Introduction to Asian American Studies

Prof. Yến Lê Espiritu
Office hours: Tues 10 to 11 a.m.; Thurs 2 to 4 p.m. – SSB 228
yespiritu@ucsd.edu

Teaching Assistants and Discussion Sections
Keva Bui Mon 3 p.m. and 4 p.m., CENTR 205 kxb002@ucsd.edu
Noelle Sepina Mon 9 and 10 a.m., YORK 3050A nsepina@ucsd.edu

Course Description
Emerging from mid-20th century social movements, civil rights-era formations, and antiwar protests, Asian American studies is now an established field of transnational inquiry, diasporic engagement, and rights activism. This course examines how Asian Americans have influenced American history, from the nineteenth century to the contemporary moment. Course readings, lectures and assignments will foreground an analysis of how Asian Americans have been racialized in relation to other groups in the United States and its territories, and how they have expanded possibilities for ally-ship and coalition. We will pay particular attention to Asian American alternative world-making, insurgent knowledge formation, and social justice campaigns.

Note: This syllabus is subject to change; the syllabus of record is kept updated and posted on the course website.

Required Texts
All course readings can be viewed and downloaded via the course website via TritonEd. Other relevant course materials will also be posted there throughout the quarter.

Course requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments/Exams</th>
<th>Grading Scale</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion section participation – 20%</td>
<td>94-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Immigration Law” Assignment – 10 %</td>
<td>90-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam – 20%</td>
<td>86-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Current Event” Assignment – 15%</td>
<td>83-85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation (attendance; conduct) – 5%</td>
<td>80-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam – 30%</td>
<td>76-79</td>
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Discussion section participation. Sections are mandatory. Each TA will have their unique way of evaluating section participation. Please attend the section in which you are registered now and throughout the duration of the course.

“Immigration Law” Assignment – Due date: Oct. 17. Instructions will be posted on TritonEd

Midterm Exam – In-class exam, Nov. 5
“Current Event” Assignment – Due date: Nov. 21. Instructions will be posted on TritonEd

Final Exam – In-class exam, Friday Dec. 13, 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

** Grading policy. You must complete all assignments and receive a passing grade in your
discussion section in order to receive a passing grade in the class. For the P/NP option, a “Pass”
requires the equivalent letter grade of C or above.

### Academic Honesty
All work submitted in this course must be your own and original. Each student is expected to be familiar
with and abide by UCSD’s policy on Integrity of Scholarship, available at
[https://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu/process/policy.html](https://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu/process/policy.html)

### Classroom Conduct/Discussion Ethics
Students and instructors both have responsibilities for creating a collegial environment conducive to
respectful exchange and intellectual growth. We are engaged in scholarly inquiry, which requires us to
base our arguments on evidence, analysis, and logic, not on unsubstantiated opinions. Abusive and
harsh language, intimidation and personal attacks will not be tolerated. These norms are reflected in
the UCSD Principles of Community ([https://ucsd.edu/about/principles.html](https://ucsd.edu/about/principles.html)) that we are all expected to
follow.

Attendance: I firmly believe that students learn the course material much better when they regularly
attend lecture. Therefore, I will take attendance periodically via short in-class written exercises.

### Accommodations
If you have a medical condition or different physical or learning needs for which you may need
accommodation in order to participate fully and successfully, please speak with me individually so that
we can make necessary adjustments. You may also seek assistance or information from the Office for
Students with Disabilities. If you prefer to be called by a different name or referred to as a different
gender than the one under which you are officially enrolled, please inform me, so that we can adjust
accordingly.

### Classroom Technology Policy
“A growing body of evidence shows that over all, college students
learn less when they use computers or tablets during lectures. They
also tend to earn worse grades. The research is unequivocal: Laptops
distract from learning, both for users and for those around them.”

“...research suggests that even when laptops are used solely to take notes,
they may still be impairing learning because their use results in shallower processing.”

My goal is to create and maintain an environment in which all students have the maximum potential to
focus on learning. Therefore, I request that all electronic devices, including laptops, be put away at all
times. If you need special accommodations, please email me in the first two weeks of class. Let’s
respect the classroom as a place of learning and exchanging of ideas.

### Unit 1 – Relational Racial Formations
“Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Week 1 (10/1 & 10/3) – Introduction: A Song for Ourselves**


Asian American Opposition to Vietnam War: [https://densho.org/asian-american-opposition-vietnam-war/](https://densho.org/asian-american-opposition-vietnam-war/)

**Documentary:** *A Song for Ourselves* (Tadashi Nakamura)

**Week 2 – Asian American Racial Formation:**

**Immigration, Citizenship and Nation**

“The idea of an Asian American identity is an inherently political one, about forging a community and finding shared commonalities—even when those commonalities are not always easy to find”

Neelanjana Banerjee

**Week 2 – 10/8 & 10/10 | Racial Exclusion: Perpetual Foreigner & Yellow Peril**


**Week 3 - 10/15 & 10/17 | Policing Bodies: Race, Sex, Gender, Propriety**


Video: “Dollar a Day, Ten Cents a Dance.”

“Immigration Law” Assignment Due 10/17

Week 4 - 10/22 & 10/24 | Settler Colonialism and Immigrant Settlers


Unit 3 - Race Making and War Making

“Why should black folks fight a war against yellow folks so that white folks can keep a land they stole from red folks? We’re not going to Vietnam. Ain’t no Vietcong ever called me ni____!”

Stokely Carmichael

Week 5 - 10/29 & 10/31 | The Cold War: U.S. Militarization in Asia and the Pacific


Week 6 - 11/5 & 11/7 | Returns of War: Orphans and Adoptees


Video: Loving Belinda / Jane Jin Kaisen

In-Class Midterm – Nov. 5

Week 7 - 11/12 & 11/14 | The Rising Tide of Color


Martin Luther King, Jr. “Beyond Vietnam,” Riverside Church, New York City, 4 April 1967.


Unit 4 - Contemporary Asian America

“You don’t choose the times you live in, but you do choose who you want to be, and you do choose how you want to think.” —Grace Lee Boggs
**Week 8 - 11/19 & 11/21 | Model Minority and the Immigration Act of 1965**


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**“Current Event” assignment due Nov 21**

**Week 9 - 11/26 | Incarceration, Detention, Deportation**


Video: TBD

**Thursday: Thanksgiving Break**

**Week 10 - 12/3 & 12/5 | Post-9/11 Asian America**


Final Exam Friday Dec. 13, 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

**Majoring or Minoring in Ethnic Studies**

An Ethnic Studies major is excellent preparation for a career in law, education, medicine, public health, social work, counseling, public policy, and many other careers. If you would like information about the Ethnic Studies major or minor, please contact:

Monica Rodriguez, Ethnic Studies Undergraduate Program Advisor
ethnicstudies@ucsd.edu or visit www.ethnicstudies.ucsd.edu