsibly and honorably in all my activities as a Duke student. Please ask me if you have any questions about citation or attribution. You may also consult: <http://library.duke.edu/research/plagiarism>.

WRITING 101 SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

Course Librarian: Our course librarian is Matthew Hayes (matt.hayes@duke.edu). He will be partnering with me to familiarize you with Duke's library system and to assist you with research and resources for your final research project. He will lead us in a large-group workshop in March and is available for individual consultations.

The Writing Studio: I encourage you to visit the Writing Studio, a place beyond our classroom to work collaboratively with an attentive, nonevaluative reader. You can schedule an appointment at any stage in your writing process, including before you have even started writing. You'll find friendly student consultants who are eager to talk with you about your writing and think with you about ways to make your processes even more effective. Visit <http://twp.duke.edu/twp-writing-studio> to schedule an appointment and to learn more about Studio resources.

Enrichment Suite for International Students: International students may wish to visit the DukeWrites Enrichment Suite for International Students (ESIS), an online suite of videos and quiz tutorials about U.S. classroom and academic writing practices (e.g., essay structure, verbs, citations practices, intercultural

norms). There is also a forum for students to have online exchanges with peers about writing. To access the site, go to <https://dukewritessuite.com/>. Next, enter DukeWrites Enrichment in the search box to join this Sakai site.

Students with Disabilities: Students who may need special accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Student Disability Access Office as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations can be implemented in a timely fashion. <http://www.access.duke.edu/students/index.php>

PANDEMIC-RELATED POLICIES

This course is designed with flexibility in mind. In accordance with university policies, we will begin the semester online, moving to in-person instruction when pandemic restrictions are lifted. We will conduct the rest of the semester in person, with the understanding that the course might move online again if 1) the university mandates such a move, or 2) we decide that the limitations of in-person discussions during a pandemic outweigh the benefits of face-to-face interaction, e.g., if a majority of students are placed in quarantine. Please be prepared to be flexible and cheerful: as an instructor, I am fully versed in Zoom instruction and have experience conducting Writing 101 via Zoom.

As with other classes at Duke, face masks will be mandatory until we are advised otherwise by the university.

COURSE CALENDAR
***Live version with links on Sakai**

Date	In-Class Activities	Writing Due	Reading Due
Week 1	Course Introduction		Lee, 1-11
Thursday, January 6	Asian/Americans in Hollywood: <i>Slaying the Dragon</i> (we will watch in class)	HW1. 250-word minimum post to Forums due Friday 10 p.m. Response to a classmate due Saturday 10 p.m.	
Week 2	Orientalism and Exclusion		Said, <i>Orientalism</i> : 1-9
Tuesday, January 11	Writing and Citing: Paraphrases and Direct Quotes		<i>Edward Said on Orientalism</i> (40 min.)
Thursday, January 13	“The Chinese Must Go!” More: Writing and Citing		Lee, 59-108 Sui Sin Far: “Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian”
Week 3	The Model Minority?		“The Model Minority,” 173-175
Tuesday, January 18	Disaggregating the data Writing: Crafting a Paragraph	HW2. 250-word minimum post to Forums due Friday 10 p.m. Response to a classmate due Saturday 10 p.m.	Kim, “Racial Triangulation”

Thursday, January 20	The Dangers of a Single Story: What the Model Minority Leaves Out	Excerpt: Jose Antonio Vargas <i>Halmoni</i> (15 min).
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HW3. 250-word minimum post to Forums due Friday 10 p.m.

Response to a classmate due Saturday 10 p.m.

Week 4 Tuesday, January 25	The Model Minority and Identity	Amy Chua, “Why Chinese Mothers Are Superior” <i>Ninh, Passing for Perfect</i>
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Thursday, January 27	Writing: Representing the Work of Others	<i>Ninh, Passing for Perfect</i>
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HW4. 250-word minimum post to Forums due Friday 10 p.m.

Response to a classmate due Saturday 10 p.m.

Week 5 Tuesday, February 1	Representation and Memoir	Jacob, <i>Good Talk</i> , 1-181 (graphic novel)
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Thursday, February 3	Assignment 1: Introduction and Discussion	Jacob, <i>Good Talk</i> , 182-end (graphic novel)
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HW5. Assignment 1 proposal due to Forums due Friday 10 p.m.

Response to a classmate due Saturday 10 p.m.

Week 6 Tuesday, February 8	Assignment 1: Workshop	
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Thursday, February 10 Assignment 1: Workshop

Assignment 1 due
Saturday 10:00 pm

Week 7 Asian American Voices Lee, 211-251

Tuesday, February 15

Engaging History: Japanese
Americans during World
War II

In-class Photography
project

Thursday, February 17

Writing: Finding (and
Using) Textual Evidence

Yamada: poetry

HW6. 250-word
minimum post to Forums
due Friday 10 p.m.

Response to a classmate
due Saturday 10 p.m.

Week 8 Troubling Gender

Woman Warrior (1-109)

Tuesday, February 22

Woman Warrior (112-end)

Thursday, February 24

More: Textual Evidence
and Paragraphing

HW7. 250-word
minimum post to Forums
due Friday 10 p.m.

Response to a classmate
due Saturday 10 p.m.

Week 9 Adoption Stories

Film: *First Person Plural*

Tuesday, March 1

Week 9
Thursday, March 3

Writing: Sample Textual
Analysis

Jodi Kim, "An 'Orphan' with
Two Mothers"

HW8. 250-word
minimum post to Forums
due before you leave for
spring break.

Response to a classmate
optional this week.

Week 10

SPRING BREAK

SPRING BREAK

SPRING BREAK

March 8-10

Week 11

Asian American Refugees

Lee, 314-333

Tuesday, March 15

The Best We Could Do, 1-130

Thursday, March 17

Writing: Visual Evidence
Assignment 2 Discussion

The Best We Could Do, 130-
end

HW9. Assignment 2
proposal due to Forums
due Friday 10 p.m.

Response to a classmate
due Saturday 10 p.m.

Week 12

Assignment 2: Workshop

Tuesday, March 22

Thursday, March 24

Assignment 2: Workshop

Week 13

Tuesday, March 29

History through Narrative:
Library Day

In preparation for today,
read through Assignment
3; come with tentative
topics for research

Thursday, March 31

Hmong refugees

The Latehomecomer, 1-114

HW10. Turn in 1-page project proposal to Sakai by Saturday 10 p.m.

Week 14
Tuesday, April 5 Writing: Crafting a Narrative *The Latehomecomer*, 115-212

Thursday, April 7 *The Latehomecomer*, 213-end

HW11. Begin oral history research.

Turn in Annotated Bibliography to Sakai by Saturday 10 p.m.

Week 15
Tuesday, April 12 Narrative writing Past projects: samples on Sakai

Thursday, April 14 Individual meetings with instructor in lieu of class

Week 16
Tuesday, April 19 Last day of class!
Discussion of projects;
course evaluations

Group Workshops to be scheduled

Final projects due to Sakai **Sunday, April 24**
10:00 pm