

# Comparative American Identities/ Asian American Literature

Fall 2012  
TR 1:00pm-2:15pm  
Ballantine Hall 147

**Instructor:** Holly Schreiber  
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**Office:** 814 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> St., Room 112  
**Office Hours:** TR 10:00am-11:30am

AMST A200-22844  
AAST A200-30138

This class will examine issues of racial and ethnic identity in the United States through a consideration of figures that defy easy categorization, such as biracial and multiracial Americans. We will begin by exploring recent scholarship on racial and national identity formation and then move on to analyze how these identities are navigated by figures that fall outside of legal, political and cultural categories. In the absence of an official place for such subjects, we will consider the literary response to these experiences. All the while, we will question how racial identity is related to and complicated by gender, class and nationality.

## **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Brian Ascalon Roley, *American Son*, Norton.  
Aimee Phan, *We Should Never Meet*, Picador.  
Danny Santiago, *Famous All Over Town*, Penguin.  
James McBride, *The Color of Water*, Penguin.

All other readings will be available on Oncourse under 'Resources.' Please bring your book or a printed copy of the readings to class everyday.

## **[ COURSE POLICIES ]**

### **PARTICIPATION AND PREPARATION:**

You are expected to seriously prepare for and participate in class discussions. Your participation grade will reflect both the quantity and quality of your comments in class.

### **CLASS CONDUCT:**

While you are in class I hold you to professional forms of conduct. Text messaging, falling asleep, doing homework for another class, or being otherwise disengaged or disruptive is unprofessional and will lower your participation grade.

### **ATTENDANCE:**

You may have 3 unexcused absences without penalty. After that, 3% will be deducted from your final grade for each unexcused absence. Tardiness of more than 15 minutes will be counted as an absence. Absences can be excused in the case of:

- **Illness**, provided I am notified within 24 hours of the class missed. For more than 2 consecutive days of absence I require a note from the IU Health Center or other healthcare provider.
- **Major family matters** (such as weddings or funerals). For weddings I require at least 2 weeks notice in advance.
- **Religious observances**, provided I am notified at least 2 weeks in advance.

### **LATE WORK:**

Even if you cannot make it to class, make every effort to get your work in on time. You or someone you trust can drop off hard copies of your assignments in my mailbox (in Ballantine 901, open M-F 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.).

If you are unable to complete your work on time due to illness or other circumstances, you must contact me in a timely manner if you wish to arrange make-up work or an extension. I reserve the right to refuse late work or an extension if I determine that your reason for missing the deadline is not adequate.

### **PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

At IUB, plagiarism is considered a violation of academic integrity and can result in automatic failure of the course (see the Code of Student Conduct for more information:

<http://www.iu.edu/~code/code/responsibilities/academic/index.shtml>.) Plagiarism occurs when you represent someone else's work as your own work in the following ways:

- having someone write your paper for you or turning in someone else's work
- purchasing someone else's work and using it as your own
- simply copying and pasting published information into your paper
- deliberately using sources without attributing them.

Our course will teach you ways of integrating the ideas of other writers and documenting the source of those ideas, but please ask if you ever have any questions about plagiarism.

## **[ ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION ]**

### **ASSIGNMENTS:**

All assignments and homework are due at the beginning of the class period for which they are assigned. For major papers, please upload your paper to 'Assignments 2' on Oncourse. Reading Quizzes will be completed at home prior to the class for which they are due. You will can the quiz through the 'Tests and Surveys' function on Oncourse and will have 15 minutes to complete the quiz. There are 13 quizzes scheduled throughout the semester; the lowest 3 will be dropped in the final grade calculations.

### **GRADE DISTRIBUTION:**

Attendance and Participation	100 points
Reading Quizzes (10 x 20 points each)	200 points
Analytical Essay (5 pages)	200 points

In-class Writing (2 x 75 points each)	150 points
Midterm Exam	150 points
Final Exam	200 points

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<b>Total</b>	<b>1000 points</b>
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**GRADING:**

The final grade distribution is as follows:

	899-870 points (B+)	799-770 points (C+)	699-600 (D)
1000-930 points (A)	869-830 points (B)	769-730 points (C)	599 and below (F)
929-900 points (A-)	829-800 points (B-)	729-700 points (C-)	

Please keep in the mind that at Indiana University, an “A” indicates exemplary work and means you have mastered the concepts of the assignment. A “B” indicates very good work in which you have not only met all of the assignment requirements, but you have also met them at a level above expectations. A “C” indicates that you have sufficiently completed the assignment. A “D” indicates that you have failed to execute some portion of the assignment properly and need help with the assignment. And an “F” indicates that you either did not understand or did not follow through with the assignment.

**[ RESOURCES ]****WRITING TUTORIAL SERVICES:**

I highly encourage you to seek out additional readers for your writing at Writing Tutorial Services (WTS) in the Wells Library Information Commons. The tutors there can provide you with valuable feedback at any stage of your writing process.

**SUPPORT SERVICES:**

Disability Services and The Adaptive Technologies divisions of the Office of Student Affairs can arrange for assistance, auxiliary aids, or related services if you think a temporary or permanent disability will prevent you from being a full participant in the class. Contact them at <http://www.dsa.indiana.edu> or 855-7578 with any individual concerns. Students with special needs must be registered with Disability Services before classroom accommodations can be provided.

**[ COURSE SCHEDULE ]**

You will be expected to complete all readings prior the class in which they are discussed. Please bring a printed copy of your text for each day. I reserve the right to make changes to assignments and due dates. I will announce any changes in class and on Oncourse. (RQ = Reading Quiz).

T Aug. 21

| Introduction to the semester

R	Aug. 23	Elizabeth Theiss-Morse, "The Need for a Social Theory of National Identity" (Oncourse)
T	Aug. 28	Jhumpa Lahiri, "Interpreter of Maladies" and "The Third and Final Continent" (Oncourse)
R	Aug. 30	Peony Fhagen-Smith, "Social Class, Racial/Ethnic Identity, and the Psychology of 'Choice'" (Oncourse), <b>RQ 1</b>
T	Sept. 4	Brian Ascalon Roley, <i>American Son</i> , Part I
R	Sept. 6	Brian Ascalon Roley, <i>American Son</i> , Part II, <b>RQ 2</b>
T	Sept. 11	Brian Ascalon Roley, <i>American Son</i> , Part III
R	Sept. 13	Stephen Masami Ropp, "Do Multiracial Subjects Really Challenge Race?" (Oncourse), <b>RQ 3</b>
T	Sept. 18	Paul Spickard, "What's Critical about White Studies" (Oncourse) , <b>RQ 4</b>
R	Sept. 20	In-class discussion: <i>Gran Torino</i> , <b>In-class Writing #1</b>
T	Sept. 25	James McBride, <i>The Color of Water</i> , Ch. 1-7, <b>RQ 5</b>
R	Sept. 27	James McBride, <i>The Color of Water</i> , Ch. 8-13
T	Oct. 2	James McBride, <i>The Color of Water</i> , Ch. 14-19, <b>RQ 6</b>
R	Oct. 4	James McBride, <i>The Color of Water</i> , Ch. 20-Epilogue, Midterm Review
T	Oct. 9	<b>Midterm Exam</b>
R	Oct. 11	Carlos A. Fernández, "La Raza and the Melting Pot: A Comparative Look at Multiethnicity", <b>RQ 7</b>
T	Oct. 16	Gloria Anzaldúa, excerpts from <i>Borderlands/La Frontera</i> (Oncourse)
R	Oct. 18	Kieu-Linh Caroline Valverde, "From Dust to Gold" (Oncourse), <b>RQ 8</b>
T	Oct. 23	Aimee Phan, <i>We Should Never Meet</i> , ("Miss Lien", "We Should Never Meet", "The Delta")
R	Oct. 25	Aimee Phan, <i>We Should Never Meet</i> , ("Visitors", "Gates of Saigon", "Emancipation"), <b>RQ 9</b>
T	Oct. 30	Aimee Phan, <i>We Should Never Meet</i> , ("Bound", "Motherland"), <b>In-class Writing #2</b>
R	Nov. 1	Sherman Alexie, "Amusements", "This is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona", "Witnesses, Secret and Not" (Oncourse) , <b>RQ 10</b>
T	Nov. 6	In-class discussion: <i>Smoke Signals</i>
R	Nov. 8	Circe Sturm, "Challenging the Color Line" (Oncourse), <b>RQ 11</b> , <b>Analytical Essay Draft due</b>
T	Nov. 13	Peer Review Workshop
R	Nov. 15	Danny Santiago, <i>Famous All Over Town</i> , Ch. 1-8, <b>Analytical Essay due</b>
T	Nov. 20	<i>Thanksgiving Break – class does not meet</i>

R	Nov. 22	<i>Thanksgiving Break – class does not meet</i>
T	Nov. 27	Danny Santiago, <i>Famous All Over Town</i> , Ch. 9-23, <b>RQ 12</b>
R	Nov. 29	Danny Santiago, <i>Famous All Over Town</i> , Ch. 24-33
T	Dec. 4	Laura Browder, “To Pass is To Survive” (Oncourse), <b>RQ 13</b>
R	Dec. 6	Final Exam Review, Course Evaluations
T	Dec. 11	<b>Final Exam</b> (take-home, 2 hours), <i>class does not meet</i>