



## **Asian American Psychology Seminar (PSYC 339) Course Syllabus**

*Thursdays 1:30-4:00, 14 Stokes Hall*

**Instructor:** Shu-wen Wang, PhD, Associate Professor  
Pronouns: she/her/hers  
Feel free to call me: Shu-wen, Dr. Wang, or Prof. Wang

**Contact:** [swang1@haverford.edu](mailto:swang1@haverford.edu)

**Office:** 410 Sharpless Hall

**Student Hours:** Wed 1:00-2:20 via Zoom (see Zoom link on Moodle).  
Catch me after class Thurs 4:00-4:30.  
Or make a separate appointment with me.

### **Course Description and Objectives**

This seminar course on Asian American Psychology draws upon psychological theories and empirical research to better understand the patterns in cognition, emotion, development, and relationships that impact health and well-being for Asian Americans (the North American diaspora of people from Asian and Pacific Islander backgrounds). The course will also address psychological issues as they are influenced by the diverse histories and contemporary social realities of Asian American ethnic minority experiences in the United States, with a focus on immigration, acculturation, ethnic identity, and stereotyping and discrimination.

Seminar will foster in-depth discussion of topics in Asian American psychology, provide ample opportunities for self-reflection and application of scholarly material to everyday life, help develop oral presentation skills and the ability to consume and critically analyze primary sources (empirical articles), and participate in community-engaged learning through excursions off-campus as well as interaction with invited speakers to campus who advocate for the Asian American community.

### **By the end of the course, students are expected to:**

- 1) Develop a critical understanding of the Asian American psychology field, including comprehension of theory, methods, key findings, challenges, and future directions.
- 2) Apply the research literature to analyze first-person narratives of Asian American experiences (those shared in class, in the media, and in memoirs)
- 3) Apply the research literature to better understand current events, practice, and policy
- 4) Cultivate effective oral and written communication skills across a range of modalities
- 5) Appreciate the great diversity among folks identifying as Asian American

## Course Readings

- 1) There is no required textbook. Readings consist of journal articles, book chapters, and news articles. These are all posted to Moodle for your reference.
- 2) For the final paper, you will select and read a memoir from the approved list below. Copies are widely available for purchase online and are also on reserve in the Science Library (3<sup>rd</sup> floor Hilles). We will discuss the assignment in class and you will have the opportunity to peruse my copies of the books.
  - *All You Can Never Know* by Nicole Chung
  - *We Have Not Stopped Trembling Yet* by EJR David
  - *Minor Feelings: An Asian American Reckoning* by Cathy Park Hong
  - *Fresh Off the Boat* by Eddie Huang
  - *Return to India: An Immigrant Memoir* by Shoba Narayan
  - *I Love You are for White People* by Lac Su
  - *Crying in H-Mart*: by Michelle Zauner

**Slides** – Slides will be posted on Moodle for your reference AFTER class.

## A Note About the Challenges of 2021-2022

I'm excited you're here and ready to learn about psychology! I am aware that the past couple of years have been incredibly challenging due to Covid-19 and other events, and that many of us have experienced pain and loss and may be hurting and anxious. I recognize that we are still in the midst of a pandemic and that we are all (myself included) just trying to do our best. These are not "normal" times and we should not act as if they are. But I'm still hopeful we'll have a positive experience learning and growing together, and I will do everything I can towards that goal. In our classroom, I ask that we be understanding, supportive, and flexible (!) as we navigate the uncertainties of the year. Please feel free to discuss any specific concerns you have with me.

## A Note on Classroom Culture

This course is a small discussion-based seminar. I envision our classroom as a collaboration between me (the instructor) and you (the participants). We are all here to learn together, myself included. The success of the course is driven by your active participation and contributions in discussion, as well as your work on the various assignments that are designed to give you autonomy and voice in leading what you learn. I encourage you to **take ownership of our course and your learning**.

We will be exploring sensitive but important cultural issues, and class members may share about personal experiences. It is essential that all members of this class feel respected, and that confidentiality about personal experiences is maintained. Let's collectively build a **safe and generative space** where we can adopt a position of intellectual curiosity, engage in open and flexible dialogue, and encourage one another in our mutual journeys of learning and personal growth.

## **Support, Access, and Disability**

I am committed to partnering with you on your academic and intellectual journey. I also recognize that your ability to thrive academically can be impacted by your personal well-being and that stressors may impact you over the course of the semester. If the stressors are academic, I welcome the opportunity to discuss and address those stressors with you in order to find solutions together. If you are experiencing challenges or questions related to emotional health, finances, physical health, relationships, learning strategies or differences, or other potential stressors, I hope you will consider reaching out to the many resources available on campus. These resources include CAPS (free and unlimited counseling is available), the Office of Academic Resources, Health Services, Professional Health Advocate, Religious and Spiritual Life, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the GRASE Center, and the Dean's Office. Additional information can be found at <https://www.haverford.edu/deans-office-student-life/offices-resources>.

Additionally, Haverford College is committed to creating a learning environment that meets the needs of its diverse student body and providing equal access to students with a disability. If you have (or think you have) a learning difference or disability – including mental health, medical, or physical impairment – please contact the Office of Access and Disability Services (ADS) at [hc-ads@haverford.edu](mailto:hc-ads@haverford.edu). The Director will confidentially discuss the process to establish reasonable accommodations. It is never too late to request accommodations – our bodies and circumstances are continuously changing.

Students who have already been approved to receive academic accommodations and want to use their accommodations in this course should share their accommodation letter and make arrangements to meet with me as soon as possible to discuss how their accommodations will be implemented in this course. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice in order to successfully implement.

If, at any point in the semester, a disability or personal circumstances affect your learning in this course or if there are ways in which the overall structure of the course and general classroom interactions could be adapted to facilitate full participation, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

*It is a state law in Pennsylvania that individuals must be given advance notice that they may be recorded. Therefore, any student who has a disability-related need to audio record this class must first be approved for this accommodation from the Director of Access and Disability Services and then must speak to me. Other class members need to be aware that this class may be recorded.*

## **Title IX**

Haverford College is committed to fostering a safe and inclusive living and learning environment where all can feel secure and free from harassment. All forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic violence, and dating violence are violations of Haverford's policies, whether they occur on or off campus. Haverford faculty are committed to helping to create a safe learning environment for all students and for the College community as a whole. If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination, harassment, or violence, know that help and support are available. Staff members are trained to support students in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more.

The College strongly encourages all students to report any incidents of sexual misconduct. Please be aware that all Haverford employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors, clergy, and healthcare providers) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the Bi-College Title IX Coordinator: <https://www.haverford.edu/users/ktaylor4>

Information about the College's Sexual Misconduct policy, reporting options, and a list of campus and local resources can be found on the College's website: <https://www.haverford.edu/sexual-misconduct>

## **Class Policies**

- 1) **Academic Integrity:** You are expected to generate your own unique, and unless otherwise noted, independent work. Avoid plagiarism, that is, using another person's work, words, or ideas without properly crediting them. Obviously, do not cheat on exams by providing or benefiting from assistance. Follow the Haverford College Honor Code and consult the APA Publication Manual for proper citation practice.
- 2) **Technology Etiquette:** Please turn off or silence your phones. No texting permitted. I advise against using laptops for note-taking as they provide distractions and may detract from your ability to encode information. However, if you have a need for laptop use, please restrict your use to class activities. Violations of this policy are rude to myself and your peers, and will result in your being asked to leave. This will be reflected in your grade.
- 3) **Emails:** I will try to respond to emails within 24 hours. The more specific and clear your question, the better I'll be able to address it. For any question that requires an extensive response, I may ask you to meet instead.
- 4) **Student Hours:** I highly encourage you to see me in student hours. These are ideal times to ask me questions you have or to discuss your thoughts and ideas.
- 5) **Attendance and missed/late assignments:**
  - Your attendance is expected at every class (barring serious illness or personal emergency).
  - If you miss class for any reason, you must email me within 24 hours of the missed class.
  - If you have a legitimate reason for missing class, you will not be penalized for your course participation (class contributions). However, your remaining course participation will count more towards your final grade.
  - If you have a legitimate reason and cannot submit your discussion question, you will not be penalized for the DQ. However, your remaining DQ submissions will count more towards your final grade.
  - If you have a legitimate reason for missing class and were scheduled to present, I will move your presentation to another class meeting.
  - Requests for extensions on late papers are given at my discretion and on a case-by-case basis for situations involving serious illness or personal emergency. Otherwise, my policy is that for each 24 hour period of lateness, I'll deduct one grade point level. For example, if the paper is due Monday 5pm and you submit the paper Tues 4pm (within 24 hours), your original 3.7 would now become a 3.3. If you submit the paper Tues 6pm (past 24 hours), your original 3.7 would now become a 3.0.
  - Missing class or a presentation without a legitimate excuse will result in a mark of 0.

## 6) **Grading Scale**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Points</b>
A / 4.0	94-100	C+ / 2.3	77-79.99
A- / 3.7	90-93.99	C / 2.0	73-76.99
B+ / 3.3	87-89.99	C- / 1.7	70-72.99
B / 3.0	83-86.99	D+ / 1.3	67-69.99
B- / 2.7	80-82.99	D / 1.0	60-66.99
		F / 0.0	59.99 and below

## **Course Requirements**

1. Class Contributions	15%
2. Discussion Questions	15%
3. Article Presentation	15%
4. Community Engagement Paper (3-4 pages)	10%
5. Special Topics Group Presentation	20%
6. Integrated Book Paper (10-12 pages)	25%
	<u>Total = 100%</u>

Class Contributions (15%) Your attendance is expected at every class (barring serious illness or personal emergency) and your contributions and energy are critical to the success of the class. Do you share your perspectives in a constructive manner? Do you listen and respond well to others? Do you engage in class activities? Are you an overall positive addition to the class environment? Note that quality of contribution outweighs frequency of contribution. If you miss class for any reason, you must email me within 24 hours of the missed class.

Discussion Questions (15%) You will submit an original discussion question based on the readings by 5pm the day before the seminar meets (Wed 5pm). The DQs should be brief (2-4 sentences) and can focus on any aspect of the reading that you think will stimulate class discussion. These DQs will help me know what resonated most from the readings and guide discussion during class. DQs are expected for 10 classes: Weeks 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14. Please submit on Moodle.

Article Presentation (15%) Students will give a 15 minute presentation (with slides) on an empirical research article that they select, that corresponds to their assigned day's topic, and which other students will not have read. You will have the chance to rank your preferences for topic. See Moodle for further instructions.

Community Engagement Paper (10%) is a brief reaction paper (3-4 pages) that is written in response to community-engaged learning beyond the walls of our classroom. While we would typically take a class trip together to Asian Arts Initiative, given the current COVID-19 pandemic, we can participate virtually this year. You can choose from specific programs. Paper is due 7-10 days after the date of the program you attend. See Moodle for further instructions.

Special Topics Group Presentation (20%) One class meeting is reserved for group special topic presentations. The class will generate ideas for "special topics" in Asian American psychology. With guidance from me, groups are responsible for: a) doing a literature review covering key theories and research on that topic, b) designing a study to test an unanswered question or hypothesis, c) assigning 1 seminal reading to the class, and d) preparing a 20-25 minute oral presentation with slides and other media. See Moodle for further instructions.

Final Paper (25%) (10-12 pages) Students will select, read, and analyze a non-fiction book (a memoir) by an Asian American author from a provided list. Students will identify the most significant psychological themes or issues within the book, analyze that set of issues in the context of theory and research from lecture and course readings, and conduct a brief literature review (3-5 articles) to extend knowledge on the primary issues. Papers should entail the students' own critical analysis of the research. See Moodle for further instructions.

**Course Schedule**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Presenter(s)</b>	<b>DQ Due Wed 5pm</b>
Wk 1 – 9/2	<b>Course Intro; Who are Asian Americans?</b> Review syllabus; Rank article presentation topics		
Wk 2 – 9/9	<b>Immigration, Acculturation, and Stress</b>		Yes
Wk 3 – 9/16	<b>Ethnic and Racial Identity</b> Discuss Community Engagement Paper		Yes
Wk 4 – 9/23	<b>Family Socialization and Youth Development</b> Discuss and Form Special Topics Groups		Yes
Wk 5 – 9/30	<b>Stereotyping, Prejudice, and Discrimination</b> Reminder: Asian Arts Initiative 10/1 6pm event		Yes
Wk 6 – 10/7 7:00pm-8:30pm	<b>Stereotyping continued</b> <b>Guest Visitor:</b> Curtis Chin (Writer/Producer/Director) <b><i>Vincent Who?</i></b> 2009 documentary (Screening/Q&A)		Yes
<b>Fall Break – No Class – Enjoy!</b>			
Wk 8 – 10/21	<b>Cognition, Emotion, Motivation</b> Group presentation work-time		Yes
Wk 9 – 10/28	<b>Education and Achievement</b> Group presentation work-time		Yes
Wk 10 – 11/4	<b><u>Special Topics Group Presentations</u></b>		
Wk 11–11/11	<b>Mental Health, Help-Seeking, and Service Use</b> Discuss Final Paper		Yes
Wk 12–11/18	<b>Gender, Sexuality, and Relationships</b> Reminder: Asian Arts Initiative 11/22 5:30pm event		Yes
<b>Thanksgiving Break – No Class – Enjoy!</b>			
Wk 14 – 12/2	<b>Asian American Communities and Social Activism</b> Reminder: Asian Arts Initiative 12/3 6:00 pm event		Yes
Wk 15 – 12/9	<b>Final Class Wrap-Up</b> Book discussion groups		

**\*\*\*Final Paper Due Dec 17 Noon\*\*\***