

English 310: Chinese American Literature and Culture (40382)

Instructor: Prof. Ning Yu
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Office Hours: T, Th 10-11, Wed 3
The Arranged Hour: W 3-4



Prof. Yu took six Western students on a China Study tour in summer, 2002.

Description: This course surveys works by writers of Chinese descent in North America from the 1890s to the current millennium. We will read, analyze and discuss texts by Sui Sin Far, Frank Chin, Maxine Hong Kingston, Ruthanne Lum McCunn, Gish Jen, Shawn Wong and David Wong Louie in the context of both American and Chinese cultures, especially the history of Chinese immigration. Our objective is to achieve a better understanding of the rich diversity within Chinese American communities. One mid-term, one final paper of 12-15 pages, four written questions and responses. The fifth arranged hour will be the time when students and the instructor work on a one-to-one basis for a project of oral presentation.

Texts: Sui Sin Far, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance and Other Writings*; Frank Chin, *The Chickencoop Chinaman*, *The Year of the Dragon: Two Plays* by Frank Chin; Maxine Hong Kingston, *China Men*; Ruthanne Lum McCunn, *Thousand Pieces of Gold*; Gish Jen, *Typical American*, David Wong Louie, *The Barbarians Are Coming*, Shawn Wong, *American Knees: A Novel*.

Requirements: 1. Heavy reading. Students must read *all* the assigned texts carefully and be well prepared to discuss them in depth. Active participation in class discussion is a must for a successful student in this class. 2. An oral presentation on a topic chosen by the student from a list provided by the instructor. The instructor will meet the student at an appointed hour in his office (HU 361) 3. Each student is responsible for two thought-provoking written questions about the assigned texts. The questions are due two days before the day of discussion, so that the instructor will organize his lecture and discussion in response to them. 4. A mid-term examination. 5. A final paper about 15 pages (double space) in length. Students are encouraged to incorporate their presentation research into their final paper. 6. Last but not least, regular attendance is required. The student will lose 3% of their total grade for each unexcused absence. No student with more than three unexcused absences will get a grade higher than B no matter how well s/he does in the class otherwise.

Evaluation: Class participation = 20% of total grade; mid-term = 20%; written questions = 12% (6% per question and response); oral presentation = 18%; final paper = 30%.

Schedule:

Sept.

- 25 Th Course Introduction; introduction to the Chinese American Experience; start reading Sui Sin Far (pp.1-83, 231-265) for next meeting
- 30 T Discussion: Sui Sin Far, using group 1 questions; Read Sui Sin Far (pp.83-166) for next meeting

Oct.

- 2 Th Discussion: Sui Sin Far (pp. 83-166), group 2 questions; presentations (1. Edith Maude Eaton 2. Winifred Eaton 3. First Chinese immigrants to the U.S. 4. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 Read Chin (*The Chickencoop Chinaman*)
- 7 T Discussion: Chin; group 3 questions
- 9 Th Discussion: Chin continued, group 4 questions; presentations (5. China in the 1840s 6. The U.S. in the 1840s 7. The Repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act 8. The Transcontinental Railroad Read Kingston (pp. 3-118)
- 14 T Discussion: Kingston (3-118), group 5 questions; Read Kingston (119-151)
- 16 Th Discussion: Kingston (119-151), group 6 questions; presentations (9. Chinese herbal medicine, 10. Chinatowns in the U.S.,

11. U.S.-China relation during WWII, 12. Kingston's *Woman Warrior*
Read Maxine Hong Kingston (152-255)

21 T Discussion: Kingston (152-255), group 7 questions;
Read Kingston (256-308)

23 Th Discussion: Kingston (256-308), group 8 questions; presentations
(13. Louis Chu 14. The transcontinental railroad 15. Chin
Yang Lee 16. Frank Chin's *Donald Duk*)
Read McCunn (Parts 1 and 2)

28 T Discussion: McCunn (Parts 3 and 4)
Read McCunn (Parts 5 through 7)

Oct.

30 Th Discussion: McCunn (Parts 3 and 4), group 9 questions
Read McCunn (Parts 5 through 7)

Nov.

4 T Discussion: McCunn (Parts 5 through 7), group 10 questions;
Mid-Term
Read Jen (Parts 1 through 4)

6 Th Discussion: Jen (Parts 1 through 3 and a little into 4), group 11
questions; Read Jen (Part 5)

11 T **Veteran's Day (No Class)**

13 Th Discussion: Jen (Parts 4 and 5), group 12; presentations (17. *Nu Shu* [women's writing] 18. Amy Tan 19. *Bone* 20. Pearl Buck); Read Shawn Wong (pp. 1-156)

18 T Discussion: Wong (pp. 1-156), group 13 questions
Read Shawn Wong (pp157-240)

20 Th Discussion: Wong (pp. 157-240), group 14 questions
presentations (21. *Children of the Pearl in Shanghai* 22. *Life and Death*
23. *Beyond the Narrow Gate* 24. *A Generation Lost*
Read Louie (Parts 1 and 2)

25 T Discussion: Louie (Parts 1 and 2), group 15 questions;
Read Louie (Part 3)

27 Th **Thanksgiving (No Class)**

Dec.

- 2 T Discussion: Louie (Part 3), group 16 questions; presentations (25. the old Chinatown in Fairhaven 26. the May 4th [1919] Movement 27. the 1911 Chinese Revolution 28. the 1949 Revolution in China
Read Louie (Part 4)
- 4 Th Discussion: Louie (Part 4), group 17 questions; presentations: 29. the Cultural Revolution in China 30. the April 5th [1976] Event on Tiananmen Square 31. the 1989 Tiananmen Square Event
32. Ha Jin
- 12 F **Final: 8 AM** presentations (33. Today's U.S. Business in China 34. Western's China Teaching Program 35. the Western in Kunming Program