

University of California, San Diego

ETHN 121
Contemporary Asian American History

Professor Lisa Sun-Hee Park, Ph.D.

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Fall 2004

CSB 002 / T&Th 3:30-4:50 p.m.

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COURSE OVERVIEW

The goal of this course is to critically place contemporary Asian American experiences within a larger social and historical context. To do this, we will strive for a deeper understanding of the social, political, and economic institutions that construct the basis of Asian America since 1965. This goal will require an emphasis on the race, class, and gender dynamics of migration that continue to structure the roots of Asian America. The course is organized into four themes: movements and migration, defining Asian American communities, the continuing myth of the model minority, and resistance and empowerment.

The required texts for this course are as noted. Additional readings may be required to extend your knowledge of Asian American communities beyond what is provided by the assigned books. Please note that this is an upper division course. It is expected that you have some introductory knowledge of issues pertinent to Asian American studies. For those who need a “refresher” on the basic history of Asian America, I suggest you review Ronald Takaki’s *Strangers from a Different Shore* and Bill Ong Hing’s *Making and Remaking Asian America Through Immigration Policy, 1890-1990*. It is your responsibility to fulfill this prerequisite.

Also, I suggest that students form reading groups to informally discuss the required texts. Given that this course is upper-division, I generally do not discuss the readings in lecture. In preparing for the exams and essays, focus on comprehension of the course materials and the critical points of each.

REQUIRED TEXTS (Available at Groundwork Books)

Asian American Women and Men

By Yen Le Espiritu

Blue Dreams: Korean Americans and the Los Angeles Riots

By Nancy Abelmann and John Lie

Asian American Studies: A Reader

Edited by Jean Yu-Wen Shen Wu and Min Song

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This course will involve lectures, discussions, and films. Attendance and active participation is mandatory. There will be in-class assignments that cannot be “made up.” This includes films, which are an important and serious part of this course. Take notes while watching the films. In addition to the take-home midterm and final exams, I have assigned brief essays that require you to *critically* analyze the readings, lectures, and/or films (rather than simply summarizing the materials). These papers are limited to 2 pages in length. All take-home exams, essays, and assignments must be typed. Late papers, assignments or exams are not accepted. I will not read late material.

Midterm exam	30%
Critical Essays(2 take-home & 2 in-class)	20%
Final exam	40%
Participation/Discussion	10%

- Students with disabilities who may need academic accommodations should discuss options with me during the first two weeks of class.
- Please familiarize yourself with the university policy on plagiarism. All materials used must be appropriately cited. Be particularly cautious in using the internet – copying even small portions of an essay from the web is cheating.
- An interactive classroom environment is an important part of my teaching-learning philosophy. Mutual respect, cooperation, and participation form the basis of this environment. By the very nature of the course topic, there will likely be a wide range of opinions, many of which may be rooted in your personal experiences. That is fine. A good classroom environment is supposed to stimulate you to think for yourselves and challenge paradigms and raise critical questions. However, please keep in mind that we must engage each other in a respectful and considerate debate in the classroom.
- All electronic equipment (i.e. cell phones) must be turned off prior to entering the classroom.

Note: I reserve the right to revise the contents of this syllabus at any given time (with due notice, of course).

OUTLINE OF COURSE READINGS AND FILMS

Unit One: Movements and Migration Film: My America

September 23	Introduction to the course
September 28	<i>Asian American Studies: A Reader</i> , Intro & ch. 1
September 30	<i>Asian American Women and Men</i> , chs. 1, 2, 3

Unit Two: Defining the Asian American Community
Film: Who Killed Vincent Chin?

October 5 *Asian American Women and Men*, chs. 4, 5, 6
October 7 *Asian American Studies: A Reader*, chs. 18, 19, 21
October 12 *Asian American Studies: A Reader*, chs. 22, 23
October 14 *Asian American Studies: A Reader*, chs. 24, 25
October 19 Review & Essay Due

October 21 Midterm Exam Due

Unit Three: The Continuing Myth of the Model Minority
Films: aka Don Bonus
Sa-I-Gu

October 26 *Blue Dreams*, Preface & ch.1, 2
October 28 *Blue Dreams*, chs. 3, 4, 5
November 2 *Blue Dreams*, chs. 6 & conclusion
November 4 *Asian American Studies: A Reader*, chs. 13, 20
November 11 **Veterans Day Holiday**
November 16 *Asian American Studies: A Reader*, chs. 15, 16, 17

Unit Four: Resistance and Empowerment
Film: Kelly Loves Tony

November 18 *Asian American Studies: A Reader*, chs. 14, 26
November 23 *Asian American Studies: A Reader*, chs. 32, 33, 34, 35
November 25 **Thanksgiving Holiday**
November 30 Review and Essay Due
December 2 Review

Final Exam TBA