Amnesia, Forgetting, and the Nation in James Joyce’s *Ulysses*
Vincent J. Cheng

The Eshkol Tower, Room 1620
Wednesday May 17th, 12:00-13:30

Amnesia as a neurological condition is always represented as a negative thing, a loss of a personal identity that one desperately needs to recover. Much scholarly and scientific work has been done, in recent decades, on issues having to do with memory, Alzheimer's, trauma, remembrance, memorials and monuments, truth and reconciliation; indeed, memory studies are a notable presence in contemporary studies of culture. But hardly anyone ever talks about the desirability or usefulness of forgetting. Drawing on Nietzsche, Marx, Renan, Freud, Luria, Anderson, Yerushalmi, and others, this talk considers the importance of forgetting, especially in terms of the nation and national forgetting and then focuses on one particular literary case study, James Joyce's treatment of these issues in *Ulysses*.

**Vincent J. Cheng** is the Shirley Sutton Thomas Professor of English at the University of Utah. He is the author of many scholarly articles and several books, including *Inauthentic: The Anxiety Over Culture and Identity* (2004), *Joyce, Race, and Empire* (1995), *Shakespeare and Joyce: A Study of Finnegans Wake* (1984), “*Le Cid*”: *A Translation in Rhymed Couplets* (1987), and (as editor) *Joyce in Context* (1992) and *Joycean Cultures* (1999). He has been the recipient of numerous teaching awards as well as scholarly awards (including Guggenheim, NEH, Fulbright, UC Humanities Research Institute, and Tanner Humanities Center). His recent work addresses the intersections of postcolonial studies, race studies, twentieth-century literature, and contemporary culture.