Ethnic America:
Migration, Race, and Nation in the 20th Century United States

Course # 01 050 331 01
Department of American Studies
Rutgers University, Spring 2007
Tuesdays and Fridays, 12:35-1:55 PM, Ruth Adams Building Room 104

Professor Ellen D. Wu (ellenwu@rci.rutgers.edu)
Office Hours: Fridays, 10 AM-12 Noon or by appointment, RAB 205E

Course Description
This course examines the process of “nation-building” in modern America through the dual, intertwined lenses of migration and race. We will consider the social, cultural, and political impacts of migration (both within the United States as well as from abroad) by placing the experiences of migrants and their communities at the center of our inquiry. Major concepts to be explored include racial formation, citizenship, and transnationalism. Lectures, readings, discussions, and films will emphasize an interdisciplinary approach to our study of American national identity formation.

Required Texts

The books listed above are available for purchase at the Douglass Student Co-op Bookstore and will also be placed on reserve at the Douglass Library. Other readings on the syllabus will be available for downloading via the course SAKAI website (sakai.rutgers.edu). Your personal SAKAI site should be automatically linked to the course website.

Films (to be screened during class)
A Family Gathering (Lise Yasui, 1988)
Haven From Shame (Marge Pala, 1994)
Kelly Loves Tony (Spencer Nakasako, 1998)
My American Girls: A Dominican Story (Aaron Matthews, 2000)
Crash (Paul Haggis, 2005)
Assignments, Grading, and Course Policies

Full Attendance and Spirited Participation = 15%

On-time attendance is mandatory. Missing multiple class sections or chronic without valid and documented reason will lead to affect your grade negatively. To have an absence counted as “excused,” it must be accompanied by appropriate documentation which clearly demonstrates the reason for and validity of the absence (e.g., a dated doctor’s note), a copy of which must be presented to the instructor. If you must miss a screening, you are responsible for viewing the film at the Music Library on Douglass Campus.

Spirited participation comprises more than simply being present in class. Students are expected to come to class having read the assigned material and prepared to engage actively and thoughtfully in the day’s discussion.

Note that cell phones will not be tolerated in class. Any cell phone usage (making and receiving calls and text messaging) will result in a deduction in your participation grade.

Paper #1 = 15%
Due Friday, 9 February, at the beginning of class.

Paper #2 = 15%
Due Tuesday, 24 April, at the beginning of class.

Midterm = 25%
In-class midterm will be held on Tuesday, 6 March.

Final Exam = 30%
Take home final exam will be due Friday, 4 May at 12 Noon in the American Studies office, Ruth Adams Building Room 024. You must turn in a hard copy—electronic (emailed) copies will NOT be accepted.

Late Assignments
There will be a grade penalty for assignments turned in past deadline. One grade increment will be deducted for each 24 hours late.

Academic Honesty
Students not yet familiar with Rutgers’ policies on plagiarism and academic honesty should familiarize themselves with the University’s guidelines. (See http://cat.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html.) Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will lead to an automatic failing grade in the course (F).

Changes to Syllabus
The instructor reserves the right to make any necessary changes to the syllabus

Week 1: Welcome and Introduction [T, 16 Jan]

Week 1: Frameworks for Considering Immigration, Race, and Nation in the 20th Century United States [F, 19 Jan]


**Part One: Migration, Modernization, and Nation-Building**

**Week 2: The Origins of America as a “Gatekeeping” Nation** [T, 23 Jan]

**Week 2: The Origins of America as a “Gatekeeping” Nation** [F, 26 Jan]
- Lee, *At America’s Gates*, Chapters 5-7, Epilogue, and Afterword (pp. 147-255).

**Week 3: The Great Migration** [T, 30 Jan]
- “Letters From Migrants, 1916-1918” (pp. 64-66).
- *Crisis*, “The Massacre of East St. Louis,” September 1917 (pp. 80-85).
- Chronology of Events Related to the Great Migration (pp. 204-205).

**Week 3: Exclusions and Inclusions: Defining “Whiteness”** [F, 2 Feb]
- Yezierska, *Bread Givers*, Foreword (pp. vii-xvii), Introduction (pp. xxi-xxxvi), and Book I, “Hester Street” (pp. 1-151).

**Week 4: Immigrants and the City** [T, 6 Feb]

**Week 4: WWI and the Rise of Nativism** [F, 9 Feb]

***Paper #1 Due***
**Part Two: Migration, Expansion, and Conquest**

**Week 5: Western Expansion, Agriculture, and Migration I** [T, 13 Feb]
- Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American*, Introduction and Chapters 1-5 (pp. 3-125).

**Week 5: Western Expansion, Agriculture, and Migration II** [F, 16 Feb]

**Week 6: Imperialism—Hawaii** [T, 20 Feb]
- Murayama, *All I Asking For Is My Body*

**Week 6: CLASS CANCELLED** [F, 23 Feb]

**Week 7: Imperialism—Philippines** [T, 27 Feb]

**Week 7: Imperialism—Puerto Rico** [F, 2 March]

**Week 8: MIDTERM** [T, 6 March]

**Week 8: NO CLASS—HAPPY SPRING BREAK!** [F, 9 March]

**Part Three: The Rise of America to Global Prominence**

**Week 9: The Watershed of World War II** [T, 20 March]
- Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American*, Chapter 12 and Conclusion (pp. 253-274).
Week 9: Japanese American Internment/Resettlement [F, 23 March]

Films: A Family Gathering
Haven From Shame

Week 10: The Cold War and Immigration Reform [T, 27 March]

Week 10: The Pacific Wars and Southeast Asian Refugees [F, 30 March]

Film: Kelly Loves Tony

Part Four: Migration in the Era of Globalization

Week 11: Race and Post-1965 Immigrant Communities [T, 3 April]
- Waters, Black Identities, Chapters 1, 3, 5, 7 (pp. 1-15, 44-93, 140-191, 243-284) [optional: Chapters 2, 4, and 6].

Week 11: Race and Post-1965 Immigrant Communities [F, 6 April]
- Waters, Black Identities, Chapters 8 and 9 (pp. 285-344).

**Week 12: Transnationalism, Culture, and Consumption** [T, 10 April]

**Week 12: 9/11 and Realignments of Race and Citizenship** [F, 13 April]

**Week 13: The Browning of America** [T, 17 April]

**Film:** *My American Girls: A Dominican Story*

**Week 13: The Browning of America** [F, 20 April]
- Davis, *Magical Urbanism*, Chapters 10-17 (pp. 93-174).

**Week 14: Immigration and Race in Popular Culture** [T, 24 April]

**TV Show:** *Dave Chappelle*
**Film:** *Crash*

***Paper #2 Due***

**Week 14: Immigration and Race in Popular Culture** [F, 27 April]

**Film:** *Crash*

**TAKE HOME FINAL EXAM—DUE FRIDAY, 4 MAY, 12 NOON**
To be turned in to the American Studies Office, RAB 024  
(note: hard copies only—electronic copies will NOT be accepted)