

University of California, San Diego

ETHN 121
Contemporary Asian American History

Professor Lisa Sun-Hee Park, Ph.D.

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Winter 2007
MWF 2-2:50 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. We will strive for a deeper understanding of the social, political, and economic institutions that construct the basis of Asian America since 1965. To do this, we will emphasize 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. 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 central points of each.

REQUIRED TEXTS (Available at Groundwork Books)

Abelmann, Nancy and John Lie. 1995. *Blue Dreams*. Harvard University Press.
Espiritu, Yen. 1995. *Filipino American Lives*. Temple University Press.
Maira, Sunaina Marr. 2002. *Desis in the House*. Temple University Press.
Ong, Aihwa. 2003. *Buddha is Hiding*. University of California Press.
Park, Edward and John Park. 2005. *Probationary Americans*. Routledge Press.
Zia, Helen. 2000. *Asian American Dreams*. Farrar, Straus, & Giroux.

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 part of this course. You are expected to 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 (double-spaced) 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(2x, take-home)	20%
Final Exam	20%
Final paper/project	20%
In-class assignments	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 without appropriate attribution is cheating.
- An interactive classroom environment is an important part of my teaching and 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 yourself and challenge paradigms and raise critical questions. However, please keep in mind that we must engage each other in a respectful and considerate manner 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).

COURSE OUTLINE

January 8	Introduction to the course
January 10	Zia, <i>Asian American Dreams</i>
January 12	Zia, <i>Asian American Dreams</i>
January 15	No Class – MLK Day
January 17	Park and Park, <i>Probationary Americans</i>
January 19	Park and Park, <i>Probationary Americans</i>
January 22	Park and Park, <i>Probationary Americans</i>
January 24	Espiritu, <i>Filipino American Lives</i>
January 26	Espiritu, <i>Filipino American Lives</i>
January 29	Espiritu, <i>Filipino American Lives</i>
January 31	Espiritu, <i>Filipino American Lives</i>
February 2	Critical Essay #1 Due Review Discussion
February 5	Distribute Midterm Questions
February 7	Catch up
February 9	Midterm Exam Due
February 12	Abelmann and Lie, <i>Blue Dreams</i>
February 14	Abelmann and Lie, <i>Blue Dreams</i>
February 16	Abelmann and Lie, <i>Blue Dreams</i>
February 19	No Class – President's Day
February 21	Ong, <i>Buddha is Hiding</i>
February 23	Ong, <i>Buddha is Hiding</i>
February 26	Ong, <i>Buddha is Hiding</i>
February 28	Ong, <i>Buddha is Hiding</i>
March 2	No Class – Independent Research Day
March 5	Maira, <i>Desis in the House</i>
March 7	Maira, <i>Desis in the House</i>
March 9	Maira, <i>Desis in the House</i>
March 12	Critical Essay #2 Due
March 14	Review & Catch up
March 16	Final Project Due
March 19	Final Exam, 3-6pm

Majoring or Minor in Ethnic Studies at UCSD

You may be closer to a major, minor or a double major in Ethnic Studies than you realize. An Ethnic Studies major or minor is excellent preparation for a career in education, public policy, law, government and politics, journalism, public health, international relations, and many other careers. Please contact the Ethnic Studies Department Undergraduate Advisor for more information.

