

HIUS 125/ETHN 163J: ASIAN AMERICAN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS (WI 22)

Tu/Th 3:30-4:50pm | SOLIS 110

Zoom link: <https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/97771578612> | Zoom ID: 977 7157 8612

Prof Simeon Man (he/him) | siman@ucsd.edu

Office Hours: W 11:00-1:00pm | RWAC 0944

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the history of Asian American activism from the vantage of our present conjuncture. In this moment marked by multiple crises—the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate catastrophe, neoliberal austerity, and state-sanctioned violence targeting Asian, Black, brown, Indigenous, queer and trans people of color, we have witnessed an explosion of uprisings in the streets, the workplace, the university, and so on, demanding systemic change. Asian Americans have played an integral role in these political struggles past and present. This course begins by studying some core concepts in the field of Asian American studies—imperialism, racial capitalism, migrant labor—and proceeds to examine how generations of activists, workers, and students have politicized around these conditions and forged movements of solidarity with others in the U.S. and around the world. What freedom dreams propelled them in the past and present? And what lessons do these histories of struggle teach us about what's possible and achievable in our current moment?

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Karen L. Ishisuka, *Serve the People: Making Asian America in the Long Sixties* (2015) (purchase from [VersoBooks.com](https://www.versobooks.com) for 60% discount)
- Biju Mathew, *Taxi! Cabs and Capitalism in New York City* (2005)
- Mai-Linh K. Hong, et al., *The Auntie Sewing Squad Guide to Mask Making, Radical Care, and Racial Justice* (2022) (if purchasing from [ucpress.edu](https://www.ucpress.edu), enter code 21W7202 for 30% discount)

All required texts will be available as PDFs on Canvas or linked on the syllabus.

COURSE STRUCTURE

The course meets in-person on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with an option to join remotely through Zoom. Lectures are delivered on Tuesdays and discussions are on Thursdays. Assignments should be completed before class on Thursday.

Due to COVID-19, the course will be entirely remote Jan 3-17, and possibly longer pending campus guidelines. Please check Canvas Announcements for updates.

DISCUSSION BOARD

By Wednesday 9pm each week, post your reflections to the readings and films (if any) on the Canvas Discussion Board. What insights and questions did they prompt for you? What new lines of research might you want to investigate? Your reflections can take a variety of forms, including a short write-up (150-200 words), an audio or video recording, a news article accompanied by your own text about its relevance to the assignments, or a combination thereof. The main point is that you engage with the materials in some way and share those findings with your classmates. I

encourage you to post your reflections as a response to another classmate's post to facilitate conversation.

FINAL PROJECT

The final project is an opportunity to take what you have learned in this course and apply it in a creative form. You have wide flexibility here in choosing what you do. Ideas include: an op-ed, an artistic production or performance, a recorded oral history, TikTok or other social media posts, a zine, or an academic essay. If you have other ideas, I'm open. Your topic, too, can range widely but should be focused. For example, you might shed light on a little-known event or figure in the history of Asian American activism, or you might analyze a contemporary issue, such as the housing crisis, the recent campaign of UC lecturers, labor exploitation in the gig economy, the struggle against Amazon, and so on. In choosing your final project, ask yourself: 1) what do I want to learn more about? 2) Who or what am I doing this for? Consider this an opportunity to challenge yourself to deepen your learning. Whatever you choose should be meaningful for you. Depending on the scope of the project, working in small groups or pairs are encouraged.

Final Project requirements and deadlines:

Week 2-4: meet with me to discuss your idea(s) for your project

Week 5 (Feb 3): submit a brief project proposal of about 150-200 words, explaining 1) your topic, and the 1-2 question(s) motivating your work; 2) your medium and why you have chosen it; 3) 3-4 primary and/or secondary sources that you will engage with for your project.

Finals Week (Mar 14): Final project due

GROW: A COLLECTION OF AAPI COMMUNITY STORIES AT UC SAN DIEGO

For your final project, you may choose to participate in a new project called [Generating and Reclaiming Our Wisdoms \(GROW\): A Collection of AAPI Community Stories at UC San Diego](#). GROW was initiated this year by a team of UCSD students, faculty, librarians, and staff, with the aim of documenting the long, hidden history of Asian American student activism at UC San Diego. Its primary mode of documentation is two-fold: 1) conducting oral history with current and former students, staff, and faculty; and 2) creating a timeline through archival research at the Library Special Collections.

Through this project, you will gain invaluable skills by learning how to conduct archival research and do oral history. You will also deepen your knowledge about the history of Asian American student activism on this campus and contribute to sharing this knowledge in a digital platform.

If you would like to participate in GROW as your final project, the requirement is to conduct research into one historical event to contribute to the GROW timeline. You will also attend at least one monthly team meeting with the GROW team.

ASSESSMENT

The primary mode of assessment for this course will be through self-reflection. Because I recognize each of you may be living through various challenges, whether they be personal, financial, or academic, your grade for this course will be based on the principles of ungrading, which invite you to reflect upon your own conditions and learning. Those of you who would like to

learn more about ungrading can refer to the writings and research of Dr. Jesse Stommel, an expert on the topic, which is available [here](#).

The final course grade will therefore be determined by three self-assessments. The first will be due Week 1 (Jan 6), the second in Week 5 (Feb 3), and the third during finals week (Mar 14). Please note that I cannot submit a grade for you at the end of the quarter unless I receive all three self-assessments.

NOTE ON RESPECT, FLEXIBILITY, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND INTEGRITY

In this course, we will practice a culture of mutual respect, in which all voices will be heard and valued. We will hold ourselves accountable to our own biases and privileges and make space for each other. The learning and unlearning we will do in this course will invite conversations that are at times challenging or uncomfortable; we will acknowledge them when they occur, and engage them as part of our learning process.

How we participate in this course affects not only us individually, but also our classmates, the professor, and the learning environment of everyone. Part of recognizing that you are valued members of the course also means being mindful of this larger collective responsibility.

We recognize that everyone's learning environments and capacities are different, made more so by the pandemic, the housing crisis, and other manufactured vulnerabilities. We will practice flexibility and accessibility while recognizing these are insufficient modes of addressing systemic harm. At any point during the quarter, please let me know if you have any concerns that arise and how I can best meet your learning needs.

All written work submitted for this course should be original, meaning that the work, in its entirety or in parts, should not have been submitted for previous courses, acquired from other sources, or done by others, including peers, tutors, editors, or people you pay. You must attribute all ideas and paraphrases that are acquired from other sources with proper citation, including the use of quotation marks when pulling phrases in their entirety.

Do not share, circulate, and reproduce PowerPoint slides without the permission of Simeon Man who holds the rights to these materials. Do not record the class discussion without the permission of every member of the course.

SCHEDULE

Week 1 (Jan 4/6): Liberation, Not Assimilation

Readings:

- Ishizuka, *Serve the People*, introduction and chapters 1-2, pp. 1-55.
- "Understanding AAPA," *AAPA Newspaper*, Summer Issue, Vol. 1, No. 5, 1969

Jan 6: Self-Assessment Due

Week 2 (Jan 11/13): What's "Structural" in Structural Racism?

Readings:

- Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz, "Yellow Peril," in *Not a Nation of Immigrants*, 179-226.
- Jamelle Bouie, "[What 'Structural Racism' Really Means,](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/opinion/structural-racism.html)" *The New York Times*, November 9, 2021. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/opinion/structural-racism.html>.

Week 3 (Jan 18/20): Anticolonial Solidarities in the early 20th Century

Readings:

- Vivek Bald, "From Ships' Holds to Factory Floors," in *Bengali Harlem and the Lost Histories of South Asian America*, 94-136.
- "Immigration Act of 1917 (Barred Zone Act)," in *Asian America: A Primary Source Reader*, 64-66

EC: Attend Zoom Event Antimilitarism in the Pacific, Wednesday, Jan 19, 4pm
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Week 4 (Jan 25/27): Asian American Movement

Readings:

- Ishizuka, *Serve the People*, chapter 3-5
- UC Berkeley TWLF Strike Newspaper, 1969
- Asian Studies Proposal, Solidarity 1969
- Film, *Yellow Brotherhood* (2003, 18 minutes)
http://tadashinakamura.com/Tadashi_Nakamura/Yellow_Brotherhood.html

Week 5 (Feb 1/3): Serve the People

Readings:

- Ishizuka, *Serve the People*, chapter 6-8 (optional: chapter 9-10)
- "Asian Community Center 1970 Program," and "Serve the People," Asian Community Center Newsletter No. 2, July 24, 1970.
- "Change Can Only Come from the People," *Asian Community Center Newsletter*, No. 1, July 11, 1970
- In-class film: *Fall of the I-Hotel* (1983)

Feb 3: Self-Assessment Due

Week 6 (Feb 8/10): Global Labor Migrations under Neoliberalism

Readings:

- Mathew, *Taxi!* Prologue and chapters 1-3

Week 7 (Feb 15/17): Neoliberal Multiculturalism

Readings:

- Mathew, *Taxi!* Chapters 4-5

- UCSD Administration's Statement on George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery, <https://ucsdnews.ucsd.edu/pressrelease/statement-on-george-floyd-breonna-taylor-and-ahmaud-arbery>
- UCSD Black Student Union [Statement](#), June 2020

Week 8 (Feb 22/24): Immigrant Labor Organizing

Readings:

- Mathew, *Taxi!* Chapters 6-7
- Film: *Made in LA* (2007)

Week 9 (Mar 1/3): Fighting Anti-Asian Violence at the Roots

Readings:

- *The Auntie Sewing Squad Guide*
- Alexis Shotwell, ["The Virus is a Relation,"](#) *Upping the Anti: A Journal of Theory and Action*
- [Red Canary Song and Survived and Punished Response to Hate Crime Charges](#), November 22, 2021

Week 10 (Mar 8/10): Toward an Abolitionist Asian American Politics

Readings:

- *The Auntie Sewing Squad Guide*
- Film: *American Revolutionary: The Evolution of Grace Lee Boggs* (dir. Grace Lee, 2013)
- TBA

March 15: Final Project and Self-Assessment Due

LOCAL SAN DIEGO PROJECTS + RESOURCES (partial list)

Anakbayan San Diego - <https://www.facebook.com/AnakbayanSanDiego/>
 Asian Solidarity Collective - <https://www.asiansolidaritycollective.org/>
 Black Lives Matter San Diego - <https://www.facebook.com/blmsd/>
 Cops Off Campus Coalition UCSD - <https://copsoffcampusucsd.org/>
 Detention Resistance - <https://www.detentionresistance.org/>
 Kumeyaay Defense Against the Wall - <https://linktr.ee/kumeyaaydefense>
 Mutual Aid UCSD - <https://linktr.ee/mutualaidUCSD>
 Pacific Arts Movement - <https://pacarts.org/>
 Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans - <https://www.panasd.org/>
 Pillars of the Community - <https://www.potcsd.org/>
 Stop AAPI Hate - <https://stopaapihate.org/>
 Tech Workers Coalition - <https://techworkerscoalition.org/>
 We All We Got (San Diego County Mutual Aid) - <https://www.weallwegotsd.com/>