



LIT-265: ASIAN AMERICAN LITERATURE

Effective Term

Fall 2026

BOT Approval Date

12/11/2025

Discipline

LIT - Literature

Course Number

265

Course Title

Asian American Literature

Short Title

Asian American Lit

Credit Status (CB 04)

D - Credit - Degree applicable

Units**Lecture Units**

3.00

Total Units

3.00

Hours**Lecture Contact Hours**

48-54

Out of Class Hours Lecture

96-108

Total Contact Hours

48 - 54

Total Out of Class Hours

96 - 108

Total Student Learning Hours

144 - 162

Distance Education

Yes

Distance Education**Distance Education Type**

Both Fully Online and Hybrid Online

Fully Online Delivery Requirements:

- a. Students must be notified via the college schedule of classes and the syllabus for the class if proctored tests are required for this course
- b. Any planned face-to-face meetings, such as an orientation or study session, must be optional

c. The MSJC curriculum committee requires the use of accessible, asynchronous discussion as a component of every fully online course

Are you using publisher content?

No

Regular Substantive Interaction

Instructor-to-student, student-to-student, and student-to-content contact shall be distributed in a manner that will ensure regular substantive interaction (RSI) is maintained not only weekly but also for the duration of the course. Instructor interactions should be equivalent in time, quality and consistency to the engagement students would receive in a face-to-face course—for example, through announcements, discussion participation, personalized feedback, video messages, or other instructional communications. Instructors are expected to be responsive to student inquiries within a 24-72 hour time frame excluding holidays. RSI will be maintained through a variety of methods:

- Orientation - Students must be oriented to the online and face-to-face portions at the start of the course.
- Announcements - Announcements using the course management system must be posted at least weekly to keep students current on course events, due dates, materials, etc.
- Discussion Forums - Content-related discussion forums within the designated CMS will include appropriate instructor participation and will be initiated and maintained, with timely feedback provided. Instructors are required to monitor the discussions and related activities to provide guidance and direction. Open-ended discussion boards may be used to further learning and interaction.
- MSJC Communication – Instructor will use MSJC-administered communication tools (such as email or the designated CMS communication tools) to regularly communicate with and provide ease of access to students.
- Timely Feedback - Timely feedback on student work will be provided by the instructor, which may include comments and/or rubrics, within the Grades area of the designated CMS.
- Scheduled Meetings – Hybrid and synchronous courses will meet at regularly scheduled times.

ADA Compliance - All course interactions and content must be designed with accessibility in mind and meet ADA requirements.

Catalog Description

This course surveys, interprets, compares, and explores the lived experiences of Asian American authors through a variety of texts and genres. Readings, discussions, lectures, and presentations will focus on the cultural, social, and historical aspects of Asian American literature. The course may include a variety of genres: fiction, poetry, drama, film, and non-fiction prose, etc.

Requisites

Prerequisite(s)

Prerequisite(s) (must be taken before)

ENGL-C1000 (with a grade of C or better)

Codes

TOP Code (CB 03)

1501.00 - English

CIP Code

23.0101 - English Language and Literature, General.

Repeatability Code

No

Grading Option

Letter grade OR P/NP

Minimum Qualifications

Minimum Qualifications	And/Or
English (Masters Required)	Or
Asian American Studies (Masters Required)	End

GE Information

Check GE Types Requested

AA/AS C - Humanities

AA/AS F - Ethnic Studies

Learning Objectives

Learning Objectives

Learning Objective

1. Analyze texts written by Asian American authors through literary and ethnic studies lenses to appreciate their contributions to the literary arts and historical movements.
2. Apply a variety of literary theories including those developed and practiced by Asian American authors and scholars that build upon and resist literary traditions and scholarship.
3. Distinguish the differences that exist within a wide range of identities that are considered Asian American, including the intersections of these identities and their influences on literature, popular culture, and social justice movements.
4. Analyze distinctive structural and literary characteristics of Asian American texts, including but not limited to novels, short fiction, drama, poetry, speeches, and/or essays.
5. Contextualize Asian American literature within its social, political, or historical backgrounds.
6. Correlate specific themes and cultural concerns distinctive to Asian American communities with their representation in literature (e.g. generational differences, ethnic identities, intersectionality, immigration/migration, assimilation/acculturation, stereotyping, the model minority).
7. Identify the distinct Asian American cultural and social pressures of gender expression, gender identities, sexuality and gendered expectations in Asian American culture and how they appear or are resisted in various genres.
8. Evaluate the significance of various rhetorical approaches such as use of traditional storytelling, mythology, religion, symbolism, and cultural archetypes in a variety of literary and scholarly forms.

Learning Outcome Information

Course Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcome

1. Students will analyze and articulate concepts such as race and racism, racialization, ethnicity, equity, ethno-centrism, eurocentrism, white supremacy, self-determination, liberation, decolonization, sovereignty, imperialism, settler colonialism, and anti-racism as analyzed in Asian American literature.
2. Students will contextualize Asian American literature within its cultural, social, religious, political, and historical contexts.
3. Students will compare and contrast shared themes and rhetorical approaches in Asian American literature as well as the unique differences and lived experiences among the diversity of authors and scholars.
4. Students will evaluate the complexity of language choice as tools for liberation, decolonization, creative expression, and counternarrative strategies.
5. Students will describe and actively engage with anti-racist and anti-colonial issues and the practices and movements depicted in Asian American literature to represent Asian American communities and a just and equitable society.

Content

Course Lecture Content

Given the wide and diverse nature of this subject matter, the themes, topics, authors, and works listed below represent possible approaches. Instructors may adapt and/or develop their own themes and interests. They may use separate texts or may choose selections included in any of the available Asian American Literature anthologies to vary the emphasis in the course. Instructors can include various genres including poetry, novels, short stories, memoirs, comics, graphic novels, speeches, or songs in addition to films or other video texts to support their assignments and course focus.

1. Definitions & Limitations of Terminology
 - a. What is Ethnic Studies?
 - b. Defining Race, Ethnicity, & Nationality
 - c. Defining Asian American (e.g. any US citizen or occupant from North, South, East, West, and Central Asia)
 - d. Hyphenated identities (e.g. Pan-ethnic Asian-American versus Korean American, Japanese American, Thai-American etc.)
 - e. Discussion of related texts, such as:
 - i. "What It Means to be Asian in America," Pew Research Center (article); *Asian American Heritage: An Anthology of Prose and Poetry*, David Hsin-fu Wand (first reference to Asian American Literature); *Aliiiiiiiii! An Anthology of Asian-American Writers*, Frank Chin et al
2. Theoretical Approaches to Asian American Literature

- a. Reader-Response Theory
- b. New Historicism Theory
- c. Marxist Literary Theory
- d. Intersectional Feminism
- e. Critical Race Theory
- f. Queer Theory
- g. Postcolonial Theory

i. Suggested theoretical texts may include: *How to Interpret Literature: Critical Theory for Literary and Cultural Studies*, Robert Dale Parker; *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction* (Third Edition), Richard Delgado et.al

3. Significant Social, Political, or Historical Context

a. Orientalism

- i. Topics may include: advent of Chinatowns in late 20th century; orientalist depictions in popular culture (*Sixteen Candles*, *The Simpsons*, *Game of Thrones*, *Dune* etc.)
- ii. Related texts such as: *Interior Chinatown*, Charles Yu (novel); "Orientalism and power: When will we stop stereotyping people?," BBC Ideas (YouTube Video); *Orientalism*, Edward W. Said (critical text)

b. "Alien" Immigrant Laws:

- i. Topics may include: Laws banning women, land ownership etc.(e.g. Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, 1913 Alien Land Law)
- ii. Related texts such as: *The Buddha in the Attic*, Julie Otsuka; (novella) *Passage West*, Rishi Reddi (novel); *A New History of Asian America*, Shelley Sang-Hee Lee (history textbook); *Asian American History, A Very Short Introduction*, Madeline Y. Hsu (history textbook)

c. Internment

- i. Topics may include: Japanese Internment during World War II, Korean Internment during Korean War, Proposals for Muslim Internment in 21st Century
- ii. Related texts such as: *When the Emperor Was Divine*, Julie Otsuka (novella); *No-No Boy*, John Okada (novel); *Internment*, Samira Ahmed (Young Adult novel)

d. Civil Rights & Watershed Moments of 1965-68 :

- i. Topics may include: overturning of Alien Laws (1965); first use of the term Asian American (1968)
- ii. Related texts such as: "1965: The Many Faces of Post-1965 Asian America," Asian American Histories of the United States, Catherine Ceniza Choy (critical text); *Mona in the Promised Land*, Gish Jen (novel)

e. Anti-Asian Hate Crime

- i. Topics may include: Post 9/11 Islamophobia; Pan-Asian Covid-19 Pandemic Hate Crimes
- ii. Related texts such as: *If They Come For Us*, Fatimah Ashgar (poetry collection); *Global Anti-Asian Racism*, Jennifer Ho (Edited Collection)

4. Thematic Threads

a. Assimilation

- i. Topics may include: Cultural Assimilation, Linguistic Assimilation etc.
- ii. Related Texts such as: *Monstress*, Lysley Tenorio (short fiction); *Interpreter of Maladies*, Jhumpa Lahiri (short fiction); "Phnom Penh Diptych: Dry Season," Jenny Xie (poem); *Mona in the Promised Land*, Gish Jen (novel); *English*, Sanaz Toossi (play)

b. Class and Advancement

- i. Topics may include: experiences of poverty, alienation, and discrimination or, alternatively, stereotypes of the "model minority"
- ii. Related texts such as: "Three Women of Chuck's Donuts," *Afterparties*, Anthony Veasna So; *Minor Feelings*, Cathy Hong Park (essay collection); *The Emperor of Gladness*, Ocean Vuong (novel); *The Model Minority Stereotype Reader*, Nicholas Hartlep (anthology)

c. Citizenship

- i. Topics may include: citizenship laws/processes, asylum, and documentation
- ii. Related texts such as: *Beautiful Country*, Qian Julie Wang (memoir); *The Refugees*, Viet Thanh Nguyen (short fiction); "Hunger," Angie Chau (short story)

d. Food and Eating

- i. Topics may include: food as stereotype, (e.g. dog-eating), food as connection to ancestry, food as fusion of culture etc.

ii. Related texts such as: *Crying in H Mart*, Michelle Zauner (memoir); *My Year of Meats*, Ruth Ozeki (novel); "Are you Sannata3159?" Vandana Singh (short story); "Peking Duck," Ling Ma (short story); *The Abundance*, Amit Majmudar (novel); *Eating Identities*, Wenying Xi (critical text); *Eating Asian America*, Robert Ji-Song Ku et al (critical text)

e. Gender and Sexuality

i. Topics may include: gender performativity, son preference, queer expression in Asian American literature and culture
ii. Related texts such as: *How Much of These Hills is Gold*, C Pam Zhang (novel); *Everything We Never Had*, Randy Ribay (novel); *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*, Ocean Vuong; *When I Grow Up I Want to be a List of Further Possibilities*, Chen Chen (poetry collection); "The Homoerotics of Orientalism," Joseph Allen Boone (critical text); "Out Here and Over There: Queerness and Diaspora in Asian American Studies," David L. Eng (critical text)

f. Solidarity Movements

i. Related texts such as: "Why Only Multiracial Solidarity and Restorative Justice Can Solve Racial Attacks on Asian Americans," Margaretta Lin (article); *Tropic of Orange*, Karen Tai Yamashita (novel)

5. Literary Genres and Archetypes

a. Arrival Narratives:

i. Related texts such as: *America is in the Heart*, Carlos Bulosan (auto-fiction); *The Buddha in the Attic*, Julie Otsuka (novella); *The Gangster We Are All Looking For*, Le Thi Diem Thuy (novel)

b. Historical Fiction:

i. Related texts such as: *The Sympathizer*, Viet Thanh Nguyen (novel); *Passage West*, Rishi Reddi (novel)

c. Speculative Literature, which may include:

i. Science Fiction: texts such as *Ambiguity Machines*, Vandana Singh (short fiction); "A Brief History of Cyborgs," Franny Choi (poem); *Engine Empire*, Cathy Park Hong (poetry collection)
ii. Dystopian Fiction: texts such as *Land of Milk and Honey*, C Pam Zhang (novel)
iii. Magical Realism: texts such as *The Paper Menagerie*, Ken Liu (short fiction)

d. Visual Storytelling:

i. Related texts such as: *Vietnamerica, A Family's Journey*, GB Tran (Graphic Memoir)

Methods of Instruction

Method

Discussion

Integration

Discussion (both large and small group) to build on material presented in lecture with regard to historical and cultural contexts of specific texts and to discuss and analyze literary texts. Discussions can apply theory and knowledge of Asian American authors to literature that deals with the critical events, histories, cultures, intellectual traditions, contributions, lived-experiences and social struggles of individuals within these communities.

DE Adaptations for MOI

Classroom discussion can be facilitated using the course management system's (CMS) discussion board feature. This will be instructor initiated and monitored. All materials will be accessible.

Method

Film/video Viewing and Discussion

Integration

Videos, films, slides, and/or podcasts will be used in class. Instructors will ensure all media meets accessibility guidelines. Instructor will provide instructor-guided interpretation, analysis, and comparison questions. Topics may include how struggle, resistance, racial and social justice, solidarity, and liberation, are depicted in the literature.

DE Adaptations for MOI

All media will be made available and accessible in the CMS. Discussions on these materials will take place on the discussion board feature on the CMS.

Method

Lecture

Integration

Lecture to highlight the historical and cultural context of the writing and to explain aspects of ethnic literary tradition. Lecture topics will include concepts such as race and racism, racialization, ethnicity, equity, ethno-centrism, eurocentrism, white supremacy, self-determination, liberation, decolonization, sovereignty, imperialism, settler colonialism, and anti-racism in the context of Asian American literature.

DE Adaptations for MOI

Lecture will be communicated through the CMS. Lecture can occur via instructor developed Power Point presentations, Closed-Captioned video lectures, and sites appropriate to the course. All content will be captioned to meet accessibility requirements.

Method

Reading

Integration

Reading to analyze how literature can help to understand struggles, resistance, racial and social justice, solidarity, and liberation of Asian American individuals and communities as well as current political issues such as immigration, reparations, sovereignty and colonialism, antiracism, the justice system, and systemic racism.

DE Adaptations for MOI

All readings will be either provided through the MSJC bookstore, via Open Educational Resources, or provided on the CMS in ways that meet accessibility and copyright guidelines.

Methods of Evaluation**Method**

Class Participation

Integration

Students' contribution to class discussions will demonstrate knowledge of assigned texts applying theory and knowledge to Asian American literature with an emphasis on critical events, histories, cultures, intellectual traditions, contributions, lived-experiences and social struggles of those groups and their agency and group-affirmation. compare texts assigned. Students will be evaluated on their sensitivity to the experiences of these Asian American characters and communities, as well as their ability to apply cultural/historical contexts and course concepts to literary texts.

DE Adaptations for MOE

Students will participate in discussion boards or in small groups through the CMS. Feedback will be provided to individuals, to groups as a whole through discussion board feedback or through feedback given in the grading program. Feedback may be provided to the class as a whole through the CMS announcements or course pages within one to two weeks.

Method

Exams/Tests

Integration

Exams, tests, and quizzes that demonstrate analysis of texts and ability to articulate concepts such as assigned as racism, eurocentrism, self-determination, decolonization, sovereignty, settler colonialism, well as their relation to the historical, cultural and literary context and anti-racism in addition to literary theories and concepts.

DE Adaptations for MOE

Exams will be conducted through the CMS, and students will be given feedback through the grading comments as well as providing feedback for the class as a whole through CMS announcements or course pages for concepts on which students as a whole need more clarification. These will be graded within one to two weeks.

Method

Papers

Integration

Written analyses of the literature that depend on a strong thesis as a focal point, a convincing argument, and evidence from primary text(s) and perhaps secondary sources for support through examples, quotations, summaries, paraphrases of passages, and an explication of the language of the primary text(s) using appropriate MLA documentation will be assessed. Papers will accurately and sensitively present information about the Asian American experience and demonstrate an understanding of the ideas presented will be graded using a rubric provided in the course, such as anti-racist ideas and cultural/historical contexts, as well as the way authors position and identify themselves and their cultures in the literary texts.

DE Adaptations for MOE

Students will upload papers to the CMS and feedback will be provided through grading tools or feedback tools or uploaded rubric through the CMS. These will be graded within two to three weeks.

Assignments**Assignment Type**

Writing

In-class and/or outside of class

Outside of class

Formative or Summative

Summative

Assignment

Prompt: Historical Context Analysis

After completing the close reading essay, an assignment that relies on a text-centered approach to analysis, you will conduct an analysis with quite the opposite lens. For your second paper, you will choose a short story from a list of recommended stories we have not read in class (or choose your own, pending approval) to analyze through a New Historicist lens. In this way, you will continue practicing the analytical skills from the first project, while considering your text within the context of the work/author's historical and cultural place and time. While this paper is also claim-based, and should relate to the course's larger themes, your evidence will be a combination of textual evidence and historical/cultural information from outside sources.

Some questions you will consider as you begin this process: Which genres do you find particularly interesting? You can choose from any genre; the story does not need to be historical fiction to have historical context! How do background details about the culture/region/author or other context surrounding your short story inform your analysis of its form and themes?

Tasks

Choose a short story from the attached list (or pitch your own).

Take copious notes/annotations on your short story. Note the following:

Formal elements: structure, allusions, word choice, figurative language, images, rhetorical appeals etc.

Thematic elements: implications, motifs, patterns that relate to our course topics.

Use the library/databases to research the culture/region related to your author's background or the story's setting (or both)

Unlike the rhetorical features paper, this essay should include outside sources alongside each point you make, explaining your own points about the text's themes through its historical context

Develop a thesis which considers the relationship between the historical context of the story and its themes (i.e. how does the author use their text to convey a message about their community or a related topic?). It should make an argument, asserting the relationship between the context you describe and a major theme.

Develop a structure for your essay based on your findings. Using your notes as evidence, consider the patterns that emerge and organize by these subtopics.

Each paragraph should relate to the major theme in your thesis.

Cite information from outside sources (both a works cited at the end of your paper and in-text).

Length and Format

1,000-1,250 words

You should follow standard MLA formatting and citation style

Choose a short story for your historical context essay. Short stories on their own are listed in quotations; if the text is in italics, it is a large collection of stories, of which you may choose one. Remember, you can always choose a text outside this list as long as you chat with me about it first.

Short Stories

"A Doomed Romance is the Deadliest Tragedy," SJ Sindu

"Mom is in Love with Randy Travis," Souvankham Thammavongsa

"Navigating New Orleans in Vietnamese," Eric Nguyen

"Our Arab," Zaina Arafat

"Summer in Samarkand," Elif Batuman

"The Ugliest Babies in the World," Vanessa Chan

Short Story Collections (Choose 1 Story)

Afterparties, Anthony Veasna So

Ambiguity Machines, Vandana Singh

Bliss Montage, Ling Ma

Kitchen Curse, Eka Kurniawan

Monstress, Lysley Tenorio

Skinship, Yoon Choi

My Baby First Birthday, Jenny Zhang

The Inheritance of Exile, Susan Muaddi Darraj

The Paper Menagerie, Ken Liu

The Refugees, Viet Thanh Nguyen

Unaccustomed Earth, Jhumpa Lahiri

How assignment will be adapted in online format

The prompt can be uploaded as an assignment. Students can upload a rough draft, and participate in peer review using the built-in Canvas feature. Upon submission, students receive feedback from the instructor in the Learning Management System. Feedback should be provided within two weeks or before the next summative assignment.

Assignment Type

Other

In-class and/or outside of class

In-class

Formative or Summative

Formative

Assignment

Small Group Writing Activity: Historical Context Analysis Practice with "Hunger," by Angie Chau

Objective: In this writing activity, you will research and draft an argumentative paragraph about Angie Chau's "Hunger," using both textual evidence and evidence drawn from your in-class research on historical touchstones. By the end of this class period, you will be able to identify and construct the paragraph structure common to a historical context paper, including a topic sentence, textual evidence, historical evidence, commentary, and concluding sentence.

Step 1: Writing Warm Up (5 min)

In a new journal entry, list out the historical touchstones you notice in Angie Chau's "Hunger." Remember: touchstones refer to concrete references that help to orient you in a particular time of place; think: references to clothing, music, events, people, places, food, dates etc.

Step 2: Class List of Touchstones (10 min)

Call out the touchstones you identified in your journal, and I'll record a class list on the board. [Sample touchstones: Rat Pack, Erik Estrada, CHiPs, Superman, Woolsworth's, Fantasy Island, U.S.S Coral Sea, Viet Cong, Giants Baseball]

Step 3: Collaborative Writing (30 min)

In groups of 3-4, choose one of the touchstones we came up with. Write a paragraph as a group, using the provided shared Google Doc. Remember the paragraph structure we discussed last class? Your paragraph should include:

A Topic Sentence

Evidence from Angie Chau's "Hunger"

Evidence from an outside source, connected to your touchstone

Commentary connecting these two pieces of evidence

A Concluding Sentence

Step 4: Group Peer Review (10 min)

Once finished writing, I'm going to pair your group with another group. Read their paragraph in the shared Google Doc and offer some feedback based on the following questions:

Does their paragraph contain each of the required elements of a historical context argument? (topic sentence, evidence from text, historical evidence, commentary, and concluding sentence)

How does the historical evidence they provide help you to understand Angie Chau's "Hunger" more deeply?

Step 5: Group Conversation (15 min)

As a class, we will reflect on these questions:

What was the historical connection your group wrote about?

Describe the research process for this paragraph. Did you find historical sources easily? Was it challenging? Where did you end up finding useful information?

How does historical evidence help you to understand Angie Chau's "Hunger" more deeply?

How assignment will be adapted in online format

Writing Discussion board with "Hunger," by Angie Chau

Objective: In this writing activity, you will research and draft an argumentative paragraph about Angie Chau's "Hunger," using both textual evidence and evidence drawn from your research on historical touchstones. By the end of this assignment, you will be able to identify and construct the paragraph structure common to a historical context paper, including a topic sentence, textual evidence, historical evidence, commentary, and concluding sentence.

Step 1: Initial Post (No min word count)

In your small group discussion boards, list out the historical touchstones you notice in Angie Chau's "Hunger." Remember: touchstones refer to concrete references that help to orient you in a particular time of place; think: references to clothing, music, events, people, places, food, dates etc.

Step 2: Second Post (200-300 words)

Choose one of the touchstones we came up with (it doesn't have to be yours!). Write a body paragraph using the paragraph outline discussed in the lecture video. Your paragraph should include:

A Topic Sentence

Evidence from Angie Chau's "Hunger"

Evidence from an outside source, connected to your touchstone

Commentary connecting these two pieces of evidence

A Concluding Sentence

Step 3: Reply to Peers (100 words each)

Comment on two of your peers' paragraphs, using these questions as a guide:

Does their paragraph contain each of the required elements of a historical context argument? (topic sentence, evidence from text, historical evidence, commentary, and concluding sentence)

How does the historical evidence they provide help you to understand Angie Chau's "Hunger" more deeply?

Assignment Type

Reading

In-class and/or outside of class

In-class

Formative or Summative

Formative

Assignment

In-Class Activity: "When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine" From Jhumpa Lahiri's Interpreter of Maladies

Objective: In this activity, you'll work closely with classmates to explore how Jhumpa Lahiri uses childhood narration, cultural context, and historical events to shape themes of identity, belonging, and diaspora.

Step 1: Warm-Up (5 minutes)

On your own, jot down one passage where Lilia (the narrator) shows her limited understanding of either:

Mr. Pirzada's political/historical context, or

What it means to belong to more than one place.

Step 2: Group Discussion (15 minutes)

In groups of 3–4, you'll be assigned one of the following questions to discuss:

Childhood Perspective: How does Lilia's childlike view shape the way we understand Mr. Pirzada and the war in Bangladesh? What are the strengths and limits of this perspective?

Identity & Belonging: Mr. Pirzada is Pakistani, but he feels connected to Lilia's Indian American family. How does Lahiri explore cultural bonds despite political borders?

History & the Personal: How does Lahiri connect the Bangladesh Liberation War to the everyday dinners in Lilia's home? Why frame a global event through family life?

Memory & Meaning: As an adult, Lilia reflects on these dinners. How does memory shape her understanding of identity, loss, and diaspora?

Step 3: Creative Synthesis (15 minutes)

Your group will prepare a short way to share your thinking. Choose one:

Symbol Analysis: Pick a symbol (candies, TV news, the map, food) and explain its deeper meaning.

Visual Timeline: Sketch a quick diagram showing how family dinners connect with events happening abroad.

Perspective Rewrite: Rewrite a short passage from Mr. Pirzada's point of view — how would the story change if he narrated it?

Step 4: Share Out (10 minutes)

Each group will share their work. As a class, we'll reflect together.

How does Lahiri connect global events to family life?

What does this story suggest about how immigrant children come to understand identity and history?

How assignment will be adapted in online format

Canvas Discussion: "When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine" From Jhumpa Lahiri's Interpreter of Maladies

Objective: This discussion will help you analyze how Lahiri portrays immigrant life, historical conflict, and belonging through the lens of a child narrator.

Step 1: Your Post (200–300 words, Due by [insert date])

After reading the story, respond to one of the prompts below. Be specific, quote or paraphrase at least one passage, and explain why it matters:

Childhood Perspective": How does Lilia's narration shape the way we understand Mr. Pirzada, the war, and immigrant identity?
Symbols of Belonging: Choose one symbol (candies, food, TV news, the map). How does Lahiri use it to represent belonging, memory, or identity?
History Meets Home: Why do you think Lahiri chose to frame the Bangladesh Liberation War through family dinners in an American household?
Memory & Reflection: How does the adult narrator's reflection add depth to the story? What does it reveal about identity, history, and diaspora?

Step 2: Peer Replies (100 words each, Due by [insert date])
Reply to at least two classmates. In your reply, do one of the following:
Add a new example or idea that extends their analysis.
Ask a thoughtful question or gently challenge their interpretation.
Connect their post to broader themes in Asian American literature (immigration, intergenerational memory, diaspora, cultural hybridity etc).

Step 3: Extra Credit Reflection (100 words)
After posting and replying, you may write a short reflection for 5 additional extra credit points. Consider:
Did someone's perspective change the way you read the story?
How does Lahiri use everyday family life to reflect big questions about cultural identity and belonging?

Course Materials

Textbooks

Ocean Vuong, *The Emperor of Gladness* (2025)
John Okada, *No-No Boy* (1957)
Jenny Zhang, *My Baby First Birthday* (2020)
Michelle Zauner, *Crying in H Mart* (2023)
Thi Diem Thuy Le, *The Gangster We Are All Looking For* (2004)
Jhumpa Lahiri, *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999)
Cathy Hong Park, *Minor Feelings* (2021)

Class Size Information

Class Size

30

Class Size Category

D - Individualized instruction/group learning/student presentations 30

Diversity and Inclusion

Course Design and Materials: Course will incorporate diverse perspectives, authors, and examples that reflect a variety of cultures, identities, and lived experiences. Instructional materials will be reviewed regularly to ensure representation, inclusivity, and alignment with equity-minded practices across disciplines.

Inclusive Learning Environment: Instructors will establish classroom norms and policies that promote respect, civil discourse, and belonging in both online and face-to-face classes. Clear expectations for communication and engagement will support a learning space where all students feel valued and heard.

Accessible Instruction: Course content will be delivered using accessible design. Materials will follow accessibility guidelines within the CMS, including captioned media, readable document formats, and multiple means of engagement to support diverse learning.

Equitable Teaching Practices: Instructors will use transparent and grading criteria, varied assessment methods, and timely feedback to promote fairness and student success. Opportunities for revision, reflection, and multiple demonstrations of learning may be incorporated when appropriate to the discipline.

Culturally Responsive Pedagogies: Instructional strategies will encourage critical thinking about diverse perspectives and systems of power relevant to the course content. Faculty will foster opportunities for students to connect course material to real-world contexts.

Ongoing Reflection and Improvement: Faculty will engage in continuous professional development related to IDEAA principles and reflect on course practices using metacognition to identify opportunities for increased equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

Explain how diversity and inclusion(e.g., gender, culture/race, sexuality, etc.) is infused into the course.

The course was revised to more explicitly address the CSU Area F core competencies to support its satisfaction of the Ethnic Studies requirement. The course focuses on the diversity of cultural and theoretical perspectives among Asian American scholars and literatures. In addition, the course emphasizes literary contributions and responses to social justice movements in resistance to colonialism and white supremacy towards liberation, agency, and group affirmation.

Describe how assignments, instruction, evaluation, course content, and interactions are contextualized for diverse learners promoting an equitable course.

This course supports the needs of English majors and students seeking to fulfill their humanities requirement, but also as a course proposed to fulfill the Ethnic Studies requirement, it will also support non-majors. Formative and summative assignments have been added to support non-majors who may be unfamiliar with literary elements and theories. In addition, assessment has been expanded to include exams, presentations, and projects in addition to traditional literary analysis essays. Student-to-student interaction was also emphasized to support collaborative learning that begins with students' prior knowledge as a scaffold for unfamiliar concepts. Finally, additional examples of contributions to popular culture have been added to support students from all backgrounds in developing an appreciation and empathy for Asian American identities, experiences, and perspectives. All materials will be presented in an accessible way that meet ADA standards.

Interactions

Explain how the course will incorporate student-to-student interaction.

Small group and whole class discussions encourage students to share and contrast prior knowledge, interpretations of texts, and experiences with class concepts such as colorism, multiracial identity formation, or immigration status. Student-student interactions can build empathy and critical awareness of lived experiences different from one's, a core concept in ethnic studies. Students enrolled in either face to face or distance education sections will collaborate using the CMS discussion board, Collaborate, or Student Annotation Tools. Individual or small group projects can be managed and evaluated using the CMS and produced using accessible presentation software or platforms. In addition, peer reviews, collaborative quizzes, and poster projects encourage peer learning that supports student engagement.

Explain how the course will incorporate instructor-to-student interaction.

Instructor-to- student interaction can be supported by discussion board, announcement, and assignment feedback practices to meet regular effective contact. These may include lecturing or facilitating discussions about literary theory, genre structures, or the sociopolitical contexts of class texts. In distance education sections, instructors can host live post pre recorded lectures and respond to questions posed asynchronously by students. Instructor feedback could support student learning as they move beyond summary and personal response to stronger literary analysis, research methods, and application of Ethnic Studies core competencies to deepen their understanding of Asian American literatures and theoretical practices.

Explain how the course will incorporate student-to-content interaction.

Students will study a variety of Asian American texts from a variety of genres to understand the historical, social, and political contexts of these texts. These texts will include themes such as race and racism, racialization, ethnicity, equity, ethno-centrism, eurocentrism, white supremacy, self-determination, liberation, decolonization, sovereignty, imperialism, settler colonialism, and anti-racism. In addition, book talks or interviews by prominent authors or theorists can provide students with direct engagement with secondary sources to support their analysis of assigned texts. Students can be assigned to engage with library research workshops or recordings to deepen their research skills.

Explain how the course will incorporate student-to-self interaction (metacognitive).

Students will engage in reflective writing to process their understanding and responses to Asian American literature, theories, and experiences. Students will also be encouraged to study the value of emotional intelligence in their personal and professional lives and the ways in which literary study have been demonstrated to increase EQ, emotional wellbeing, and effectiveness in leadership. This can support the sometimes uncomfortable spaces that Ethnic Studies concepts and practices invite students to engage in. Finally, students can reflect on their developing knowledge in journals, complete self-assessments on their essays prior to submission, and write a summative essay reflecting on their understanding and appreciation of Asian American literatures.