

REL 336gw: Re-Viewing Religion in Asian America

Units: 4.0 units

SPRING 2020 Tuesday/Thursday 11am-12:20pm

Location: WPH 203

Instructor: Professor Duncan Williams

Office: ACB 231, Phone (213-740-0270), duncanwi@usc.edu

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

This course explores religion, race, and national belonging in the United States from the vantage point of Asian America. Through a study of the history and contemporary manifestations of the religious diversity of Asian America, the course interrogates how immigration policies, citizenship laws, and religious freedom operates in America. There are no prerequisites for this course. This course fulfills the GE-G (Citizenship in a Diverse World) requirement.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the semester, the following objectives will have been accomplished:

- Students will have a broad knowledge of the history and contemporary diversity of Asian American religions.
- Students will have facility to discuss how the conflation of religion and race has played a role in American immigration policy and laws governing citizenship.
- Students will be able to identify and analyze how Asian religions in America have shaped conversation on American notions of religious freedom.
- Students will have a comparative basis to discuss how religion, race, and national belonging inform both American and global/Asian notions of national belonging.

Prerequisites: None

Readings and Supplementary Material – see assigned readings in the course schedule (no required textbooks)

Course Requirements and Assignments

Students are expected to attend class regularly and contribute to class discussions (15% of grade). Anyone with over two unexcused absences will have great difficulty passing the course. In addition, there are three course requirements: 1) an in-class presentation of the reading or original research (10% of grade); 2) Three writing assignments of 5 pages each (30% of grade); and 3) a final paper of 15 pages (30% of grade) with final paper proposal of 2-3 pages (10%)

Grade Breakdown:

Attendance/Participation in Class	15
Presentations	15
5-Page Papers (3)	30
Final Paper Proposal	10
15-Page Final Paper	30

Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

Course Schedule

Week 1 (January 14, 16) Introduction to the Course

Week 2 (January 21, 23) American Identity and Religious Freedom: The Constitutional Basis for Free Exercise and Non-Establishment

[NOTE EXTRA CREDIT - Attendance at Wednesday, January 22, 2019 7:30pm “The Chinese in the Huntington Archives” – a Lecture by Prof. Mae Ngai (Columbia University) – need to register for free ticket here - <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4449881>]

John Adams to Thomas Jefferson (1813-14) – Thomas Tweed and Stephen Prothero, eds. *Asian Religions in America: A Documentary History*. Oxford University Press, 1998, pp. 48-50

Frederick Douglass, "Our Composite Nationality." – Thomas Tweed and Stephen Prothero, eds. *Asian Religions in America: A Documentary History*. Oxford University Press, 1998, pp. 67-69

Hector Avalos, "The Treaty of Tripoli and the Myth of a Christian Nation." In *Investigating Christian Privilege and Religious Oppression in the United States*. Warren Blumenfield, Khyati Joshi, and Ellen Fairchild, eds. Sense Publishers, 2008, pp. 23-36.

Philip Gorski, *American Covenant: A History of Civil Religion from the Puritans to the Present*. Princeton University Press, 2017. [Introduction, Cpt. 1 "The Civil Religious Tradition and Its Rivals]

Week 3 (January 28, 30) Religious Freedom from an Early Asian American Vantage Point

Tomoe Moriya, *Yemyo Imamura: Pioneer American Buddhist*. Honolulu: Buddhist Study Center, 2000. [Imamura's *Democracy According to the Buddhist Viewpoint* (1918)]

Shuye Sonoda, "Buddhism in the Kingdom of Liberty" – Thomas Tweed and Stephen Prothero, eds. *Asian Religions in America: A Documentary History*. Oxford University Press, 1998, pp.78-81

Myra E. Withee, "Is Buddhism to Blame?" (1902) – Thomas Tweed and Stephen Prothero, eds. *Asian Religions in America: A Documentary History*. Oxford University Press, 1998, pp. 123-126

Week 4 (February 4, 6) Exclusions: Anti-Asian Immigration Acts and Racial-Religious Animus

Zachary Johnson, *Regulating the Dead to Protect the Living: Chinese Immigrants, Religion, and the Bio-Politics of Public Health in Nineteenth Century San Francisco*. M.A. thesis, Florida State University, 2013. [pp. 1-20]

Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943*. University of North Carolina Press, 2007. [Cpt. 1 "Closing America's Gates: Chinese Exclusion and the Origins of American Gatekeeping"]

Irene Lin. "Journey to the Far West: Chinese Buddhism in America." In *New Spiritual Homes: Religion and Asian Americans*. David Yoo, ed. University of Hawai'i Press, 1999, pp. 134-66.

Daniel Métreux, "How Bret Harte's Satirical Poem 'The Heathen Chinese' Helped Inflammate Racism in 1870s America." *Southeast Review of Asian Studies* 33 (2011): 173-78.

Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*. Princeton University Press, 2003. [Introduction, Cpt. 1 "The Johnson-Reed Act of 1924 and the Reconstruction of Race in Immigration Law"]

Film – Selections from *The Chinese Exclusion Act* (Dir. Ric Burns and Li-Shin Yu, Center for Asian American Media, 2017)

5-Page Paper #1 Due

Week 5 (February 11, 13) Early Hindu and Sikh Belonging in America

[NOTE – Attendance at Friday, February 14 4pm-5:30pm Lecture by Prof. Richard Jaffe (Duke University) at Doheny Library, Room 110C]

[NOTE EXTRA CREDIT - Attendance at Saturday, February 15 4pm-5:30pm Workshop on “Neither Monk Nor Layman” with Prof. Richard Jaffe (Duke University), Hwansoo Kim (Yale University), Ann Gleig (University of Central Florida) at Doheny Library, Room 110C]

Michael Altman, *Heathens, Hindoo, Hindu: American Representations of India, 1721-1893*. Oxford University Press, 2017. [Cpts. 1 “Heathens and Hindoos in Early America”; 3 “Hindoo Religion in American National Culture”]

Philip Roland Deslippe. “Rishis and Rebels: The Punjabi Sikh Presence in Early American Yoga.” *Journal of Sikh & Punjab Studies* 23/1-2: 93-129.

Alexander Rocklin. “‘A Hindu is White Although he is Black’: Hindu Alterity and the Performativity of Religion and Race between the United States and the Caribbean.” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 58/1: 181-210.

Film – Selections from *Roots in the Sand* (Dir. Jayasri Majumdar Hart, Center for Asian American Media, 1998)

Week 6 (February 18, 20) American Citizenship and Whiteness: The Two U.S. Supreme Court Cases - *United States v. Ozawa* (1922) and *United States v. Thind* (1923)

[NOTE – Extra Credit Attendance at Thursday, February 20 5pm-7pm “Contemporary Chinese Diasporic Fiction: Exploring and Exploding Identity” at BCI – Visions and Voices]

[NOTE – Extra Credit Attendance at Saturday, February 23 4pm-6pm “Seamless, A Play: Japanese American Incarceration and the Afterlife of Historical Trauma” at BCI – Visions and Voices]

Ian F. Haney Lopez, *White By Law: The Legal Construction of Race*. New York University Press, 1996. [Cpts. 2 “Racial Restrictions in the Law of Citizenship”, 4 “*Ozawa* and *Thind*”]

Jennifer Snow, “The Civilization of White Men: The Race of Hindu in *United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind*.” In *Race, Nation, and Religion in the Americas*. Henry Goldschmidt and Elizabeth McAllister, eds. Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 259-82.

Week 7 (February 25, 27) Keeping America Pure: A White and Christian Nation

Daniel B. Lee, "A Great Racial Commission: Religion and the Construction of White America." In *Race, Nation, and Religion in the Americas*. Henry Goldschmidt and Elizabeth McAllister, eds. Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 85-110.

Khyati Joshi, "The Racialization of Religion in the United States." In *Investigating Christian Privilege and Religious Oppression in the United States*. Warren Blumenfield, Khyati Joshi, and Ellen Fairchild, eds. Sense Publishers, 2008, pp. 37-56.

5-Page Paper #2 Due

Week 8 (March 3 [no class on March 5]) Language and Territory: Anglo America, the Anti-Japanese Language School Movement, and Anti-Asian Alien Land Laws

Noriko Asato, "The Japanese Language School Controversy in Hawaii." In *Issei Buddhism in the Americas: The Pioneers of the Japanese-American Buddhist Diaspora*. Duncan Williams and Tomoe Moriya, ed. University of Illinois Press, 2010, pp. 45-64.

Gabriel J. Chin, "Citizenship and Exclusion: Wyoming's Anti-Japanese Alien Land Law in Context." *Wyoming Law Review* 1 /2: 497-521.

Rose Cuison Villazor, "Rediscovering *Oyama v. California*: At the Intersection of Property, Race, and Citizenship." *Washington University Law Review* 87/5 (2010): 979-1042.

Week 9 (March 10, 12) Religion and the World War II Incarceration of Japanese Americans

Duncan Williams. *American Sutra: A Story of Faith and Freedom in the Second World War* (Harvard University Press, 2019) [Introduction, Cpts. 1, 2, 4, 5]

MARCH 17, 19 – NO CLASS – USC SPRING BREAK

Week 10 (March 24, [no class on March 26]) Asian American Christian and Buddhist Institutions: Post-1965 Immigration

Russell Jeung. *Faithful Generations: Race and New Asian American Churches*. Rutgers University Press, 2005. [Cpts. 1 "Introduction", 2 "Chinese and Japanese Churches in the United States", 3 "The Emergence and Institutionalization of Asian American Churches", 8 "Conclusion: Asian American Christians in a Multiethnic Society"]

Carolyn Chen, *Getting Saved in America: Taiwanese Immigration and Religious Experience*. Princeton University Press, 2008. [Cpt. 1 "Taiwanese Immigration and Religion in Southern California, 2 "Becoming Christian: Breaking Traditions and Making Traditions", 3 "Becoming Buddhist: From Embedded Religion to Explicit Religion", Conclusion "Becoming Americans"]

Week 11 (March 31, April 2) Whiteness and Asianness: South and Southeast Asian Theravada Traditions in the U.S.

Wendy Cadge, *Heartwood: The First Generation of Theravada Buddhism in America*. University of Chicago Press, 2004. [Cpts. 1 “Arrivals and a Map of the Journey”, 2 “The History of Theravada Buddhism in America”, 6 “Ascribed and Achieved Buddhist Identities”]

Joseph Cheah. *Race and Religion in American Buddhism: White Supremacy and Immigrant Adaptation*. Oxford University Press, 2011. [Cpts. 1 “Introduction”, 2 “Colonial Legacy of White Supremacy in American Buddhism”, 3 “Buddhist Modernism and the American Vipassana Movement”, 5 “Assimilationist Paradigm and Burmese Americans”]

Week 12 (April 7, 9) Asian American Religions and Religious Freedom Legal Cases [NOTE – Extra Credit Attendance at Saturday, April 11th ?2pm [tba] “Paper Chase” – a film at the Japanese American National Museum]

Chloe Anne Breyer, “Religious Liberty in Law and Practice: Vietnamese Home Temples and the First Amendment,” *Journal of Church and State* 35 (1993): 367-401.

Justice William Douglas, “Asian Religions According to the Supreme Court” (1965) – Thomas Tweed and Stephen Prothero, eds. *Asian Religions in America: A Documentary History*. Oxford University Press, 1998, pp. 378-380

U.S. Supreme Court, “Even Buddhist Prisoners Have Rights” (1972) –Thomas Tweed and Stephen Prothero, eds. *Asian Religions in America: A Documentary History*. Oxford University Press, 1998, pp. 381-382

5-Page Paper #3 Due

**Week 13 ([no class on April 14], [class trip on April 16 to Venice JA Memorial Monument])
Asian American Religion in a Mixed-Race America**

Helen Kiyong Kim and Noah Samuel Leavitt, *JewAsian: Race, Religion, and Identity for America’s Newest Jews*. University of Nebraska Press, 2016. [Cpts. 1 “Introducing Jewish American and Asian American Marriages”, 3 “Intermarriage: Moving Beyond the Interfaith Debate”]

Todd LeRoy Pereira. “Sasana Sakon and the New Asian American: Intermarriage and Identity at a Thai Buddhist Temple in Silicon Valley.” In *Asian American Religions: The Making and Remaking of Borders and Boundaries*. Tony Carnes and Fenggang Yang, eds. New York University Press, 2004, pp. 313-37.

Deenesh Sohoni. “Unsuitable Suitors: Anti-Miscegenation Laws, Naturalization Laws, and the Construction of Asian Identities.” *Law and Society Review* 41/3 (2007): 587-618.

Duncan Williams, "Key Moments in Japanese America's Mixed-Race History, 1868-1945." In *Hapa Japan*. Duncan Williams, ed. Los Angeles: Kaya Press, 2017, pp. 189-224.

Week 14 (April 21, 23) Post-9/11 Sikh and Asian Muslim Americans

Ameena Ghaffar-Kucher, "Religification of Pakistani-American Youth." *American Educational Research Journal* 49/1 (2011): 30-52.

Yeary Panji Setianto. "Mediatization of Religion: How Indonesian Muslim Diasporas Mediatized Islamic Practices." *Journal of Media and Religion* 14/4: 230-44.

Jaideep Singh. "Memory, Invisibility, and the Oak Creek *Gurdwara* Massacre: A Sikh American Perspective of the 'Post-racial' U.S." *Sikh Formations: Religion, Culture, Theory* 9/2 (2013): 215-25.

Week 15 (April 28, 30) Final Paper Preparation and Presentations

FINAL PAPER DUE ON TUESDAY, May 5th

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 Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) - (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710

campussupport.usc.edu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

ombuds.usc.edu

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.