

Preliminary Web Course Description

*Please note: This is a preliminary web course description only. The department reserves the right to change without notice any information in this description. The final, binding course outline will be distributed in the first class of the semester.

School of English and Theatre Studies

Course Code: ENGL*3960	Course Title: Literature in History	Date of Offering: W'21
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Course Instructor: E. Chang	Course Format: Remote – synchronous and asynchronous
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Brief Course Synopsis:

**Subtitle/Area of Emphasis: “(Re)Writing and (Re)Reading East Asian North American History as Mystery”
(Subject to Change)**

The extremely variable histories of East Asian diaspora and immigration to Canada and the USA is a dense yet disconnected patchwork of exclusionary admissions and internment policies, denials of citizenship status and the franchise, exploitative legislation regarding work and “family planning,” overt and covert racism. At the same time, we encounter a panoply of survival stories: of footholds and fights for rights within the frameworks of nation(s) and narration(s), leading to a diversity of “gains,” however mixed: in selective assimilation, and the vexed and vexing phenomenon of the so-called “model minority”; in forging Pan-Asian and intersectional solidarities; and in recovering the lesser-known or buried stories *and* histories of countless persons and communities who may be “missing” within the very gaps and margins of the official narratives that have served to subordinate or erase them. This course focuses on these gaps, omissions, erasures, and exclusions as rich and complex sites for the production and reception of literature as Asian North American history. Focusing on the figure of the (often reluctant) fictional detective, we will engage with several examples of the Anglo-American novel as a cultural form or genre subject to significant kinds of transformation and reconfiguration: both admitting and denying access to “lost agents” of history—leading to revealing and restorative, yet partial and incomplete, solutions of the mysteries of individual and communal identities and truths.

Methods of Evaluation and Weight:

TBD: potentially, a combination of at least one take-home midterm; an individual or pair presentation; preparatory steps toward a research essay (e.g., annotated bibliography, research questions and plan); and a final research essay (length TBA, but at least 3,600 words and utilizing at least 5 *scholarly* research sources).

Texts and/or Resources Required (e.g. Internet access, specific textbook title, lab kit, etc.)

Texts and resources may include (subject to change):

Novels

Joy Kogawa, *Obasan*; Sky Lee, *Disappearing Moon Café*; Chang-rae Lee, *On Such a Full Sea*; Ruth Ozeki, *A Tale for the Time Being*, Madeleine Thien, *Do Not Say We Have Nothing or Certainty*; Wayson Choy, *Paper Shadows: A Chinatown Childhood*.

Naomi Hirahara: *Snakeskin Shamisen*, *Hiroshima Boy*, *Sayonara Slam* (and/or other novels from the “Mas Arai Mystery” series)

Film

Chan Is Missing (dir. Wayne Wang)

Chinatown (dir. Roman Polanski)

Literary/Cultural Theory and History

E.g., Mikhail Bakhtin, Lisa Lowe, Tina Chen, Peter Feng, Susan Koshy, Rey Chow, Homi Bhabha, Kay Anderson

This course counts towards the following distribution requirement(s) for students who registered at the University prior to the Fall of 2018:
20th and 21st Century

Information about mode of delivery (synchronous/asynchronous/other details):

Synchronous (approx. 1.5 hours per week) and Asynchronous (approx. 1.5 hours per week)

*Students who registered at the University of Guelph after Fall 2018 must fulfill the “new” major and minor requirements. Students who registered at the University of Guelph prior to Fall 2018 must fulfill the requirements of the Calendar in effect when they first enrolled unless they have filed a Schedule of Studies Change Request to change to the 2018-2019 calendar. For more information, please consult the major and minor checklists at <https://www.uoguelph.ca/arts/sets/undergraduate/english/current-student-information>.