Although a nation of immigrants and descendants of immigrants, the United States of America has witnessed a complex relationship among segments of its population who differ in their race and ethnicity as well as times of arrival. In this senior seminar, we will discuss writings that address issues arising from narrators’ experiences with physical relocation, racial differentiation, and cultural assimilation, with an eye on the definition of Americanness which remains a central point of debate in American Literature.

We will focus on writers with European and/or Asian backgrounds. However, students are encouraged to enrich assigned materials with their family’s own American stories.