

**Asian American Studies Program
University of Wisconsin-Madison**

**Asian Am. 170: Hmong American Experiences in the United States
Fall 2021**

Class Days & Time: Tuesday and Thursday, 11:00 – 12:15pm
Class Location: 114 School of Social Work building

Instructor Name: Professor Yang Sao Xiong
Office Hours: By appointment
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CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION

This course explores how Hmong’s participation in the Secret War that the United States waged in Laos shaped their experiences in the U.S., heightening the importance of Hmong Americans’ social, cultural and political self-definition and how, through collective action, Hmong Americans have contributed to the advancement of U.S. society.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines Hmong Americans’ historically conditioned experiences as an ethnic immigrant group in the United States. We will analyze a variety of sources, including oral histories, primary research and video documentaries, to cultivate students’ awareness of how historical circumstances, such as the Secret War in Laos, have impacted Hmong’s socio-political conditions, experiences and identities. Furthermore, this course will develop students’ ability to recognize and refute simplistic or one-dimensional thinking about Hmong and their contemporary conditions and experiences. Rather than simply accept what others have said or written about Hmong, we will challenge dominant narratives by analyzing Hmong Americans’ voices, perspectives and analyses of people, events and the world. Instead of accepting other people’s characterization of Hmong as silent, reticent, submissive persons, we will examine the consequences that racialization and social closure have had on the opportunities and life chances of Hmong Americans and other groups of people. Finally, we will examine how Hmong have organized collective action against various social problems in American society and elsewhere in the world.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course fulfills the UW – Madison’s Ethnic Studies Requirement.

Essential Learning Outcomes	How will I assess mastery of learning outcomes?
1. Increase awareness of how historical circumstances such as the U.S. Secret War in Laos impacted the lives of Hmong Americans.	Through class discussions, movie analysis, and Hmong American lived experiences project.
2. Understand how racial privilege and dominance works to marginalize Hmong American experiences and generate one-dimensional accounts of the Hmong in the U.S.	Through reading questions, class discussions, movie analysis, and Hmong American lived experiences project.

<p>3. Understand how racial incorporation and political mobilization have contributed to empowering Hmong Americans to contest their marginalization and to develop nuanced representations of their experiences in the U.S.</p>	<p>Through reading questions, class discussions, movie analysis, and Hmong American lived experiences project.</p>
<p>4. Be Aware of History's Impact on the Present: Ethnic Studies courses highlight how certain histories have been valued and devalued, and how these differences have promulgated disparities in contemporary American society.</p>	<p>Through reading questions, class discussions, movie analysis, and Hmong American lived experiences project.</p>
<p>5. Be Able to Recognize and Question Assumptions: Ethnic Studies courses promote recognition and application of critical thinking skills, specifically with respect to teaching students to harbor a healthy skepticism towards knowledge claims, whether in the form of media, political, or popular representations, primarily as these relate to race and ethnicity. As part of this process, the ESR should challenge students to question their own assumptions and preconceived notions on these topics.</p>	<p>Through reading questions, class discussions, leading of class discussions, movie analysis, and Hmong American lived experiences project.</p>
<p>6. Be Conscious of "Self" and "Other"/Personal and Social Responsibility: Awareness of self is inextricably linked with awareness of and empathy towards others' perspectives. In constructing a space for this kind of discussion in their classrooms, this course gives students an opportunity to think about identity issues (their own as well as others), and connections they have to people "outside" their social circle.</p>	<p>Through weekly written reflection paper, leading of class discussions, and class discussions. Self-reflection linking course concepts to Hmong and other minority and majority communities is encouraged and examined. Through reflections and class discussions, students will become more aware of their own identities & social locations and the identities & social locations of others.</p>
<p>7. Be Able to Participate Effectively in a Multicultural Society: Ethnic Studies courses should be relevant to students' "lives outside the classroom", and pursuing the objectives above should not only lead to student behavioral change, but to action in the real world. The ESR should ultimately engender in students the ability to participate in a multicultural society more effectively, respectfully, and meaningfully. This participation may be as mundane as simply being able to discuss issues related to race with a colleague or friend, or to recognize inequities in interpersonal, institutional, or other contexts.</p>	<p>Through Hmong American lived experiences project/term paper. The lived experiences project, for example, will require students to go beyond the classroom readings to identify, research and write about an aspect of Hmong American lives that is understudied.</p>
<p>8. Knowledge of Cultures: Focused engagement with big questions, both contemporary and historically.</p>	<p>Through class discussions, weekly reflections, movie analysis, and Hmong American lived experiences project.</p>
<p>9. Intellectual and Practical Skills, including inquiry and analysis, critical and creative thinking, written and oral communication, teamwork and problem solving</p>	<p>Through class discussions, leading of class discussions, weekly reflections, movie analysis, and Hmong American lived experiences project.</p>

3-Credit Courses: This 3-credit course meets as a group for two 75-minute sessions per week and carries the expectation that you will spend an average of 3 hours outside of class for each class period. In other words, in addition to class time, plan to allot an average of 6 hours per week for reading, writing, preparing for discussions, and/or studying for quizzes and exams for this class.

Asian American Studies Certificate:

“Hmong American Experiences in the U.S.” fulfills the Asian American Studies Certificate Program requirements. The Asian American Studies Certificate Program provides students with an opportunity to develop a sustained intellectual focus on Asian American racial formation, history, literature, and culture. Interdisciplinary in nature, the certificate can be obtained by completing 15 credits of coursework. The certificate program is open to any undergraduate student who has an interest in Asian American Studies. Please contact the Asian American Studies Program Director, Lori Lopez (lklopez@wisc.edu), if you are interested.

Within the Asian American Studies Concentration, students have the option to declare a HMoob American Studies Emphasis. This special track promotes a more in-depth examination of HMoob American history and culture and can be obtained if 6 out of 15 credits are completed by taking designated HMoob American Studies courses within the Asian American Studies curriculum.

READING MATERIALS AND COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Required readings: All required reading materials will be posted at Canvas under this course’s website. Readings are due prior to the day on which they are assigned (See Assignments Policy, p. 10). You must print and bring each week’s required articles/chapters to class.

Students are expected to:

- Be responsible for their own learning and actions.
- Be respectful of other students’ perspectives and right to learn.
- Attend and actively participate in class discussions.
- Arrive on time. Late arrivals and early departures are very disruptive and should be avoided.
- Read required materials prior to the day on which they are assigned and come prepared with discussion questions on the readings.
- Regularly check email and Canvas for announcements and materials.
- Complete all required assignments for the course.

The instructor is expected to:

- Create a comfortable and open atmosphere conducive to learning.
- Design and organize the course.
- Be available to students to answer questions and to hear concerns.
- Begin and end classes on time.
- Assure that course objectives are being met.
- Assure that the class is accessible to all students.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Your course grade will be comprised of the following assignments. There are 100 points possible.

Assignment	Due	Max Points
Attendance (See Attendance Policy, p. 9).	Ongoing	5
Active Participation (See Active Participation Policy, p. 9)	Ongoing	20
Movie Analysis Paper	October 28	35
Hmong American Lived Experiences Project	December 14	40
TOTAL		100

Students will receive detailed prompts for the oral history project/presentations and the Hmong American Experiences term paper later in the semester.

Grading Scale & Standards: Students' final grade will be determined as follows:

Points	Grade	What the point totals & subsequent grade generally indicate
94-100	A	Outstanding, excellent work in all areas
88-93	AB	Outstanding, excellent work in many areas
82-87	B	Meets expectations in all areas
76-81	BC	Meets expectations in most areas, below in others
70-75	C	Below expectations in most areas, not acceptable undergraduate work
64-69	D	Below expectations in all areas
<64	F	Course failure

COURSE CONTENTS (Subject to change; please consult the course webpage in Canvas for the most recent version of the syllabus and its contents).

WEEK 1	
Introduction to the Course	
R, 9/9:	<i>Teacher & Student Introductions, Syllabus Review Activity, Course Goals and Ground Rules for Class Discussions</i> Handout: Course Syllabus & Class Ice Breaker
WEEK 2	
Introduction to Hmong History and Society; Critical Race Theory/Insight	
T, 9/14:	Readings: (1) Her, Vincent K. and Mary Louise Buley-Meissner. 2012. "Hmong American Studies: Bringing New Voices into Multicultural Studies." Pp. 3-28 in <i>Hmong and American: Negotiating Identity, Community, and Culture</i> , edited by V. K. Her and M. L. Buley-Meissner, Minnesota Historical Society Press.

	(2) Lee, Gary Yia. 2007. "Diaspora and the Predicament of Origins: Interrogating Hmong Postcolonial History and Identity." <i>Hmong Studies Journal</i> 8:1-25.
R, 9/16:	Readings: (1) Delgado, Richard and Jean Stefancic. 2017. "Introduction: What is Critical Race Theory." Pp. 1-13 in <i>Critical Race Theory</i> , edited by R. Delgado and J. Stefancic. New York University Press. (2) Culas, Christian, and Jean Michaud. 1997. "A Contribution to the Study of Hmong (Miao) Migrations and History." <i>BKI</i> , pp. 211-243.

WEEK 3
The Secret War and Its Aftermath; Historical Traumas

T, 9/21:	Readings: (1) "Laos" (pp. 1-27) (24 declassified documents from the Foreign Relations of the United States 1964-1968). (2) "The CIA and the "Secret War" in Laos: The Battle for Skyline Ridge, 1971-1972" (Leary 1995, pp. 505-517). (3) "The Impact of the War on Hmong" (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory et al. 1985: 15-34).
R, 9/23:	*Readings: (1) Yang, Kao Kalia. "The Song Poet Love Song." <i>The Song Poet</i> . (2) Munger, Ronald G. 1986. "Sleep Disturbances and Sudden Death of Hmong Refugees: A Report on Field Work Conducted in the Ban Vinai Refugee Camp." Pp. 379-398 in <i>The Hmong in Transition</i> edited by G. L. Hendricks, B. T. Downing, and A. A. Deinard. New York: Center for Migration Studies.

WEEK 4
International Migration and Resettlement

T, 9/28:	*Readings: (1) Letter by Daniels. P. 18 in <i>Hmong Voices in Montana</i> , Susan Lindbergh Miller, Bounthavy Kiatoukaysy Thao, Tou Yang (Eds). Missoula Museum of the Arts Foundation, 1992. (2) U.S. Government. Department of State. Declassified Documents D403 and D404. (3) Rosenblatt, Lionel. 2015. "How the Hmong Came to Be in the U.S." Concordia University. Handout: <i>Movie Analysis Prompt</i> (analyzing Hmong's experiences with race, class, gender).
R, 9/30:	*Reading: Chan, Sucheng. 1994. "The Xiong Family of Lompoc." Pp. 87-128 in <i>Hmong Means Free: Life in Laos and America</i> . Temple University Press.

WEEK 5
The Hmong American Population and Historical Traumas

T, 10/5:	*Reading: Pfeifer, Mark, John Sullivan, Kou Yang and Wayne Yang. 2013. "Hmong Population and Demographic Trends in the 2010 Census and 2010 American Community Survey." Pp. 8-20 in <i>The State of the Hmong American Community: 2013</i> . Washington, D.C.: Hmong National Development, Inc.
R, 10/7:	*Reading: Koltyk, Jo Ann. 1998. "The Hmong in the Context of the Indochinese Refugees Diaspora." Pp. 8-18 in <i>New Pioneers in the Heartland: Hmong Life in Wisconsin</i> . Allyn and Bacon.
Handout: Hmong American Experiences Multimedia Project Prompt	

WEEK 6
Hmong American Experiences with Racialization and Racism

T, 10/12:	*Readings: (1) Hein, Jeremy. 2000. "Interpersonal Discrimination Against Hmong Americans: Parallels and Variation in Microlevel Racial Inequality." <i>Sociological Quarterly</i> 41(3):413-429. (2) Hein, Jeremy. 2006. "Small-Town Hospitality and Hate." Pp. 79-100 in <i>Ethnic Origins: The Adaptation of Cambodian and Hmong Refugees in Four American Cities</i> . Russell Sage.
R, 10/14:	*Reading: Schein, Louisa and Va-Megn Thoj. 2007. "Occult Racism: The Masking of Race in the Hmong Hunter Incident." <i>American Quarterly</i> 59(4):1051-1095. Film/Movie Video Clips: <i>Lone Hunter</i> (watch in-class); <i>Gran Torino</i> (watch full movie on own and outside of class) https://www.popdust.com/lone-hunter-2444181792.html ; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=67gAEuFpV2w

WEEK 7
Experiences with Racism (continued); Institutional Racism

T, 10/19:	*Reading: Xiong, Yang Sao. 2010. "State-Mandated Language Classification: A Study of Hmong American Students' Access to College-Preparatory Curricula." <i>AAPI Nexus Journal</i> 8(1): 17-42.
R, 10/21:	*Readings: Lee, Stacey J., Choua Xiong, Linda Marie Pheng, and Mai Neng Vang. 2017. "The Model Minority Maze: Hmong Americans Working Within and Around Racial Discourses." <i>Journal of Southeast Asian American Education and Advancement</i> 12(2):1-16.

WEEK 8
Hmong Americans' Experiences with Class Inequality

T, 10/26:	*Readings: Xiong, Yang Sao. 2016. "The Reorganization of Hmong American Families in Response to Poverty." Pp. 175-192 in Min Zhou and Anthony Ocampo (Eds.). <i>Contemporary Asian America: A Multidisciplinary Reader</i> . New York University Press.
R, 10/28:	*Reading: Xiong, Yang Sao. 2012. "Hmong Americans' Educational Attainment: Recent Changes and Remaining Challenges." <i>Hmong Studies Journal</i> 13(2):1-18. Due Today: Movie Analysis Paper

WEEK 9 Class Inequality (Continued)	
T, 11/2:	*Readings: Lo, Bao. 2018. "Criminalization and Second-Generation Hmong American Boys." <i>Amerasia Journal</i> 44(2):113-126.
R, 11/4:	*Readings: (1) "Hmong, Put into War by CIA, Losing Appeals of Welfare Cuts They're Veterans..." (Howard). (2) Hwang, Victor. 2002. "The Hmong Campaign for Justice: A Practitioner's Perspective." <i>Asian American Law Journal</i> 9:83-115.

WEEK 10 Hmong American Collective Actions—Past and Present	
T, 11/9:	*Reading: Vang, Nengher N. 2011. "Political Transmigrants: Rethinking Hmong Political Activism in America." <i>Hmong Studies Journal</i> 12:1-46.
R, 11/11:	*Reading: Xiong, Yang Sao. 2016. "The Centrality of Ethnic Community and the Military Service Master Frame in Hmong Americans' Protest Events and Cycles of Protest, 1980-2010." <i>Hmong Studies Journal</i> 17:1-33.

WEEK 11 Hmong Americans' Collective Actions—Past and Present	
T, 11/16:	*Reading: Cha, Dia. 2005. "Hmong and Lao Refugee Women: Reflections of a Hmong American Woman Anthropologist." <i>Hmong Studies Journal</i> 6:1-35.
R, 11/18:	*Readings: (1) Pha, Kong Pheng. 2019. "Queer Hmong and the Politics of Community Formation in the Diaspora." Minnesota Historical Society. (2) Mayo, James B. 2013. "Hmong History and LGBTQ Lives: Immigrant Youth Perspectives on Being Queer and Hmong." <i>Journal of International Social Studies</i> 3(1):79-91.

WEEK 12 Hmong American Collective Actions (continued)	
T, 11/23:	*Reading: Xiong, Yang Sao. 2018. "The Dynamics of Discursive Opportunities in the Hmong Campaign for Inclusion in California." <i>Amerasia Journal</i> 44(2):65-87.
R, 11/25	No Classes (Thanksgiving Recess, Nov. 25 - 28)

WEEK 13 Hmong American Civic and Political Engagements	
T, 11/30	*Reading: Wong, Carolyn. 2017. "Views on Politics." Pp. 141-184 in <i>Voting Together</i> (Stanford University Press).
R, 12/2:	<p>(1) Hansen, Nathan. "Hmong students and allies call on UW-L to preserve heritage language class, identity." <i>La Crosse Tribune</i> (Dec. 2, 2016).</p> <p>(2) Hansen, Nathan. "Hmong students protest university's handling of heritage language course." <i>La Crosse Tribune</i> (April 18, 2017).</p> <p>(3) "Everything New at UW-L."</p>

WEEK 14 Hmong American Current Issues	
T, 12/7:	<p>COVID, Anti-Asian Racism, Hmong American Access to Health</p> <p>*Reading: Knowles, Naomi. 2020. "Sheriff investigating reports of discrimination, vandalism, threats against Wausau-area Hmong over COVID-19." <i>WSAW-TV</i>, March 26. URL: https://www.wsaw.com/content/news/Sheriff-investigating-reports-of-discrimination-vandalism-threats-against-Wausau-area-Hmong-over-COVID-19-569140451.html</p>
R, 12/9:	<p>Black Lives Matter, Hmong-Black Relations; Media Representations of Hmong</p> <p>*Readings: Evan Hill et al. "How George Floyd was Killed in Police Custody." <i>New York Times</i>, May 31, 2020. URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/31/us/george-floyd-investigation.html</p> <p>Kammy Yam. "The Hmong American community, power, privilege, and a place in Asian America." <i>NBC News</i>, June 8, 2020. URL: https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/hmong-american-community-power-privilege-place-asian-america-n1227431</p> <p>Zoua M Vang. "Origins & Disruption of anti-Blackness in Hmong Communities, July 13, 2020. URL: https://medium.com/@zuajmvaj/origins-disruption-of-anti-blackness-in-hmong-communities-d8bf3d579339</p>

WEEK 15 Hmong American Current Issues and Lessons to Take Away	
T, 12/14:	<p>Last Day of Class: Lessons to Take Away about Hmong American Experiences</p> <p>Due Today: Hmong American Lived Experiences Multimedia Project</p>

COURSE POLICIES

Non-Discrimination Policy: All students will be treated in accordance with federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex, gender, race, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, and religion. No assignments will be due on major religious holidays. Students who will not be attending a class because of a religious holiday must inform their instructor prior to the date of absence so that they can receive an excused absence.

Those students who are registered with the McBurney Disability Resource Center must give the instructor a copy of their Verified Individualized Services and Accommodation (VISA) within the first two weeks of the semester so that accommodations can be made. The instructor and the TAs will assure that there is accommodation made for the student. If the student has not given the copy of the VISA to the instructor, an accommodation will not be made.

Communication Policy: I use email frequently to send out various messages and updates about assignments. Be sure to read your email before coming to class. Extended questions (questions that require longer than 1 minute responses) should only be asked in person, during class, after class, or at office hours. Please email me only when a question cannot be answered by a thorough review of the syllabus.

Technology Policy (applies to in-person instruction): The use of laptops, cell phones, tablets, smartphones and other electronic devices are not permitted in lecture except in unusual circumstances and with the permission of the instructor. All laptops, tablets, smartphones, cell phones, and other electronic devices must be turned off at the beginning of class. If you use a laptop, tablet, cell phone, or other electronic devices during lecture or discussion you will receive one warning without penalty to your grade. You will lose 2 points for the first use after the warning, 4 points for the second use, 8 points for the third use. Should a fourth violation occur, the student will forfeit all participation points (15% of course grade), and additional punishment (up to an "F" in the course) may be imposed on the student.

Attendance Policy: Attendance in lecture is mandatory and will count toward your course grade. You are allowed one unexcused absence throughout the semester provided that you do not use this "freebie" on a day when any major assignment or exam is due. You are always responsible for catching up with and making up missed work regardless of the reason for your absence. If you have a health/medical or other compelling reason for missing class, you must notify me regarding your absence and be able to provide documentation of your reason in order to obtain an excused absence. Anyone who has 5 or more unexcused absences will forfeit all attendance points.

Assignments Policy: Unless specified differently by the professor, all written assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date indicated in this syllabus. If an assignment is received after the first ten minutes of class on the due date, it will be considered late. Late assignments will be penalized by two (2) points for each day that they are late up to a max of six (6) points. However, any assignment turned in more than three (3) days late will not be graded or credited. Should a circumstance occur that make it impossible for the student to complete a class requirement or assignment on time, it is the student's responsibility to notify me by email no later than 48 hours before an assignment is due and to make appropriate and approved arrangements for completing the requirements. In the case of a documented emergency, the student should email me as soon as possible to explain the circumstance that prevented the student from turning an assignment in on time. Assignments are to be handed in or uploaded to Canvas (refer to the instructions provided on each prompt) as indicated by the individual assignment prompts. Please do not e-mail assignments to me – this is not permitted.

Active Participation Policy: On-going class discussion germane to the course materials is a critical component of learning. To foster active discussion of the materials, students must read the readings and complete the three things below:

- 1) One (1) discussion-style question for each of the readings is due at the beginning of classes every Tuesday and Thursday. Please post your question(s) to the Discussion Board on Canvas by 11:00am.

2) Sign up to lead one (1) class discussion of 15-20 minutes long during the semester. Available dates are indicated by an asterisk (*) next to "Readings."

3) Weekly written reflections: Students will post a short reflection about the ongoing class discussions by the end of class Thursday of each week.

Ground Rules Related to Participation: Respect each other and respect people's points of views, even views that you may not agree with. While in class, please raise your hand and wait to be called on before speaking. Do not talk out of turn.

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is an expectation in all classes. Academic integrity requires that the work a student presents to an instructor honestly and accurately indicates the student's own academic efforts. Students in this class have the right to expect that their fellow students are upholding the academic integrity of this University.

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense at the University because it undermines the bonds of trust and honesty between members of our community and defrauds those who may eventually depend upon our knowledge and integrity. Such dishonesty consists of cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarism. The University of Wisconsin-Madison has established a range of penalties for students guilty of plagiarism and academic dishonestly. Appropriate penalties include suspension or expulsion from the university, a failing grade for a course, a failing grade for the assignment, or a reduced grade on a redone assignment. All instances of serious plagiarism are reported to the Dean of Students.

Please take a moment to read and familiarize yourself with the University's policies on academic dishonesty at: <http://students.wisc.edu/doso/acadintegrity.html#acadintegritystandards>

On ways to avoid plagiarism, read: http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html. On ways to quote or paraphrase sources, read: <http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QuotingSources.html>

Incomplete policy: According to University policy, an Incomplete may only be given when students, who have otherwise made good progress in the course, are prohibited from completing the course as a result of an emergency or crisis event in their lives. A grade of Incomplete or "I" will not be given unless the student meets the university policy criteria, and also contacts the instructor prior to the end of the semester to discuss the situation and make arrangements for making up the required work.