The Department of Asian and Asian American Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences welcomes you to:

American Poets and China (LDS 102)
Wednesday 3:30-4:23 pm
SBS N106

Lecturer: Professor Peg Christoff
E-mail: peggy.christoff@stonybrook.edu
Phone: 631-632-4030
Office: Humanities 1126
Office Hours: Monday 4-5 pm; Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:30-9:30 am

Course Description: This course examines poetry written or translated by American and Asian American poets about China from the early 1900s to the present day. Students will read poetry aloud in class and will be encouraged (but not required) to compose their own poems.

Student Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of this course, students will be able to explain the broad social, political, and global contexts within which "China" has been constructed over time. This will be measured in the following ways:

- Students will be able to identify key words and phrases within the poems that reference China
- Students will be able to write a one page reflection answering the questions for each poetry reading (see class schedule below)
- Students will be able to relate the poets' personal experiences to relevant historical time periods (e.g., Chinese Exclusion laws, WWI, WWII, anti-war demonstrations, etc.)
- Using the paired comparison sampling (PCS) technique, students will be able to construct a criteria to identify their favorite poems
- Students will use the PCS to evaluate favorite poems among all members of the class

Course Requirements: Regular attendance and active class participation are required. To support this requirement, work outside of class is kept at a minimum. Students will be required to review assigned poems before coming to class and, after each class, write and submit a one-page reflection on the highs and lows of each class period. Throughout the semester, students will keep track of their favorite poems. At the end of the semester, the class will decide on one or two favorite poems. The professor will submit the selections (and the criteria for the selections) to a relevant Asian or Asian American foundation, museum, or other studies center, to be determined by the instructor.

Students are granted one unexcused absence without penalty. All cell phones and other electronic devices should be set on “silent” during the duration of the class. No audio/visual recording of class sessions is permitted.
**Blackboard:** Email and especially email sent via Blackboard ([http://blackboard.stonybrook.edu](http://blackboard.stonybrook.edu)) is one of the ways we officially communicate with you in this course. It is your responsibility to make sure that you read your email in your official University email account. For most students, that is Google Apps for Education ([http://www.stonybrook.edu/mycloud](http://www.stonybrook.edu/mycloud)). Please verify your official Electronic Post Office (EPO) address at: [http://it.stonybrook.edu/help/kb/checking-or-changing-your-mail-forwarding-address-in-the-epo](http://it.stonybrook.edu/help/kb/checking-or-changing-your-mail-forwarding-address-in-the-epo)

If you choose to forward your official University email to another off campus account, we are not responsible for any undeliverable messages to your alternative personal accounts. You can set up email forwarding using these DoIT-provided instructions found at: [http://it.stonybrook.edu/help/kb/setting-up-mail-forwarding-in-google-mail](http://it.stonybrook.edu/help/kb/setting-up-mail-forwarding-in-google-mail). If you need technical assistance, please contact Client Support at (631) 632-9800 or supportteam@stonybrook.edu

**LDS Program Attendance Requirement:** All LDS students are required to attend at least one LDS-sponsored event, a Spring Commons Day event and the LDS End-of-the-year event during the spring semester. Attendance will be recorded. For more information about Spring 2014 LDS Event listing, visit: [www.stonybrook.edu/lds](http://www.stonybrook.edu/lds)  *University Scholar students are strongly encouraged to attend LDS programs, but are not required. Scholars have their own event requirement, which includes at least one Scholars (for-credit) event and one LDS (for-credit) event per semester, or two Scholars (for-credit) events.

**Spring Commons Day:** All students in a Freshman 102 Seminar are required to attend a Spring Commons Day Event on Wednesday, March 26, 2014. For more information about this day visit: [http://ucolleges.stonybrook.edu/spring-commons-day](http://ucolleges.stonybrook.edu/spring-commons-day)

Required Reading: The professor will post the entire packet of readings on Blackboard. Students must print a copy of the packet and ALWAYS bring it to class. The students will use the packet to take notes in the margins, so as to identify and highlight key words and phrases.

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

**Wed., Jan. 29**  
Course Introduction: How was classical Chinese poetry introduced in America?  
Feb. 7  
Course Introduction: Why were American poets interested in it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poems and People to know:</th>
<th>Key words and phrases (TBD in class):</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Witter Bynner (1881-1968): “Poetry by Tu Fu”  
Ezra Pound (1885-1972): “Cathay”  
Sam Hamill (1943 -): “Visiting Pai-an Pavilion”  
“Endless River” | |
### Wed., Feb. 12  
**Our first poetry reading:** Why did American poets become interested particularly in Chinese ideographs? What did they observe about them?

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| Michael Anania (1939 -): “A Hanging Screen”  
Larry Levis (1946-1996): “Childhood Ideogram”  
Marin Sorescu (1936-1996): “Pure Conversation with a Chinese Character” | |

### Wed., Feb. 19  
**Our second poetry reading:** Even the briefest poetic references to China can open up a whole new corner of our consciousness. Do any of these poems do this for you?

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<th>Poems and People to know</th>
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</table>
| Mary Cornish (1948 -): “Numbers”  
Eugene Field (1850-1895): “The Duel”  
Jane Miller (1949 -): “I Have Some Snapshots”  
Wendy Videlock (1961 -): “My Moses”  
Charles Wright (1935 -): “Looking Around” | |

### Wed., Feb. 26  
**Our third poetry reading:** How does Chinese culture figure into America’s urban landscape? How did poets portray Chinese immigrants in the early 20th century? Was there a political or moral message?

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| Cale Young Rice (1872-1943): “In a Chinese Restaurant”  
“A Painting of Ma-lín”  
Vachel Lindsay (1879-1931): “The Chinese Nightingale”  
Anne Pierson Wiese (1964 -): “Columbus Park” | |
**Wed., March 5**  
*Our fourth poetry reading:* Beat poets mostly searched for underground and underworld rhythms. How did this movement distinguish itself from modernism, and why do you think they were interested in China?

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Frank O’Hara (1926 – 1996):  “At Night, Chinamen Jump”  
Willis Barnstone (1927 –):  “Going to China” | |

**Wed., March 12**  
*Evaluating the poems to date (i.e., the first mid-term)*

**SPRING BREAK (MARCH 17-21)**

**Wed., March 26**  
*Spring Commons Day – No Class*

**Wed., April 2**  
*Our fifth poetry reading:* Some American poets have very specific observations about what life was like in China. Which of these poems seem to be the most authentic? Explain.

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Arthur Sze (1950 -):  “A Silk Road”  
“The Negative” | |

**Wed., April 9**  
*Our sixth poetry reading:* How did American poets who are not proficient in Chinese language use Chinese poetic styles? Were they true to form? Explain.

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<th>Poems and People to know:</th>
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| Donald Justice (1924-2004):  “Banjo Dog Variations”  
Hayden Carruth (1921-2008):  “Of Distress of Being Humiliated by the Classical Chinese Poets”  
Billy Collins (1941-):  “Reading an Anthology of Chinese Poems of the Sung Dynasty” | |
Wed., April 16  **Our seventh poetry reading:** What particular challenges do Chinese people in America have in the present day, according to these poets? Are the challenges more negative than positive? Explain.

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Wed., April 23  **EVALUATING THE POEMS TO DATE (i.e., a take-home mid-term)**

**Our eighth poetry reading:** Classical Chinese poetry sees “the world” in nature, the environment, and ecology. Do poets who focus on these themes help Americans think globally? Why or why not?

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Wed., April 30  **Our ninth poetry reading:** It used to be that there was no defined “Asian American” poetry. But now there is. Is there something ethnic specific about Asian American poetry and identity? Where does China fit in?

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Wed., May 7  

**Our final poetry reading:** While classical Chinese poetry has influenced American poets since the beginning of the 20th century (at least!), is there a chance for contemporary Chinese poetry to do the same thing? Why or why not?

**Favorite Poems – The Final Vote**

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<th>Poems and People to know:</th>
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<td>Library of Congress Webcast on Contemporary Chinese Poetry from Copper Canyon Press</td>
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**Grading:**
Final grades will be calculated using the following percentages: Weekly attendance, class participation, and reflections (70%) 3 evaluations using the paired comparison sampling methodology (10% each, 30% total).

**Grading scale:**
A (94-100) A- (90-93) B+ (87-89) B (84-86) B- (80-83) C+ (77-79) C (74-76) C- (70-73) D+ (69-68), D (67-65), F (64 and below)

**Additional class resources:**
Library resources: Melville Library has an excellent collection of Asian and Asian American resources. This link will be very useful: [http://guides.library.stonybrook.edu/aas](http://guides.library.stonybrook.edu/aas)

Blackboard: To access grades, announcements, and reading, see [https://blackboard.stonybrook.edu/webapps/login/](https://blackboard.stonybrook.edu/webapps/login/)

Writing Center: For help with writing papers and composing essays, please use our writing center: [http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/writrhet/writing_center/writing.html](http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/writrhet/writing_center/writing.html)

Career Center: To talk with someone about career options, [http://career.stonybrook.edu/](http://career.stonybrook.edu/)

Other places to seek advice: [http://stonybrook.edu/aadvising/tut.html](http://stonybrook.edu/aadvising/tut.html)

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Marilyn Chin (1955 -):
- “The Survivor”
- “Turtle Soup”
- “Moon and Oatgrass”
- “The Barbarians are Coming”

Shanxing Wang (1965 -): “Mad Science in Imperial City”
Disability Support Services (DSS): If you have a physical, psychological, medical, or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services at 631-632-6748; http://studentaffairs.stonybrook.edu/dss/. They will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential. Students who require assistance during emergency evacuation are encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors and DSS. For procedures and information: http://www.stonybrook.edu/ehs/fire/disabilities

Academic Integrity: Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty members are required to report any suspected instance of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary website at http://www.stonybrook.edu/uaa/academicjudiciary/

Critical Incident Management: Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of Judicial Affairs any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, and/or inhibits students' ability to learn.