SAMPLE SYLLABUS
EDL 670

Asian Americans and Education
Instructor: Dr. Julie J. Park

Course Purpose and Learning Goals
Through addressing the historical and contemporary issues that have affected the experiences of Asian Americans in U.S. schools and colleges, students will critically investigate the ways in which there may be a common Asian American educational experience, as well as the ways in which there are many different educational experiences for various subpopulations of the Asian American community.

Students will be able to identify and articulate some of the major challenges that Asian Americans encounter in the educational system, as well as some of the controversies related to Asian Americans in education.

Students will be challenged to explain how Asian American experiences in education contribute to the broader story of race and racial stratification in the U.S. educational system and society.

Class Requirements
Attendance and Participation (20%): You are allowed two absences, with the third absence your grade will automatically be dropped one letter and you will be dropped from the class with the fourth absence. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. Participation will be gauged through your participation in discussions as well as class reflections that you will turn in on a weekly basis. It is expected that you will come to class having done the readings and prepared to engage in discussion. If for any reason you’re having an off week (life happens—sickness, personal issues, family, etc.) please do your best to alert me prior to class via email.

Final Paper Preview (5%) Week 3
Paper Assignment #1 (15%): Week 5
Paper Assignment #2 (15%): Week 11
Paper Assignment #3, Final Paper (20%): Two options
  Option 1: Preliminary draft due in class Week 13, Final draft due Finals Week (feedback will be given to you Week 15)
  Option 2: Final (only) draft due Finals week
Class Presentation #1 (15%):
Class Presentation #2 (10%):

**Explanation of Assignments**

Reflections: In order to help me gauge your processing around the issues, you are expected to email a short, one to two paragraph reflection after each class. These reflections are due within 24 hours after the end of class. These reflections should briefly address your reaction to the readings and/or class discussion; you are encouraged to reflect on how the readings/discussion tie into your own personal experience: Do they challenge them or is this something you’ve seen before, maybe in your own life or in the lives of friends? Feel free to comment on what you thought went well in class, as well as areas for improvement. As you can see, participation is 20% of your grade—these reflections will be taken seriously as part of your learning process in the class.

Final Paper Preview: An overview on the topic that you have selected for your final paper. Include a brief overview of the subject that you wish to study, preliminary questions or themes that you might want to address, things that you already know about the subject and things that you want to find out more about, and any personal reflections you have on the subject such as things you might know about the subject due to personal experience or observations. The purpose of the paper is to jumpstart your thinking on your final paper. 2 full pages.

Paper Assignment #1: Pick a portrayal of Asian Americans in popular culture or the news that relates to education and write a critical analysis of it, along with the educational issues that it addresses. Some suggestions include the cartoon Doonesbury, media coverage of the model minority myth over the years, or films such as Better Luck Tomorrow. Feel free to include a discussion of how your own personal experience or perceptions of Asian Americans ties into the piece of pop culture/media you picked: Is it reflective of your own experience or does your experience make you challenge its validity? 5-7 pages.

Paper Assignment #2: Throughout the semester we are continually bouncing between discussing Asian Americans as an umbrella group and addressing the needs of specific subgroups (ethnic, socioeconomic, etc). You have been given a $15,000 grant to implement an initiative that can either be targeted towards a specific Asian American subgroup, or it can target the broader Asian American population on your campus. Write a 5-7 page memo that outlines the following: Summary of proposed initiative, campus context (i.e., describe how the need for the initiative as related to the specific Asian American population(s) on your campus, rationale for targeting either an Asian American subgroup OR the broader Asian American population, potential limitations (or pros and cons), and proposed budget.

Final Paper Assignment #3: A research paper on any of the subjects we covered over the quarter, or an issue affecting Asian Americans in education that we did not address. (It is strongly suggested you run these topics by me prior to beginning your research.) 10-15 pages. In your implications or conclusion section and/or throughout the paper, please situate your discussion of Asian Americans in a broader context of race and racial inequality in American higher education. That is, provide an analysis about what your issue says not only about the state of Asian Americans in American higher education, but also what it reflects about broader trends around issues such as equality, racism, meritocracy, etc.

Class Presentation #1: Along with a partner, you will be responsible for coming up with a 20-30 minute presentation on a week’s readings. This presentation should include some sort of balance
between communicating the content of the week's readings and an exercise (or demonstration) related to the readings that will help engage your classmates in an interesting and hopefully fun way. Creativity is encouraged! You are also responsible for turning in summary of the readings (1 page per reading) that week; bring copies for your classmates. (Decide the distribution of labor with your partner: If there are 3 articles that day, maybe one of you will write a summary for the longer one while s/he writes the summaries for the shorter articles.)

Class Presentation #2: Taking your final paper topic, team up with another class member to create a 15-20 minute presentation on the intersection between your two topics. Example, if you picked Filipino Americans in higher education and someone picked affirmative action, you could do a presentation on how Filipinos Americans have been affected by affirmative action (Lots of interesting data on this!).

**Required Readings and Weekly Schedule**

**Week 1:** The Model Minority Part II, Taking a Critical Look


**Week 2:** History


**Week 3:** The fight for bilingual education, immigration and language


**Week 4:** School climate, class, and identity


Asian Americans and Education 3
Week 5: Social capital and the road to college


Week 6: Pathways through community colleges


Show and Tell: Prepare a short, 2-4 minute informal presentation on the topic that you did your Paper #1 on; we will have a time in class where we get together in groups and share about what we studied and learned.

Week 7: The politics of admissions


Week 8: Negative Action


**Week 9: Asian American Studies**


**Week 10: Faculty**


**Week 11: Campus climate and student needs**


**Week 12: Outside of the Classroom**


Asian Americans and Education 5

Week 13: Policy


Week 14: PRESENTATIONS

Week 15: PRESENTATIONS, celebration potluck—bring food!