

# **Contemporary Asian American History**

ETHNIC STUDIES: 121

Warren Lecture Hall (WLH) 2112

12:00-12:50PM

Dr. Lisa Ho

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Office Hours: M 3:00 to 4:00PM & By Appointment

Office Location: Perks @ Price Center



## **Course Description**

This course will examine the contemporary history of Asian America by focusing on newly arrived Asian ethnic groups, the exclusion of Pacific Islanders, and a variety of issues that have come to define the Asian America. The first half of the course will focus on groups from Southeast Asia and the Pacific. We will use this first portion to identify key patterns and distinctions that complicate how we understand the formation of Asian American identity, communities, and belonging. The second half of the course will explore different topics such as assimilation, higher education, popular culture, and other related areas. The purpose of this portion is to gain insight to the contemporary landscape of Asian America and different emerging issues that have gained cultural, political, and economic significance. The goal of this course is to provide critical insight into the different structural and cultural conditions constitute Asian America today but also to encourage students to develop their own strategies to inquire about other areas of interest.

## **Required Readings**

All readings will be posted on the TED course page. However, you will need to purchase the following:

*The Best We Could Do*: Thi Bui

**(PLEASE PURCHASE PRIOR FOR WEEK THREE)**

## **Assignments**

**Attendance & Participation: 10 Points**

**Weekly Assignments: 40 Points**

**Midterm: 20 Points**

**Final Exam: 20 Points**

**Final Project: 10 Points**

**Attendance & Participation:** Your attendance is required. You are allowed miss two days of class with no explanation or an excuse. **If you miss more than two classes, your grade for attendance and participation will be lowered by one point (or a 1/3 of grade) each time.** If you are experiencing extenuating circumstances, please speak with me privately to discuss alternative ways you can make up your missing time.

**Weekly Assignment Posts:** There will be two parts to your weekly assignment:

- The first part of your weekly post will be due by **MIDNIGHT** on **SUNDAYS**. You are required to do a 200-word write-up that highlights how all the different readings together to illuminate a theme of your choosing.
- The second part of your weekly post will be due by **MIDNIGHT** on **SATURDAYS**. You are required to do a 200-word write-up about how your understanding of the readings work together and chosen theme has changed in response to lecture, class discussion, and further close readings.

For example: if you are doing a post on week two readings—you must post the first portion of your weekly assignment the Sunday before week two starts. In this case, it would be January 13<sup>th</sup>. Each portion is worth 2.5 points. Both portions are worth five points which is full credit. Weekly assignments are graded on completion and comprehension. If you only do one half of the assignment, you will receive partial credit. **You will be doing weekly assignments from week 2 to week 9.**

## **THERE ARE NO MAKE-UP WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS**

**Midterm & Final Exam:** Both exams will be in class. The midterm will be given during WEEK FIVE and the final will be given during WEEK TEN. Both exams will consist of four short-answer questions based on the weeks prior to the exam. The midterm will cover weeks one to five and final will cover weeks six to ten.

**Final Project:** You will be required to interview someone who identifies as either Asian, Asian American, and/or Pacific Islander. In the same vein as *Humans of New York*, you can ask your subject one of the following questions: What does it mean to be Asian American in San Diego? What is it like living in San Diego as an Asian American? You will take a picture of your subject and include their answer in a post on Instagram. Specific instructions will be posted during week five.

**Your project is due on WEDNESDAY OF FINALS WEEK.**

**YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL ASSIGNMENTS IN ORDER TO PASS THE COURSE.**

### **Extra Credit Opportunity**

***31<sup>st</sup> All Peoples Celebration @ Balboa Park (January 20/21)***

To receive extra credit, you must volunteer for one of the designated shifts. You must sign up at the beginning of your shift and you will receive a “coupon” when you complete your shift from an event official. Each shift lasts four hours. You will only receive extra credit for **one** shift. Additional information will be posted on TritonED. This will be the only extra credit opportunity for the quarter. This opportunity is worth **THREE** extra credit points.

### **Technology Policy**

The technology policy of the class will be dependent on what activity we are doing. For lectures, laptops will not be allowed. However, for in-class writings and group work, you will need to use your laptops.

### **Class Etiquette**

“Everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about. Be kind. Always.”

### **WEEK ONE: January 7, 9, 11**

*Who is Asian American now? Where is Asian America now? How do we define Asian America now?*

“The changing contours of Asian-American historiography”: Sucheng Chan

“If We Called Ourselves Yellow”: Kat Chow (*Code Switch*, NPR)

“A Different Asian American Timeline”: *ChangeLab*

### **WEEK TWO: January 14, 16, 18**

***Figures of Refuge and Disposability***

“The Refugee Soldier: A Critique of Recognition and Citizenship in the Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act of 1997”: Ma Vang

“Deporting Cambodian Refugees: Youth Activism, State Reform, and Imperial Statecraft”: Soo Ah Kwon

**WEEK THREE: January 23, 25 \*NO CLASS ON MONDAY (1/21)**  
***War & Memory***

*The Best We Could Do: Thi Bui*

**WEEK FOUR: January 28, 30 & February 1**  
***Legacies of Imperialism in the Pacific***

“Pacific Islander Americans and Asian American Identity”: Debbie Hippolite Wright & Paul Spickard

“On the Margins of Memory and History”: Keith Camacho

**WEEK FIVE: February 4, 6, 8**  
***Legacies of Imperialism in the Pacific Continued***

“Fabled Futures: Migration and Mobility for Samoans in American Football”: Fa’anofo LisaClaire (Lisa) Uperesa

“Touring Military Masculinities: U.S.—Philippines Circuits of Sacrifice and Gratitude in Corregidor and Bataan: Vernadette Vicuña Gonzalez

**WEEK SIX: February 11, 13, 15**  
***Asian American Suburbia & Assimilation***

“Introduction: Landscapes of Difference” & “THREE: Mainstreaming the Asian Mall” from *Trespassers?: Asian Americans and the Battle for Suburbia* by Willow S. Lung-Amam

**WEEK SEVEN: February 20, 22**  
***International Asian Students & Asian Americans***

“The Burden of Being Asian American on Campus”: Julia Wang

“‘I’m Not Racist, But’”: Elizabeth Redden

“Racial segregation and the limits of international undergraduate student diversity”: Soo Ah Kwon, Xavier Hernandez & Jillian L. Moga

**(NO CLASS ON MONDAY—President’s Day)**

**WEEK EIGHT: February 25, 27 & March 1<sup>st</sup>**  
***Asian Americans & Diversity in the University***

“Introduction” & “Shattered Liberal Dreams” & “Conclusion” from *The Intimate University: Korean American Students and the Problems of Segregation*: Nancy Abelman

**WEEK NINE: March 4, 6, 8**

***What’s Popping in Asian America?***

“Searching for a Cultural Home: Asian American Youth in the EDM Festival Scene”: Judy Soojin Park

“How ‘Subtle Asian Traits’ Became a Global Hit”: Isabella Kwai

“America Is in Love With Asian Music, but Asian American Artists Still Can’t Catch a Break”: Isha Aran

“2018 Was a Landmark Year for Asian American Representation”: Inkoo Kang

**WEEK TEN: March 11, 13, 15**

***What are the emerging issues in Asian America?***

**\*As a class, we will decide what issues we will cover in the final week of the course which we will finalize by week eight.**