Course Description: Asian Americans hold an intriguing place in the cultural imagination: as perpetual foreigners, as so-called “model minorities” that serve to maintain hegemonic power relations, and as living embodiments of America’s memory of its involvement in recent wars. As artists, however, Asian Americans have contributed an impressive body of literary work, and we’ll examine some of the most enduring and provocative of these texts. We’ll explore themes such as trauma and the immigrant experience, issues of exile and dislocation, Asian Americans’ embattled place in our country’s history, and the intersections of race and ethnicity with gender and sexuality.

In spring 2017, while we will begin with an introduction to Asian American literary studies in general, the course will focus on Southeast Asian American writing and art. “Southeast Asia” is a heterogeneous region that includes the countries of Cambodia, East Timor and Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar (Burma), the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, as well as ethnic minorities like the Hmong and the Cham. Southeast Asian American immigration in the twentieth century was largely linked to the Cold War and U.S. intervention and military presence in the region. Lowell, MA, is home to the second-largest population of Cambodian Americans in the U.S., as well as a significant Southeast Asian American population overall. Some of the questions we’ll explore in this class include: How is “Asian American” generally constructed, and where do Southeast Asian Americans fit into this construction and, perhaps, lead us to rethink that category? What are the connections and discontinuities between people of Asian ancestry living in the U.S.?

Course Objectives: By the end of this course, students should be able to:

Academic Objectives:
• Identify major events in the histories of Southeast Asian American groups.
• Identify connections and patterns among those histories.
• Identify central themes, tropes, and patterns in Southeast Asian American poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, and art.
• Identify connections between Southeast Asian American literary texts and historical contexts.
• Define and apply central terms and concepts in Asian American studies (e.g. ethnicity vs. race, racial formation, diaspora, etc.).
• Write literary analysis essays conforming to MLA formatting guidelines.

Civic Objectives
• Demonstrate increased awareness of and involvement with the local Southeast Asian American communit(ies).
• Identify some needs as well as assets of local Southeast Asian American communit(ies).
• Identify similarities and differences between the literary texts and local communities.
• Apply academic skills and knowledge to service-learning work.
• Draw on service-learning experiences to supplement, critique, and complicate the material learned in the classroom.

Required Texts:
Electronic readings distributed via email and/or Blackboard – marked ER on the syllabus
Any recent writing/composition/grammar handbook and/or Purdue Online Writing Lab
(http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/)

Grading: Your course grade will be determined by the following:

- Historical Context Class Presentation: 10%
- Essay 1: 15%
- Participation, short writing assignments, & quizzes: 10%
- Service-Learning Project
  - Work w/ Community Partner: 10%
  - 2 Structured Reflection Essays: 30%
- Final Project w/ Research: 25%

**Final Grades (no exceptions):**

- 94-100=A: Superior work, highest quality
- 90-93=A-: High Honors Quality
- 87-89=B+: High Quality
- 83-86=B: Basic Honors Quality
- 80-82=B-: Below Honors Quality
- 77-79=C+: Above Satisfactory Quality
- 73-79=C: Satisfactory
- 70-72=C-: Below Satisfactory
- 67-69=D+: Above Minimum Passing
- 60-66=D: Minimum Passing
- below 60=F: Failed

An “incomplete” (INC) will only be granted in emergency situations. You can find out more about UML grading policies here: http://www.uml.edu/Catalog/Undergraduate/Policies/Grading-Policies.aspx

**CLASSROOM POLICIES:**

**Classroom environment and preparedness:** Our in-class time will be divided between brief lectures and open class discussions. In order to have a productive dialogue, we must create a classroom environment that allows for the open exchange of ideas, opinions, and questions. In this class, and in all classes at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell, students are expected to exhibit professional and respectful behavior that is conducive to a mutually beneficial learning environment in the classroom. Examples of inappropriate behavior include: text messaging, listening to music, cell phone use (other than the campus alert system), late arrivals & early departures, use of laptops for other than class purposes, disrespectful comments or behavior, intentional disruptions, and failure to follow faculty directives. Students in violation of these standards may be asked to leave class and/or be referred to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.

You should always be respectful to your classmates and their viewpoints, even when you are disagreeing with them. In order to have substantive discussions, it is essential that you come to class prepared, having read the day’s assignments carefully and critically. If you find a particular text difficult and have a hard time forming an opinion or interpretation, at least be ready to ask questions about it.

**Bring to class the readings assigned for that day** (i.e. listed on the course syllabus). You can bring paper or electronic versions of electronic readings.

**Attendance:** You are allowed up to FOUR (4) absences with no penalty. Each additional absence will lower your grade by one letter. Save your absences for when you really need them, such as illness or other unavoidable conflicts. Absences will only be excused in the case of jury or military duty or UML-affiliated activities (documentation required). If you anticipate missing consecutive classes due to a serious illness or crisis, please let me know promptly via e-mail; otherwise, I may assume you’ve simply dropped the course.

- **Be on time** – Class begins at the time noted at the top of the syllabus. Arriving late to class constitutes a serious distraction, whether I am lecturing or whether we are involved in a class discussion. If you arrive after I have taken attendance, you are responsible for making sure I have noted your attendance (after class); otherwise you may be counted absent for the day. Unless you obtain permission from me beforehand, 2 late arrivals (i.e. after I’ve taken attendance) = 1 absence.
- If you miss class or are late, **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY MATERIAL MISSED**. Get class notes from classmates, and all handouts will be posted on Blackboard.
Communications:

- **Email:** I regularly use email to communicate with individual students and with the entire class. **YOU MUST CHECK YOUR UML EMAIL ACCOUNT REGULARLY** to make sure you aren’t missing any announcements or important information. If class is cancelled for any reason, I will contact you by email to let you know how to proceed.

- **Blackboard:** I will put all course handouts and readings on our course Blackboard site. To access our Blackboard course, go to [https://lowell.umassonline.net](https://lowell.umassonline.net) and sign in with your UMass Lowell email and password. (Please note that this is a separate site from UMass Lowell Blackboard courses you may have had in the past.)

- **UML MyAlert:** If you haven’t already, it’s a good idea to sign up for text and/or email messages from UML’s alert system, which lets you know about urgent, timely notices such as weather delays or closures and health, environmental or other threats on campus. Visit [https://www.uml.edu/alert/](https://www.uml.edu/alert/) to verify existing contact information, manage your account and choose how you receive messages. Simply log on with your UMass Lowell email account and password.

**UML Academic Integrity Policy:** All students are responsible for their own academic integrity. Plagiarism, **whether intentional or not,** is an offense of the highest order and will not be tolerated. Please make sure you have read the academic policies of the University of Massachusetts Lowell. These can be found at [http://www.uml.edu/Catalog/Undergraduate/Policies/Academic-Integrity.aspx](http://www.uml.edu/Catalog/Undergraduate/Policies/Academic-Integrity.aspx)

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:**

**Essay 1:** You will write one short essay about concepts and literature covered in the first part of the course. Detailed instructions will be distributed.

**Historical Context Project:** One of the objectives of this course is to learn about the histories of various Southeast Asian American groups. While there is some overlap between the experiences of Southeast Asian Americans (as evidenced in the literature), there are also important distinctions. Each week, small groups of students will be assigned a particular Southeast Asian American ethnic/national group. You will do some research on that group and then share your findings with your classmates. Detailed instructions and grading rubrics will be distributed. I will do the first one to demonstrate how it should be done.

**Service Learning Project:** A big element of this course will be your service learning project, which is defined as “A credit-bearing, educational experience in which students [1] participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and [2] reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility” (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995).

Your required service learning project will have three parts:

1) **Work w/a Community Partner** (10 points) – As we learn about the histories, experiences, and literatures of Southeast Asian Americans, we will also engage with the local community in a real-world setting. There are a number of Community Partners and projects from which you can choose. This community work should constitute **at least 10 hours** for the entire semester. This work can be arranged in a variety of ways – 1 hour per week on-site for 10 weeks; four 2.5-hour sessions; or 5 hours of on-site work and 5 hours of service-related independent work. If you cannot do one of the established SL projects, you can meet with me to figure out a project for you. It can be on-campus or off-campus. Detailed instructions will be distributed. **You must choose your SL project by the end of Add/Drop period (Jan. 30).**

2) **Two Structured Reflection Essays** (15 points each; 30 overall) – These writing assignments will include (1) description, (2) analysis of your project in relation to the academic material we study in class, and (3) personal reflection. Detailed instructions will be distributed.

3) **Final Project** (25 points) – Your final project will synthesize what you learned from your service-learning project, from course readings and discussions, and from your own research. You will have the choice of
Some Guidelines for Your Service-Learning Project:

- The service-learning component of this course is integral; you must complete your service-learning project in order to fulfill the requirements of this course.
- Remember, federal regulations define a 3-credit course as a minimum of three hours in class and six hours out of class per week for 15 weeks, or 90 hours of outside-of-class work over a 15-week semester. Your service-learning out-of-class project requires a minimum of only 10 hours, and the reading and writing assignments have been modified to account for this time.
- Most of our Community Partners consist of selfless, hardworking people working on shoestring budgets, doing the work of twenty people with staffs of two or three (or one!). So be just as considerate as you are to your professors and classmates – if not more! Show up on time to appointments. Call or email ASAP if you have get held up or discover a time conflict. Be organized, and fulfill your assignments and work on time.
- If you have any problems with your Community Partner, contact me right away. Email is always the best way to reach me: sue_kim@uml.edu

LATE WORK:
- Discussion leading must be done on the day you’re assigned and cannot be made up.
- For all essays, one letter grade will be dropped for each 24 hours any assignment is submitted late. (If the paper is due at 9pm and you turn it in at 9:15pm, it will be lowered by one letter grade. If you turn it in more than 24 hours after the due date and time, it will be lowered by TWO letter grades.)
- I will occasionally grant extensions if you make arrangements with me at least 48 hours before the due date.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Instructional Support: At the UML Writing Center (3rd floor O’Learly Library), tutors are available (for free) to help you at any stage in the writing process. They will help you generate ideas, organize and revise, understand grammar, avoid plagiarism, or with any other difficulties you may have with your writing. (The one thing they won’t do, however, is simply proofread/edit your paper for you.) To make an appointment visit http://www.uml.edu/Writing-Center/default.aspx. The Centers for Learning and Academic Support Services also provide many resources, including tutoring in a variety of subjects, academic advising, computing resources, and study skills sessions. CLASS resources are available across UML campuses. Visit http://www.uml.edu/CLASS/default.aspx for more information.

Library Computing and Printing Services: “Printing is available from library computers at a rate of $.10 per page. All enrolled students receive $15 in print allotment per semester. Students will be able to add cash to their UCards in the libraries or use UCash.” For more information about UPrint, including printing locations around campus, please visit the UPrint information page: https://www.uml.edu/UCAPS/UPrint/UPrint.aspx.

Disability & Other Accommodations: In accordance with University policy and the ADA, I will provide accommodation for students with documented disabilities. If you have a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services as soon as possible (the Wellness Center, 3rd Floor, University Crossing; phone: 978-934-6800; e-mail: Disability@uml.edu). This documentation is confidential. Find more info at http://www.uml.edu/student-services/disability/. If you will miss class due to religious observances or other protected activities, please see me in advance so that we can plan for any change to due dates, etc.

Counseling Services, the Wellness Center, 3rd Floor, University Crossing: “The Counseling Center at UMass Lowell provides counseling services, consultation and referrals to help students achieve personal and academic success, as well as assisting students in better understanding and coping with their feelings, relationships, choices and academic studies.” Counseling is free for UML students. You can contact the Counseling Center at (987) 934-6800 or counseling@uml.edu. You can get more information at http://www.uml.edu/student-services/counseling/.
**CLASS SCHEDULE**  
Readings must be completed by date listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>READING &amp; WRITING ASSIGNMENTS</th>
<th>HIST’L CONTEXT ASSNMT</th>
<th>SERVICE LEARNING ASSIGNMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wk 1</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
<td></td>
<td>This week: Review list of potential service learning projects for this course</td>
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<tr>
<td>W 1/18</td>
<td>In-class: Pre-test on Asian American history</td>
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<tr>
<td>M 1/23</td>
<td>After reading Okhiro’s essay, write 1 paragraph on the following: <em>When and where do you enter into the American community?</em> You can interpret this any way you want: your literal arrival to the U.S., your family’s arrival, your sense of yourself as American, the communities with which you most strongly identify (e.g. ethnicity, town, school, club, etc.). <em>And when and where do you enter into Asian American history?</em> (e.g. this course? your family? your friends and/or community members?)</td>
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*Tilting the Continent*, Introduction (p. xi-xx) |                       |                             |
<p>| M 1/30 |                             |                       |                             |
| M 2/6  | <em>Vietnamera</em> |                       | This Week: Contact SL Community Partners |
| W 2/8  | <em>Vietnamera</em> |                       |                             |
| Wk 5  | Year Zero |                       | Cambodian Americans | Service Learning Week 1: Complete |
| M 2/13 | Year Zero |                       |                             |</p>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wk 6</td>
<td>M 2/20</td>
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<td>NO CLASS MEETING [UML HOLIDAY - PRESIDENT’S DAY]</td>
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<td>T 2/21</td>
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<td>MONDAY CLASS SCHEDULE</td>
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<td>W 2/22</td>
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<td><em>Essay 1 DUE</em></td>
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<td>Wk 7</td>
<td>M 2/27</td>
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<td>[SERVICE-LEARNING DAY]</td>
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<td>W 3/1</td>
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<td><em>Tilting, “Family”</em></td>
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<td>Wk 8</td>
<td>M 3/6</td>
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<td>[SERVICE-LEARNING DAY]</td>
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<td>W 3/8</td>
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<td><em>Structured Reflection #1 Due</em></td>
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<td>Wk 9</td>
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<td><strong>SPRING BREAK</strong></td>
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<td>Wk 10</td>
<td>M 3/20</td>
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<td>[SERVICE-LEARNING DAY]</td>
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<td>W 3/22</td>
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<td><em>Tilting, “The Different Past”</em></td>
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<td>Wk 11</td>
<td>M 3/27</td>
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<td>[SERVICE-LEARNING DAY]</td>
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<td>W 3/29</td>
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<td><em>Tilting, “Tilting the Continent”</em></td>
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<td>Wk 12</td>
<td>M 4/3</td>
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<td>[SERVICE-LEARNING DAY]</td>
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<td>W 4/5</td>
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<td><em>Tilting, “Returnings”</em></td>
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<td>Wk 13</td>
<td>M 4/10</td>
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<td>[SERVICE-LEARNING DAY]</td>
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<td>W 4/12</td>
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<td><em>Structured Reflection #2 Due</em></td>
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<td>Wk 14</td>
<td>M 4/17</td>
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<td>NO CLASS MEETING [UML HOLIDAY-PATRIOT’S DAY]</td>
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<td>F 4/21</td>
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<td>MONDAY CLASS SCHEDULE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wk 15</td>
<td>M 4/24</td>
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<td>Community Project Presentations</td>
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<td>W 4/26</td>
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<td>Community Project Final Project &amp; Final Assessment Due</td>
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