

CUYAMACA COLLEGE
COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD

Ethnic Studies 162 – Introduction to Asian American Studies

3 hours lecture, 3 units

Catalog Description

This course centers Asian American and Pacific Islander experiences in the United States. We focus on the founding of Asian American Studies, the development of a panethnic consciousness, the resistance for and by the communities, and more. By utilizing an Ethnic Studies lens, we see the positioning of Asian Americans by others vis a vis whiteness as well as the points of solidarity with other groups.

Prerequisite

None

Course Content

- 1) Asian American Studies
 - a. Creation of Ethnic Studies at San Francisco State University
 - b. Exclusion of Asian and Asian American experiences and knowledge from education
 - c. Desire to address the needs of Asian American communities with trained/educated professionals
 - i. Including increased immigration post-1965 called for more needs for services
 - ii. Asian American communities facing change
 - (1) American families moving into Chinatown, San Francisco
 - (2) More immigrants and immigrant businesses
 - (3) Japantowns recovering from WWII relocation
 - d. Third World Liberation Front (i.e. Black Student Union) organizing including Asian American communities
 - i. Intercollegiate Chinese for Social Action
 - ii. Philippine (later Pilipino) American Collegiate Endeavor
 - iii. Asian American Political Alliance (largely Japanese)
 - e. Asian American discipline
- 2) Major theories and concepts of Asian American Studies and Ethnic Studies such as: race and racialization, ethnicity, social justice and equity, decolonization, colonization/colonialism, self-determination and sovereignty, resistance to Eurocentrism, Orientalism, and white supremacy, and other racially constructed power structures as conceptual contexts for studying Asian American histories and current issues including but not limited to:
 - a. Orientalism and perpetual foreigner
 - b. Chinese American historical contexts; e.g., sugar making in Hawai'i, Paper Sons and Daughters, Angel Island Immigration Station, 2020 U.S. government response to COVID
 - c. Japanese American experiences, including World War II and Executive Order 9066 for Japanese American internment, agricultural labor and resistance
 - d. Filipinx American issues, such as U.S. colonization (1898-1945), World War II and its legacies, Filipinx Veterans' equity
 - e. Korean American historical contexts: Japanese colonialism, comfort women, Saigu

- f. Historical and cultural circumstances of American Pacific Islander groups, including Hawaiian and Chamorro (e.g., the illegal overthrow and annexation of Hawai'i and the aftermath of cultural suppression, environmental destruction in Guam as a result of U.S. colonization)
 - g. Southeast Asian American contexts: U.S. neocolonialism and the Vietnam War, refugee crises, Hmong immigration, Muslim American discrimination
 - h. South Asian American histories, including vestiges of British colonialism and post-9/11 profiling
- 3) Yellow peril and other Asian historical exclusion especially through institutional racism via laws and policies Including but not limited to:
- a. 1875 Page Act
 - b. 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act
 - c. 1907 Gentleman's Agreement
 - d. 1917 Asiatic barred zone (banned millions from the Middle East to Southeast Asia, including Indians)
 - e. 1934 Tydings Mc-Duffie Act (Filipinos)
 - f. 2017 Muslim ban
 - g. And corresponding acts that favored preferential treatment such as
 - i. 1965 Immigration Act
- 4) Intersectionality of Asian American lived experiences along various vectors of identity, including race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, socioeconomic class and labor, national origin, mixed heritages, religion/spirituality, generation, and ability; including, but not limited to:
- a. Family, community, and intergenerational dynamics, social psychology of Asian Americans
 - b. Politics of gender and sexuality, gender and queer theories
 - c. Labor and socioeconomic class
 - d. Multiethnic and transnational identities, acculturation, postcolonial theories
 - e. Language and linguistic topics, including Asian American literary narratives and their devices, non- or non-"traditional" English language narratives
 - f. Religious contexts, including Muslim Asian Americans' issues of marginalization and religious discrimination
- 5) Activism
- a. labor movements such as the different organizing in Hawai'i on sugar plantations
 - b. Larry Itliong and Philip Vera Cruz from Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee inviting Cesar Chavez to join and together form the United Farm Workers
 - c. Literary and artistic resistance: prose, poetry, film, still, or performance art creating a narrative of Asian American protest and empowerment
 - d. Historical study and practice of community-based activism, including voting enfranchisement, local lobbying and protests such as:
 - i. 1968 student strike for Ethnic Studies at San Francisco State University and Asian American participation.
 - ii. fighting against I-Hotel destruction, International-Hotel being single-resident occupancy housing for Filipino and Chinese elders in San Francisco
- 6) Review of Asian American orgs:
- a. Asian Americans Advancing Justice
 - b. Asian Solidarity Collective (San Diego – possible Guest speaker)
 - c. Asian Law Caucus (San Francisco)
- 7) Asian American panethnicity and racialization such as but not limited to:
- a. racial triangulation of Asian Americans
 - b. Asian American as a panethnic group

- c. history of legislation fighting for racial categorization as “white”
 - d. Asian Americans as “honorary whites”
 - e. Asian Americans as neither Black nor white
 - f. Asian American proximity to blackness
 - i. Asian-Black solidarity
 - g. Asian American/Latina/x/o American relations and solidarity
- 8) Model minority
- a. Origins
 - b. Problematics
 - c. not every Asian American “fits” model minority
 - d. problems with a “positive” stereotype
 - e. confusion between idea of culture and cultural expectations vs. conditioning within an Asian American context and especially ideas of model minority between generations
 - f. affirmative action and pitting Asian Americans against other people of color
- 9) Famous court cases and more that help shaped Asian American identity and community
- a. Hirabayashi v. United States
 - b. Korematsu v. United States
 - c. Murder of Vincent Chin
 - d. Joseph Ito
 - e. Post 9-11 Hate Crimes
 - f. Asian Indians and United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind
 - g. Japanese Americans and Ozawa v. United States
 - h. Atlanta shooting 2021

Course Objectives

Students will be able to:

- 1) Critically analyze and investigate ethnic studies concepts, including race and ethnicity, social justice and equity, decolonization, anti-war, anti-Eurocentrism/Orientalism, and other racially constructed power structures as conceptual contexts for studying Asian American histories and current issues.
- 2) Analyze with relevant theory produced by and about Asian American communities the intersectionality of Asian American lived experiences along various vectors of identity, including race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, socioeconomic class and labor, national origin, mixed heritages, religion/spirituality, generation, age, and ability.
- 3) Explain structural issues faced by Asian Americans including immigration laws.
- 4) Demonstrate contributions towards Asian American communities, directly engaging with anti-racist, anti-colonial issues, theories, practices, programs, and social and political movements towards diversity and equity in and out of the classroom, with a thorough consideration of service ethics.
- 5) Discuss the term "Asian American" as a category and as a part of Ethnic Studies history
- 6) Describe Asian American experiences that impact identity including famous court cases and model minority.

Method of Evaluation

A grading system will be established by the instructor and implemented uniformly. Grades will be based on demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter determined by multiple measurements for evaluation, one of which must be essay exams, skills demonstration or, where appropriate, the symbol system.

- 1) Quizzes and exams.
- 2) Written assignments.
- 3) Research reports.
- 4) Unit projects.

5) Class discussions and group participation.

Special Materials Required of Student

None

Minimum Instructional Facilities

Smart classroom

Method of Instruction

- 1) Lecture and discussion
- 2) Group activities
- 3) Multimedia presentations
- 4) Possible guest speakers

Out-of-Class Assignments May include:

- 1) **Reading:** lecture notes; course materials; textbook chapters; articles; books; short stories; essays; manuals; content on websites, and more.
- 2) **Writing:** journals; discussion posts and responses; reflections; assignment drafts; essays; outlines; summaries; speeches; presentations; content for projects, Reflective essays on personal experiences, interviews, or oral histories and more.
- 3) **Other:** Some examples include:
 1. Students will create projects that teach about Asian American history, identity, and community. They must draw from the course and apply it to an outside topic or do a deep dive of a topic we've discussed. They can use this to address needs in their community or talk about working in solidarity with Asian communities. The intent of this is to reimagine 1) what can be done about issues facing Asian American communities that draws from Asian American histories and struggles but also 2) reimagines the use of Asian Americans as model minority exceptions who succeeded in this colonial/neocolonial apparatus compared to Black and Latinx people. This speaks to anticolonial work of reimagining possibilities and the future that departs from colonized ways of knowing and being. The guest speaker for the Asian American community organization unit can also help to bring insight into this aspect. The presentations will be for campus and outside community, including their families.
 2. Students will write responses to some of the primary source documents, such as when studying about WWII Japanese incarceration or watching about the fall of I-Hotel or Single Occupancy Residences for elderly Filipino and Chinese in San Francisco and the long fought battle the residents and community endured. They will analyze the materials in terms of course concepts (i.e. perpetual foreigner, institutional oppression/racism, etc).
 3. Use course concepts to write a 2 page paper that analyzes a contemporary event or figure of Asian American history.
 4. Read a novel written about Asian American experiences and write a book analysis (not book report).
- **General notes followed by a sample:**
 - Attending theater, film, or musical performances, or museums, related to Asian Americans and respond in writing how it contributes to understanding Asian American experiences including experiences exposing the intersectionality of race and class, gender, sexuality, religion, and other intersections of identities.

The following examples are from “5.6 Summary Review” in “Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies” by Fischer and Hodges in Introduction to Ethnic Studies OER by Fischer et.al. (2023)

- Journal Prompts
 - Think about your racial/ethnic group(s) or about yourself as an individual. Part I: Has there ever been a time when you were seen as a "model"? Or on the other side, have you been seen as "non-model"? What kind of privileges/benefits came with being "model"? What kinds of disadvantages came with being "non-model"? Part II: What are the differences with being seen as model/non-model as a group vs. as an individual? How might this relate to being seen as "model minority" as an Asian American stereotype, including the model minority sub-section of this chapter and undocumented Asian American students sub-section? Write at least a paragraph for Part I and write at least a paragraph for Part II.
- Online activity – Panethnicity
 - This activity can be completed through discussion boards or online learning platforms like Canvas. It can be completed in groups or by individual students. For group work, you can assign discussions to groups on Canvas, or have online students collaborate on a Google Slide or Jamboard.
 - Instructions:
 - Instruct students to create a T-chart (on Canvas discussion, Google Slide, Google Jamboard, or any other online learning resources)
 - On one side, have them brainstorm when it might be useful for Asian Americans to use a panethnic label. They may pull evidence from this chapter and examples from their own experiences, observations, or what they’ve seen on social media. For example, a great historical instance of when organizing under a panethnic label was useful was the justice for Vincent Chin campaign. This was a time when Asian Americans organized under a panethnic identity since they could be mistaken for a different Asian ethnicity, as Chin was. This made sense since anti-Asian violence often conflated all Asians as one racialized group, with anti-Asians not caring to distinguish between ethnicities or nationalities. Or, perhaps when Asian American students went on strike for Ethnic Studies and Asian American Studies at SF state and UC Berkeley.
 - On the other side of the T chart, students can brainstorm when it might be useful for Asian Americans to use an ethnic-specific label. For example, when campaigning to end deportations of formerly incarcerated Cambodian Americans, it may be more useful to point out the unique experiences of Cambodian Americans as refugees of a war and genocide in Cambodia as it relates to their struggle for justice. Or, advocating for Ethnic Studies classes that focus specifically on Pacific Islanders, so that they aren’t marginalized under the larger Asian American Pacific Islander banner in some programs and classes. Examples might even include smaller scale instances, such as when Asian Americans share their ethnic background, it might make more sense for some to identify as Korean American, for example, pointing to their specific heritage, language, culture, family dynamic, and food.
 - Once the chart is complete, have students debrief on the comparisons and why it’s important to recognize how Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders may go back and forth between utilizing a panethnic identity and ethnic/nationality specific identity, depending on the context.

Texts and References

- 1) Required (representative examples):
 - a. (Eds.) Diane C. Fujino and Robyn Magalit Rodriguez. 2022. Contemporary Asian American Activism Building Movements for Liberation. University of Washington.
 - b. Erika Lee. 2015. The Making of Asian America: A History. Simon & Schuster.
 - c. Omi, Michael and Howard Winant. 2014. Racial Formation in the United States 3rd Edition (Classic text). Routledge.
 - d. Fischer, et. al. Introduction to Ethnic Studies. (2023, June 22).
<https://socialsci.libretexts.org/@go/page/143266>
- 2) Supplemental: At 40: Asian American Studies at San Francisco State: Self-Determination, Community, Student Service. By Asian American Studies Department, San Francisco State University. 2009.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) Student will demonstrate critical analysis and understanding of ethnic studies principles as those apply to Asian American Studies, including but not limited to race and ethnicity, racialization, equity, colonization and decolonization, ethno-centrism, Eurocentrism, yellow peril, orientalism, white supremacy, self-determination, model minority, liberation, decolonization, and anti-racism.
- 2) Students will be able to analyze the intersectionality of Asian American identities along various vectors of identity, including race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, socioeconomic class and labor, national origin, mixed heritages, religion/spirituality, generation, and ability.
- 3) Students will recognize anti-racist and anti-colonial connections whether to Asian or within connections to Asian American communities, Asian American movements and organizing in their pursuit of justice.
- 4) Students will identify and critically analyze relevant U.S. governmental actions, law, and policies, and their impacts on Asian Americans past and present.