Asian Americans and the Media (AAS 55)
This course begins with the recent Asian American YouTube phenomenon as a launching point to examine: 1) independent media by and 2) mainstream representations of Asians/Asian Americans throughout U.S. cultural history. We will examine popular cultural genres/media: documentary & narrative film, zines & blogs, karaoke & cover performances, TV shows, stand-up comedy, and popular music. Employing theories of cultural studies, media studies, and performance studies, we will discuss the style and impact of various popular cultural forms and representations created by, for, and about Asians/Asian Americans. This course will also feature a number of guest speakers – artists, scholars, and producers working in different genres, artistic mediums, and arts/media organizations. Class assignments include: lecture/discussion sections, weekly reading responses, in-class midterm, online group project/presentation, and a final short writing assignment.

Required Course Materials
- Course readings (PDFs available on course website)

Course Communication
Course website: http://sites.uci.edu/aas55spring2014/
Course list-serve: AAMedia-S14@classes.uci.edu

Course Requirements & Grading
- Attendance & participation – in both lecture and discussion (15% of final grade)
- Weekly 300-word reading responses—posted to Message Board every Saturday evening by 11:59pm. Any responses posted after that time will not be counted. Each week, you will write a) one 150-word response to one of the readings and b) one 150-word response to one of your colleagues’ reading responses. (20% of final grade)
- In-class midterm (25% of final grade)
- Final Group Project— In Week 3, groups will be selected and a prompt outlining the goals, objectives, and the specific requirements of the project will be distributed. All members will participate in their group’s presentation during Week 10. (20% of final grade)
- Final Writing Assignment— In Week 4, a prompt/document outlining the goals and objectives, format, and requirements of the final writing assignment will be distributed. Proposal for the final writing assignment will be due Tuesday, May 6th (Week 6). Your TAs and I will set up individual meetings with all students to discuss final assignment proposals. These meetings will take place in Week 7. ALL final portfolios are due: Wednesday, June 11th at 12noon. (20% of final grade)
Course Objectives (content)
• Identify and outline representations of Asians/Asian Americans in U.S. popular culture
• Analyze how these representations both impact and are impacted by historical and social processes of racialization for Asians in the U.S. & abroad
• Define the role of genre and media technologies in creating and sustaining Asian American popular culture & its politics
• Outline a cultural history of independent Asian American popular culture produced in the last fifty years
• Curate and critique cultural representations of Asians in America produced either by, for, or about Asian Americans

Course Objectives (form)
• Obtain & process new information
• Communicate effectively with others
• Plan, organize & prioritize work
• Make decisions & solve problems
• Work in a team structure

Policies
ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION
• Attendance and participation in class is mandatory. Tardiness is extremely disruptive and, therefore, no one will be admitted into the classroom 10 minutes after class has started. If you are absent 2 or more classes, your final grade will automatically drop one FULL LETTER GRADE (i.e. from A- to B-, B to C, etc.).

• Participation means more than just showing up—it means doing the reading before coming to class and being prepared to discuss it. If you have not done the reading for class, please save yourself and your classmates the trouble and do not show up to class. It is unfair to others if you are not fully able to participate in class discussion.

• No chatting with friends, talking on cell phones, text messaging, sleeping or otherwise engaging in distracting or disrespectful behavior during course time. Students found engaging in any of these activities will be excused from class and will be counted as absent.

• Those who are distracting or disrespectful will be excused from class and will be counted as absent. Repeat offenders will be excused from the course altogether.

EMAILS & COMMUNICATION
• Students are encouraged to speak with me directly before and after classes and during office hours. I will respond to your email queries between the office hours of Monday through Friday, 8am-5pm.

• I do not respond to emails that begin with the word “Hey” or any other informal mode of address. Also, I do not respond to emails addressed in any other way than “Professor Balance.”
• Do not email me regarding absences unless it is accompanied by a scan of a medical/doctor’s note. All other emails will automatically deleted since they do not constitute an excused absence.

• Do not email me with questions whose answers can be found on the course syllabus or any class handouts. It is your responsibility to find out what happened in class – never email me directly to ask what you missed. This is both rude and a bad reflection upon yourself as a student.

IN-CLASS
• Laptops are not allowed in class unless you come to me in advance with a legitimate medical reason for using a computer as opposed to taking notes on paper.

• Turn off all cell phones and electronic devices before class begins.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES AND SERVICES
Please note that this course fully abides by the University’s stated Principles of Community and Academic Honesty <http://www.editor.uci.edu/catalogue/appx/appx.2.htm>. These standards ensure the integrity of the educational process, and constitute the foundation of a healthy, rigorous and fair academic community. Please review them carefully. If you are encountering difficulties with the course materials, and/or with matters outside the course that are hindering your attention or abilities as a student, please let me know. I am sympathetic to the challenges confronting students, and we are open to accommodating or helping to address any problems or concerns you may have, within reason.

We are also committed to ensuring equal opportunities and access to the educational process for all students. Please let us know if we can improve the course for students with disabilities, or any other needs or challenges. You may also seek assistance and information from the Disability Services Center <http://www.disability.uci.edu/> by email, dsc@uci.edu, or by phone, (949) 824-7494, TDD (949) 824-6272.

ADD/DROP POLICIES (SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES)
DROPS: Must be submitted by 5pm of Week 2 using the WebReg system. No late drops after Week 2.
ADDS: Must be submitted by 5pm of Week 3 using the WebReg system. No late adds after Week 3.
CHANGE: Must be submitted by 5pm of Week 2 using the WebReg system. From Week 3-6, you must use the Student Access system to submit a request for a grade option change. No late grade option changes after Week 6.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY
University policy and unfortunate experiences compel the following statement of principle: Students who engage in plagiarism or cheating as defined by official university policy will automatically receive a ZERO as their grade on the assignment on which they plagiarized or the quiz or test on which they cheated. No exceptions. Other actions consistent with university policy may also be taken when deemed appropriate.

Additional note on plagiarism: In all of your writing, you must identify the nature and extent of your intellectual indebtedness to the authors whose work you have read, or to anyone else from whom you have gotten ideas (lectures, classmates, etc.). Failure to acknowledge and properly attribute your reliance on someone else’s ideas, thoughts, research, theories, findings or arguments is PLAGIARISM. Failure to provide page numbers for quotations or paraphrasing in a paper, or paraphrasing or summarizing the work of others without acknowledging the source in the text of your paper is PLAGIARISM. Plagiarism is wrong, unethical, and dishonest. If you have questions, please see the UCI Academic Senate Policy on Academic Honesty (http://www.senate.uci.edu/senateweb/default2.asp?active_page_id=754)
**Week One:**
Tues, April 1  Introduction/Course Overview

Thurs, April 3  **YouTube Killed the (Music) Video Star**
Christine Bacareza Balance, “How It Feels to Be Viral Me: Affective Labor and Asian American YouTube Performance”
Davis Jung, “How New Media Gave Me a Voice”
Josh Kun, “Unexpected Harmony: YouTube Helps Legaci’s Breakout”

  *book launch & reading/performance*
  Sunday, April 6 || 2pm || Japanese American National Museum (JANM)
  Monday, April 7 || 5-7pm || UCLA Asian American Studies Center

**Week Two:**
Tues, April 8  **Asian American Movement Redux: Narrative Film**
Margaret Hillenbrand, “Of Myths and Men: Better Luck Tomorrow and the Mainstreaming of Asian American Cinema”
Rachel Rubin, “Cyberspace Y2K: Giant Robots Asian Punks”
Wesley Yang, “Asian Like Me” (22-29)

Thurs, April 10  In-Class Screening: *Better Luck Tomorrow*

*EVENT:* “1975” a group exhibit featuring work by diasporic Cambodian artists—Anida Yoeu Ali, Amy Lee, and LinDa Saphan
  Long Beach City College (LBCC) Art Gallery
  from March 26-May 3, 2014

**Week Three:**
Tues, April 15  **Asian American Movement: Documentary Film**
Henry Jenkins, “Introduction” from *Convergence Culture*
William Wei, “Introduction” and “Chapter 2:Who Am I? Creating an Asian American Culture and Identity” from *The Asian American Movement*

*Optional:* Patricia Lange. “Videos of Affinity on YouTube” in *The YouTube Reader*
Thurs, April 17   In-Class Screening: *A Song for Ourselves*

**Week Four:**

**Tues, April 22**  **Phantasms of Orientalness: Everybody was Kung-Fu Fighting**  
Christina Klein. “Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon: a Diasporic Reading”  
Vijay Prashad. “Bruce Lee and the Anti-Imperialism of Kung Fu”  
In-Class Screening: *Enter the Dragon*

Thurs, April 24  Midterm Review (In-Class)

**Week Five:**

**Tues, April 29**  **MIDTERM (In-Class)**

Thurs, May 1   In-Class Screening: *Flower Drum Song*

*EVENT: Visual Communications Asian Pacific American Film Festival  
Thurs, May 1-Sun, May 11*

**Week Six:**

**Tues, May 6**  **Phantasms of Orientalness: Musical Theater**  
Christina Klein. “Asians in America: Flower Drum Song and Hawaii”  
Karen Shimakawa. “Introduction” from *National Abjection*  
U.S. News & World Report article

*Optional:* Shirley Jennifer Lim. “Contested Beauty: Asian American Beauty Culture during the Cold War” from *A Feeling of Belonging*

Thurs, May 8   **Asian American Re/mix: Karaoke**  
Selections from Casey Man Kong Lum’s *In Search of a Voice: Karaoke and the Construction of Identity in Chinese America*.  
Deborah Wong. “I Want the Microphone”

**Week Seven:**

**Tues, May 13**  Guest Speaker: Maikiko James (*Seeking Asian Female*)

Thurs, May 15  Guest Speaker: Leilani Chan (*Refugee Nation/TeAda Productions*)

**Week Eight:**

**Tues, May 20**  **Asian American Re/mix: Hip-Hop**  
Readings (TBA)
Thurs, May 22
Guest Speakers: Mark Villegas (editor) & contributors from *Empire of Funk*

**Week Nine:**
Tues, May 27

**Asian American Re/mix: K-Pop and Cold War Redux**

Jung-Sun Park. “Korean American Youth and the Transnational Flows of Popular Culture Across the Pacific” from *TransPop: Remix* catalog

Yong Soon Min & Viet Le. “Introduction” to *TransPop: Remix*

*Optional:* Nhi T. Lieu. “Performing Culture in Diaspora: Assimilation and Hybridity in *Paris by Night* Videos and Vietnamese American Niche Media” from *Alien Encounters*

Thurs, May 29
Guest Speakers: Brandon Kim (MNET-America)/Dumbfoundead (TBA)

**Week Ten:**
Tues, June 3
Final Group Presentations

Thurs, June 5
Final Group Presentations

**FINAL WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE – on or before Wednesday, June 11th (12noon)**

*The professor reserves the right to modify the syllabus & grading criteria during the quarter.*