Cluster Course Addition
(New Course to UNST clusters)

COURSE TITLE: Asian American Women's Studies (proposed to be added to Women's Studies Cluster)

PROPOSING FACULTY: Patti Duncan, Assistant Professor, Women's Studies Dept.

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION.
   In this interdisciplinary course, we will focus on the contemporary experiences of Asian American women, examining the ways in which race, gender, class, sexuality, and national identity shape the experiences of Asian American women. Topics include: histories of immigration and western colonization; family and community structures; representations and stereotypes in media and popular culture; sexuality and sexual identities; mixed-heritage and bicultural experiences; the politics of language; violence against Asian American women; labor force participation; relationship to feminism; and activism and resistance.

   A. DEVELOPMENT
      This is an existing course, and has been offered as a Women's Studies elective, cross-listed with the English Department.

   B. AVAILABILITY
      This course has been offered in the winter term during the 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 academic calendars. It will be offered annually in the winter term. The faculty member responsible for this course is a tenure-track assistant professor, and will be available to teach it once a year.

   C. PREREQUISITES
      There are currently no prerequisites for this course.

2. COURSE OUTLINE.
   Required texts include: Her Wild American Self, by Evelina Galang; The Woman Warrior, by Maxine Hong Kingston; Making More Waves: New Writing by Asian American Women, edited by Elaine H. Kim and Asian Women United of California; and Dragon Ladies: Asian American Feminists Breathe Fire, edited by Sonia Shah. The instructor for the class is Patti Duncan, Assistant Professor, Women's Studies Department. Please see attached syllabus.

3. GENERAL EDUCATION GOALS.

   A. CONTENT
      This is an upper-level interdisciplinary course, drawing from Women's Studies, Asian American Studies, and Ethnic Studies, as well as traditional disciplines such as history, English, sociology, philosophy, and political science. Students will be asked to apply multiple critical reading skills to a
diverse range of readings, films, and other materials. Please see attached syllabus.

B. UNST GOALS

The pedagogical goals of this course fulfill the University's goals for General Education, in terms of focusing the content of this course primarily on the diversity of human experience and social responsibility, especially in terms of understanding human agency in social transformation.

1. Inquiry and Critical Thinking. More than simply providing an introduction to readings and topics about Asian American women, an objective for this course involves fostering the development of critical frameworks for students, especially those of feminist paradigms and critical race studies. Through developing such frameworks for understanding the history, literature, and politics of Asian American women, students will then be able to turn their analyses to other realms of experience and history. By the end of this course, students should be able to articulate and apply understandings of patriarchy, racism, heterosexism and homophobia, imperialism and internal colonialism, power/privilege, hegemony, and activism/resistance.

2. Communication. Communication will be stressed in all aspects of this course, especially as this course will be structured as a discussion-centered course. Students will be required to collaborate with one another to give in-class presentations, to keep regular journals and to write critical essays exploring the themes of this course. Finally, each student will be required to conduct a term-long independent project, of his/her own design, the details of which will be worked out in consultation with the professor. All students will be asked to present and discuss these final projects during the final week of the term.

3. Diversity of Human Experience. This course will reflect the university's commitment to address issues of diversity. By emphasizing the history, literature, and sociology of Asian American women, this course broadens not only the Women's Studies curriculum, but also that of the university in general. It has become quite apparent that students at Portland State University feel a great need for courses about Asian American women. Because the themes of this course will be deeply connected to the everyday lived realities of people in relation to their gender and racial subject positions (and since of course all people are situated in relation to gender and race), this course will engage students in thinking through their own relationship to these terms, and to the identities and histories of Asian American women.

4. Ethical Issues & Social Responsibility. By examining power relations like gender and race, and exploring deeply rooted forms of oppression such as sexism and racism, this course emphasizes the need to take responsibility for challenging all forms of oppression. Also, in our exploration of identity
politics and situated positions, this course will engage all students in thinking through issues of power, privilege, and personal accountability.

C. CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT
This course relies on discussion, and is taught as a seminar. The instructor makes use of experimental methods in this course, emphasizing student-centered and collaborative learning. In classroom interactions, students will be expected to participate in discussions, creative exercises, role-plays, and debates. At times, they will be expected to collaborate to facilitate the discussion themselves. Students are expected to keep regular journals, write critical essays, engage in class presentations, and complete final independent, creative projects, relevant to the goals of the course.

D. SUITABILITY
Other classes in the Women's Studies cluster engage issues of gender in relation to art, science, history, economics, and literature. Several courses emphasize understanding of particular groups of women, including BST 410: Women in African History; CHLA 303: Chicana/Latina Experience; HST 410: Women in East Asia; WS/FL/INTL 331: Women in the Middle East; and WS 330: Women of Color in the U.S. However, there is no course that focuses exclusively on Asian American women. Thus, this course fits well within the cluster, in that it introduces students to another area of study within Women's Studies, at the same time that it contributes to the diversification of the Women's Studies cluster. Students taking courses within this cluster will have the opportunity to learn about Asian American women in relation to other groups of women of color, both within the U.S. and globally.

COURSE APPROVED FOR CLUSTER INCLUSION BY

DEPARTMENT CHAIR(S):  

DATE: 10/23/01

faculty -  

DATE: 10/23/01

CLUSTER COORDINATOR:  

DATE: 10/23/01

CHAIR, CLUSTER COORDINATORS:  

DATE:

CHAIR, UNST COMMITTEE:  

DATE:

All changes to Clusters must be approved by PSU's Senate Curriculum Committee.

PROPOSALS MUST BE RECEIVED AT UNIVERSITY STUDIES BY WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 31ST.
know this about us
we have lived our lives
on the edges of oceans
in anticipation of
sailing into the sunrise

I tell you all this
to tear apart the silence
of our days and nights here

I tell you all this
to fill the void of absence
in our history here

we are fragmented shards
blown here by a war no one wants to remember

in a foreign land
with an achingly familiar wound
our survival is dependent upon
never forgetting that vietnam is not
a word / a world / a love / a family / a fear
to bury

let people know
VIETNAM IS NOT A WAR

let people know
VIETNAM IS NOT A WAR

but a piece of us,
sister,
and
we are
so much

more

-- Le Thi Diem Thuy, from "shrapnel shards on blue water"
**Course Description:**
What have been the experiences of Asian American women in the U.S.? How are Asian American women portrayed and perceived by U.S. institutions? How do Asian American women resist such representations, struggle against multiple forms of oppression, and create self-defined communities and movements for social change?

In this upper-level interdisciplinary course, we will focus on the contemporary experiences of Asian Pacific American women. We will examine ways in which race, gender, class, sexuality, and national belonging (including immigration status), shape the experiences of Asian American women. Students will be introduced to themes in the study of Asian American women, including: histories of immigration and Western colonization; family and community structures; representations and stereotypes in media and popular culture; sexuality and sexual identities; mixed-heritage and bicultural experiences; language; violence; labor force participation; coalitions and exclusions within feminist movements and within Asian American organizations and movements; and activism and resistance.

In addition to discussing various themes in relation to Asian American women, we will work toward the development of critical frameworks for the study of race, gender, sexuality, class, and national belonging, centering the experiences of Asian American women. We will attempt to relate what we study to our own experiences and social locations, in order to make relevant connections between personal histories and larger socio-economic structures. And we will strategize together about ways to challenge multiple forms of oppression, including racism, sexism, classism, homophobia/heterosexism, and imperialism.

Drawing from Women's Studies, Asian American Studies, Ethnic Studies, Postcolonial Studies, History, Sociology, and Literary Studies, we will read historical essays, autobiographical writings, theoretical essays, poetry, and experimental writings; and we will screen films of various genres.

**Required Texts:**
Evelina Galang, *Her Wild American Self.*
COURSE PACKET (available from Smart Copy, located at 1915 SW 6th Ave.)

All required texts are available at In Other Words Bookstore, located at 3734 SE Hawthorne Blvd. A representative from In Other Words will visit our classroom to sell these texts during the first week of class. The texts are also on two-hour reserve at the reserve desk of Miller Library. In addition to the texts, shorter reading assignments are available as a packet (marked [P] in the syllabus), available from the professor.

**Course Requirements and Assignments:**

**Attendance**
Students are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings. You will be allowed three absences in case of emergencies and illness, after which your attendance grade will be reduced for each additional absence. (Please do NOT request more excused absences, except in cases of emergency situations or family tragedies.) If you are taking this course Pass/No Pass, you cannot miss more than five classes in order to pass the course. Also, you are expected to be in class on time, and to stay for the duration of the class period. Excessive tardiness (more than two or three times) will lower your attendance grade. Each tardiness will be equal to one-half of an absence. If you miss more than fifty percent of a scheduled class meeting, you will be marked absent for that day. Also, if you sleep during class, read, or work on unrelated materials, you will be marked absent. Your attendance grade will be based on the following scale:
0 absences = 100% (A+)
1-2 absences = 95% (A)
3 absences = 85% (B)
4 absences = 75% (C)
5 absences = 65% (D)
More than 5 absences = F

Class Participation
Students are expected to actively participate in all class discussions. This is an intensive reading and discussion course. All reading assignments are listed next to the day during which they will be discussed. Readings should be read and analyzed by that day. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss all reading assignments, with carefully thought out critical observations, comments, and/or questions about the readings, materials, and/or films. From time to time, you will also be asked to complete additional homework assignments or in-class assignments (including quizzes) about assigned readings. Please note, however, that not all or any comments reflect adequate class preparation and participation. Your comments should be relevant and critical, and it is important that you remember not to dominate class discussions, limiting your remarks so that other members of the class have time to speak. If necessary, we will remind you to be respectful of one another in our classroom conversations. Finally, please refrain from bringing food or gum into the classroom.

Journal
For this course, all students are required to submit regular 1-2 page journal entries, via e-mail, to the professor. Journals may consist of various formats, and should engage and reflect your understandings of the themes of the readings, films, and discussions from this class. Each week, I will assign general topics for these journal entries. Students are required to submit at least five journal entries over the term. More specific details about journals will be provided in class.

Class Presentation
Each student is required to participate in an in-class presentation. You will be asked to sign up for a presentation time slot, and to offer a presentation about the materials assigned for that week. You must write a brief proposal (approximately one page) one week before your scheduled presentation, detailing your main objectives and your method or style of presentation. These presentations will be performed during class, and engage your classmates in critical discussion. You may make use of discussion questions, hand-outs, audiovisual materials, outside research, a classroom debate, games or other creative exercises, and/or role-playing activities. Your style of presentation should be appropriate to the materials assigned for your presentation. You should work together with the other student(s) signed up for a particular presentation time slot. We will discuss your presentations in greater detail in class, at which time you will be expected to sign up for one of the scheduled presentation days. Presentations CANNOT be rescheduled. If you fail to attend your presentation, you will receive a zero for this assignment.

Critical Essay
One critical essay is required for this course, due in class Monday, February 11. Essays must be 5-7 pages in length, typed, double-spaced, on numbered pages, and properly documented. You will be given topics to choose from and additional guidelines on a separate hand-out.

Final Project
For this course, you are expected to complete a final independent project. This project can be a standard term paper (based on your research and critical analysis, both in and outside of the class), focusing on a topic of your choice, approved in advance by the professor. Or it may be an experimental project (ethnography; video/film; creative writing; personal essay; conceptual art; performance art; etc.). I will accept many different types of projects, in the form of cultural texts, based on the readings for the class and the issues raised by our discussions. However, topics and forms of presentation must be approved, in advance by the
instructor. At various stages during the quarter, a project proposal and bibliography, an outline detailing objectives and methodology, and a rough draft will be due in order to mark each student's progress, and to offer guidance along the way. If you are conducting interviews or surveys of any sort, your questions must be approved in advance. These various written stages of the process, except for the rough draft, are not optional, and will affect the final grade for the project. During the final week of this class, students will be expected to share their findings by giving brief (5-10 minutes) presentations about these final projects. All final projects are due no later than 2:00 p.m., Friday, March 15.

**Evaluation:** Your class performance will be evaluated as follows:

- Attendance: 10%
- Participation: 15%
- Journal: 15%
- Presentation: 15%
- Critical Essay: 20%
- Final Project: 25%

**Late Assignments:** Late assignments will be accepted at our discretion, and grades for late assignments will be lowered.

**Honor Code:** You are expected to uphold Portland State University's Honor Code. Plagiarism is the use of any direct quotation or paraphrased idea that is not properly documented in your writing. Proper documentation is the use of standard citations (footnotes, endnotes, bibliography) whenever your writing refers to any set of words, phrases, or ideas that is “borrowed” from another text or person (including the texts we use in this course, and the dictionary). You may use any writing manual for documentation style (suggestions include *The Chicago Manual of Style*, *The Modern Language Association Handbook*, and *Kate Turabian's Manual for Writers*). Also, work done for one course and submitted to another course without approval from both instructors is considered a violation of the Honor Code. Finally, work done with or by another student and submitted as entirely your own places all involved students under violation.

**Note:** Please keep in mind that this syllabus is subject to change (with reasonable notice). Readings, topics, and assignments may be added or removed depending on the needs and interests of the class as a whole. If you miss class, it is always your responsibility to find out what you missed, including changes in assignments or readings.

**Course Schedule:**

**WEEK 1**

Mon., Jan. 7  Introduction to the Course

              Shirley Hune, "Asian Pacific American Women in Higher Education" [P]
              Amy Tan, "Mother Tongue" [P]

Fri., Jan. 11  Discussion

**WEEK 2**

Mon., Jan. 14  *Dragon Ladies*, pp. v-xxi (introductory writings)
              Marie S. Lee, "Summer of My Korean Soldier" (MMW, 55-61)
              Chitra Divakaruna, "The Babies: I-II" (MMW, 62-64)
              Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Defining Genealogies: Feminist Reflections on Being South
Wed., Jan. 16
Yen Le Espiritu, "Race, Class, and Gender in Asian American" (MMW, 135-141)
Mitsuye Yamada, "Asian Pacific American Women and Feminism" and "Invisibility is an Unnatural Disaster" [P]
Juliana Pegues, "Strategies from the Field: Organizing the Asian American Feminist Movement" (DL, 3-16)
Rita Chaudhry Sethi, "Smells Like Racism: A Plan for Mobilizing Against Anti-Asian Bias" [P]
Sheerekha Pillai, "The Family Hour" (MMW, 201)

Fri., Jan. 18
Discussion/Presentation

WEEK 3
Mon., Jan. 21
Lisa Lowe, "Work, Immigration, Gender: Asian 'American' Women" (MMW, 269-277)
Miriam Chang Louie, "Breaking the Cycle: Women Workers Confront Corporate Greed Globally" (DL, 121-131)
Grace Chang, "The Global Trade in Filipina Workers" (DL, 132-152)

Wed., Jan. 23
Kimiko Hahn, "Blindsided" (MMW, 83-88)
Mitsuye Yamada, "Warning" (MMW, 89)
Shamita Das Dasgupta and Sayantoni DasGupta, "Bringing Up Baby: Raising a 'Third World' Daughter in the 'First World'" (DL, 182-199)

Fri., Jan. 25
Discussion/Presentation

WEEK 4
Mon., Jan. 28
Maxine Hong Kingston, The Woman Warrior, 1-53

Wed., Jan. 30
Maxine Hong Kingston, The Woman Warrior, 54-109

Fri., Feb. 1
Discussion/Presentation

WEEK 5
Mon., Feb. 4
Maxine Hong Kingston, The Woman Warrior, 110-209

Wed., Feb. 6
Sandra Liu, "Passion and Commitment: Asian American Women and Hollywood" (MMW, 258-268)
Renee Tajima-Pena, "Cinemaya" (MMW, 102-108)
FILM SCREENING: Slaying the Dragon

Fri., Feb. 8
Discussion/Presentation

WEEK 6
Mon., Feb. 11
Lisa See, "Anna May Speaks" (MMW, 195-200)
Marilyn Chin, "A Portrait of the Self as Nation, 1990-1991" (MMW, 159-163)
Elaine H. Kim, "Bad Women: Asian American Visual Artists: Hanh Thi Pham, Hung Liu, and Yong Soon Min" (MMW, 184-194)
CRITICAL ESSAY DUE
Lisa Park, "A Letter to My Sister" (MMW, 65-71)
Film Screening: Two Lies

Fri., Feb. 15  Discussion/Presentation

WEEK 7
Hershini Bhana, "How to Articulate the Inarticulable," I-III (MMW, 174-175)
Helen Zia, "Violence in Our Communities, Where Are the Asian Women" (MMW, 207-214)
Anu Gupta, "Storytime" (MMW, 153-158)
Myung Mi Kim, "From 'Thirty and Five Books'" (MMW, 202-203)

Anannya Bhattacharjee, "A Slippery Path: Organizing Resistance to Violence Against Women" (DL, 29-45)

Fri., Feb. 22  Discussion/Presentation

WEEK 8
Mon., Feb. 25  Sia Nowrojee and Joel Silliman, "Asian Women's Health..." (DL, 73-89)
Elsa E'der, Que Dang, and Karen Kimura, "Living Today: HIV, AIDS, and Asian and Pacific Islander Women" (MMW, 223-228)
Julie Sze, "Expanding Environmental Justice: Asian American Feminists' Contribution" (DL, 90-99)

Wed., Feb. 27  Dana Takagi, "Maiden Voyage: Excursion into Sexuality and Identity Politics" (MMW, 142-149)
Alice Y. Hom, "Stories from the Homefront: Perspectives of Asian American Parents with Lesbian Daughters and Gay Sons" [P]
Lani Ka'ahumanu, "Hapa Hoale Wahine" [P]
Celine Salazar Parrenas, "A Straight Sex Asian Love..." (MMW, 240-241)

Fri., Mar. 1  Discussion/Presentation

WEEK 9
Mon., Mar. 4  Evelina Galang, Her Wild American Self, 1-86

Wed., Mar. 6  Evelina Galang, Her Wild American Self, 87-184

Fri., Mar. 8  Roundtable Discussion, "On Asian America, Feminism, and Agenda-Making" (DL, 57-70)
Bandana Purkayastha, et. al., "Empowering Women" (DL, 100-107)

WEEK 10
Mon., Mar. 11  Final Project Presentations

Wed., Mar. 13  Final Project Presentations

Fri., Mar. 15  Final Project Presentations (PROJECTS DUE)