

GESM 110: Asian & Asian American Culture on Stage and Film
Section Number: 35299D

Units: Four (4)

Fall 2015—Tuesdays & Thursdays—Time: 12:30-1:50

Location: McClintock Building (MCC) 102

Instructor: Velina Hasu Houston, MFA, PhD

Office: 1029 Childs Way, University Park Campus

Office Hours: 8 am-12 pm, Mondays, scheduled in advance via email by the Friday before, 5 pm, with 24-hour required cancellation notice also via e-mail.

Contact Info: greentea@usc.edu

ITHelp : USC Information Technology Services,
<http://itservices.usc.edu>; School of Dramatic Arts – Mr.
Prakash Shirke, **Contact Info:** shirke@usc.edu, (213)
740-1288, MCC

Course Description

The course explores the cultures and characteristics of people of Asian descent both historically and in contemporary times via dramatic and cinematic arts. Idiosyncrasies, foods, customs, gender, generation, and acculturation all come under the microscope as students delve into Asian consciousnesses from the Far East to the Middle East and U.S. nationwide.

Learning Objectives

The course, via plays and films, will encourage a deeper understanding of the diversity within the Asian diaspora.

Prerequisite(s): None

Co-Requisite (s): None

Concurrent Enrollment: None

Recommended Preparation: Reading/seeing the plays and films noted below.*

(1) The course is intended to provide connectivity. The student will better appreciate the connection between plays and films, and their representations of culture, linking this artistry with sociopolitical histories and actualities. In exploring representations of multiple dimensions of Asian and Asian American culture, the course will allow students to understand how the plays and films build bridges of understanding between the Asian Diaspora and non-Asian people in the United States and globally. (2) The course will provide context. By confronting the artistry of plays and films, students will be able to see the powerful roles that drama can play in connecting with various historical, theoretical, and aesthetic dimensions of humankind both past and present within the multiethnic nexus of the Asian Diaspora. (3) The course will provide engagement via the reading and viewing of dramas that explore Asian and Asian American identity. Students will be able to engage in some materials that will expose them directly to the contemporary within the

area of focus, thereby encouraging understanding that can have a direct impact on their interest in the art of theatre. (4) The course will provide analysis. The student will be able to analyze the representations of various aspects of culture and identity within the plays and films, using shared vocabulary and focusing on the formal execution of character within the worlds of the plays and films, both supported by traditional and non-traditional research. The course will include three analytical essays, as well as a mid-term examination and a final examination. The course also will include a “making art” aspect, for which students will explore an Asian or Asian American situation in a monologue or letter that will be presented in class.

Course Notes

Each semester the course will focus on a specific ethnicity. Fall 2015’s focus will be on Japan.

Announcements and course assignments will be posted to Blackboard as well as given in class. Students must check email and Blackboard regularly, which means at least once every 24 hours for email and at least once a week for Blackboard or when directed by the instructor. There will be minimal online research.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

None. The course will take place in a regular classroom setting.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Required readings and supplementary materials. Where to access/purchase.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

What kind of work is to be done and how should it be completed, i.e. how the learning outcome will be assessed. Include any assessment and grading rubrics to be used.

Grading Breakdown

With regard to grading, grades are earned, not given. In this course, students will earn letter grades with regard to the USC grade rubric:

96-100%=A	88-90%=B+	81-84%=B-	75-77%= C	67-70%=D+
95-91%=A-	85-87%=B	78-80%=C+	71-74%= C-	66-64%=D
				61-63%=D-

When the average falls between two grades, the final grade will be weighted toward the positive end of the scale for students whose participation in class has been good, but will be weighted toward the negative end of the scale for those with poor participation.

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>% of Grade</u>
Participation	10	10%
Critical Analysis Essay	5	5%
Critical Analysis Essay	5	5%
Critical Analysis Essay	5	5%
Mid-term Examination	25	25%
Artistic Project (Monologue/Scene)	25	25%
Final Examination	25	25%

Assignment Submission Policy

Critical Analysis Essays may be submitted electronically to greentea@usc.edu USING THESE SPECIFIC GUIDELINES: (1) Subject header must say: "Homework Assignment: Critical Evaluation Essay" (2) Document must be submitted in Word, not as a PDF, so that comments can be inserted. If these two guidelines are not followed and the essay is not submitted on its due date, I will consider the assignment not submitted.

Additional Policies

- Late assignments will not be accepted.
- You are expected to attend all classes except in the case of doctor-documented illness or family crisis. There are 15 weeks of classes. Beginning on the third week of classes and ending on the 14th week of classes, participation will be graded.
- One "class" will be two class periods used for a field trip. The field trip will occur on Thursday, 10/8, in the evening. *Please reserve that time on your calendars now.*
- Please do not be late.
- Please do not have computers open in class unless I ask you to do so for a specific exercise.
- Please do not use cell phones in class for any reason.
- Use of computers or cell phones will constitute lack of participation, and the student will receive a "0" for participation on that given week.
- The final exam is required. Its date and time are determined by the University and cannot be changed. *Please reserve that time on your calendars now.* You must be present for the final. If you miss the final, you will receive a grade of "0" for the final exam.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Reading/Screening Requirements

Gold Watch, *The Music Lessons*, and *Tea* (most-produced play about Japanese and Japanese American experience in U.S.), all in *Unbroken Thread*, Edited by Roberta Uno, <http://www.amazon.com/Unbroken-Thread-Anthology-Plays-American/dp/0870238566>.

Chinglish by David Henry Hwang

Film Screenings Provided by Instructor:

Majo No Takkyubin (Film, Japan)

Hafu (Film, Japan/Japanese American)

Jiro Dreams of Sushi (Film, Japanese)

Departures (Film, Japanese)

Picture Bride (Film, Japanese American)

The Harimaya Bridge (Film, Japanese and American)

The course calendar below provides a list of course activities and expectations, a list of deliverables—readings, assignments, examinations, etc., broken down on a weekly basis. This includes subject matter/topic/activity; required preparatory reading or screening information, and assignments/deliverables.

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/ Due Dates
Week 1 8/25/2015 and 8/27/2015	<p>Introduction to course, overview of Asian/Asian American culture on stage and film and notion of diaspora. This occurs over two days during Week 1.</p> <p>Note that, for each unit of in-class contact time, the university expects two hours of out of class student work per week over a semester.</p>	<p>Discussion of differences between Asian and Asian American cultures, and of representations of culture found in plays and films (gender, ethnicity, geography, class, cuisine, religion, other idiosyncrasies). See "Deliverable/Due Dates" for readings and homework for Week 2.</p>	<p>Deliverable: Participation in class discussion during the two classes that take place in Week 1.</p> <p>Deliverable: For Week 2, read THE MUSIC LESSONS by Wakako Yamauchi and be prepared to discuss it, especially with regard to issues of geography and class.</p>
Week 2 9/1/2015 and 9/3/2015	<p>Discussion of THE MUSIC LESSONS: issues of geography and class.</p>	<p>See Blackboard for readings about the film PICTURE BRIDE.</p> <p>Begin to prepare Critical Analysis Essay, 3-5 pages double-spaced in Times 12-point font examining issues of geography and class in THE MUSIC LESSONS and PICTURE BRIDE.</p>	<p>Deliverable: Critical Analysis Essay on THE MUSIC LESSONS and PICTURE BRIDE due on 9/15/2015.</p>
Week 3 9/8/2015 and 9/10/2015	<p>Screening of PICTURE BRIDE, ½ of film on each class day. Beginning of discussion of issues of geography and class.</p>	<p>See Blackboard for readings about the film PICTURE BRIDE.</p> <p>Read GOLD WATCH by Momoko Iko and be prepared to discuss it, especially with regard to issues of masculine identities.</p>	<p>Deliverable: Critical Analysis Essay on THE MUSIC LESSONS and PICTURE BRIDE due on 9/15/2015.</p> <p>Deliverable: Ability to discuss GOLD WATCH by 9/15/2015.</p>
Week 4 9/15/2015 and 9/17/2015	<p>Discussion of GOLD WATCH: issues of masculine identities.</p> <p>Submit Critical Analysis Essay on THE MUSIC LESSONS and PICTURE BRIDE.</p>	<p>See Blackboard for readings about the film DEPARTURES.</p> <p>Begin to prepare Critical Analysis Essay, 3-5 pages double-spaced in Times 12-point font (the guidelines for all Critical Analysis Essays) examining issues of masculine identities in GOLD WATCH and DEPARTURES.</p>	<p>Deliverable: Critical Analysis Essay on GOLD WATCH and DEPARTURES due on 9/29/2015.</p>

Week 5 9/22/2015 and 9/24/2015	Screening of DEPARTURES , ½ of film on each class day. Beginning of discussion of issues of masculine identities.	See Blackboard for readings about the film DEPARTURES . Begin to prepare Critical Analysis Essay, 3-5 pages double-spaced in Times 12-point font examining issues of masculine identities in GOLD WATCH and DEPARTURES .	Deliverable: Critical Analysis Essay on GOLD WATCH and DEPARTURES due on 9/29/2015.
Week 6 9/29/2015 and 10/1/2015	Submit Critical Analysis Essay on GOLD WATCH and DEPARTURES . Presentation of scene from play TEA (reading) and film PATH OF DREAMS (reading/Q&A with producer).	See Blackboard for readings about TEA . No Critical Analysis Essay for this play. Read CHINGLISH for 10/8/2015.	
Week 7 10/6/2015 and 10/8/2015	FIELD TRIP. **Please reserve the evening of Thursday, October 8, for a field trip to an Asian American theatre performance.**	No Critical Analysis Essay for this play.	
Week 8 10/13/2015 and 10/15/2015	Mid-term examination. In-class. Essay examining issues of geography, class, masculine identities, TEA , or CHINGLISH .		
Week 9 10/20/2015 and 10/22/2015	Screening of MAJO NO TAKKYUBIN , ½ of film on each class day. Discussion of female identities and anime.	No Critical Analysis Essay for this film.	
Week 10 10/27/2015 and 10/29/2015	Screening of HAFU , ½ of film on each class day. Discussion of Hapa/ Haafu identities and Japanese diasporic ethnicities (Japanese, Japanese South Americans, Japanese Americans, Okinawans, Ainu, etc.)	No Critical Analysis Essay for this film.	

<p>Week 11 11/3/2015 and 11/5/2015</p>	<p>Screening of JIRO DREAMS OF SUSHI, ½ of film on each class day.</p> <p>Discussion of cuisine, idiosyncrasies of contemporary Japanese society.</p>	<p>Homework: Prepare Critical Analysis Essay based on this film.</p>	<p>Deliverable: Be prepared to submit Critical Analysis Essay on JIRO DREAMS OF SUSHI on 11/12/2015.</p>
<p>Week 12 11/10/2015 and 11/12/2015</p>	<p>Screening of THE HARIMAYA BRIDGE, ½ of film on each class day.</p> <p>Discussion of female identities, masculine identities, ethnicity. Q&A with director Aaron Woolfolk.</p> <p>On 11/12, Critical Analysis Essay about JIRO DREAMS OF SUSHI is due.</p>		
<p>Week 13 11/17/2015 and 11/19/2015</p>	<p>Discussion of Artistic Project. In-class exercises to stimulate writing.</p>	<p>Homework: work on Artistic Project.</p>	
<p>Week 14 11/24/2015 (11/26/2015 no class due to Thanksgiving holiday)</p>	<p>Continued work on Artistic Project.</p>	<p>Homework: work on Artistic Project.</p>	<p>Deliverable: Artistic Projects' class presentations on 12/1 and 12/3.</p>
<p>Week 15 12/1/2015 and 12/3/2015</p>	<p>Class presentations of Artistic Projects. Be prepared to present on either day. Artistic Projects need not be memorized.</p>		
<p>FINAL EXAM 12/15/2015 11 am-1 pm</p>	<p>Reading presentation and analysis.</p>		

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/departement-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* http://sait.usc.edu/academicssupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.