



**Introduction to Asian-American Studies
Ethnic Studies 252 (15626)**

**Raza
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Tues: 5:30-6:15
Thurs: 5:30-6:15
Or by appointment

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the origins, methods, and theoretical underpinnings of Ethnic Studies broadly and Asian American Studies specifically. During the term we will utilize an interdisciplinary approach to examine the arrival, growth, distribution, and redistribution of Asian American peoples in the United States. Particular emphasis will be placed on recovering cultural memory and political history during periods of Asian American immigration, racialization, exclusion, political activism, assimilation, and transnationalism. Towards this end, we will focus on the ways Asian Americans negotiate these structural forces. Our aim is to recuperate the histories, experiences, and ongoing construction of Asian American identities with an emphasis on social struggles, polycultural alliances, and community formation.

Course Objectives

Through this course, you will:

- explore the origins, theories, and methods of ethnic studies;
- engage the frameworks, debates, and central issues in Asian American studies;
- examine the role of the state in the construction of the Asian-American subject;
- retrieve the revolutionary spirit of Asian-American political mobilizations;
- develop tools for critical analysis.

Achieving these objectives will allow us to take the course content to a higher level of discussion and analysis. This requires your participation and enthusiasm to challenge yourself, engage the material, and infuse your ideas with confidence and critical thought.

Required Texts

Textbooks are available at the UO Bookstore. All texts are on reserve at the Knight Library.

Min Zhou and J.V. Gatewood, *Contemporary Asian America: A Multidisciplinary Reader*, 2nd edition (New York: New York University Press, 2007).

Diane Fujino, *A Heartbeat of Struggle: The Revolutionary Life of Yuri Kochiyama* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).

Eric Liu, *The Accidental Asian: Notes of a Native Speaker* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998).

Course Requirements and Graded Components:

Attendance and Participation: (10%)

You are expected to come to class having completed readings and other assignments for the day. Your contribution to class discussions and collaborative work will be an important component of the course. Repeated absences will adversely impact your grade. Please speak to me if you have any concerns about your ability to attend class and participate.

In-Class Exercises: (10%)

Throughout the quarter you will be completing in-class writing assignments to apply the key themes and major points from the day's readings and lecture. Quizzes may be given to prompt active reading if necessary. Quizzes and other in-class work cannot be made up.

Exams: (50%)

We will have two exams during the quarter. The midterm exam will be scheduled during week five and the final during week eleven. Exams will be comprised of identification questions and short essays.

Annotated Bibliographies (20%)

Throughout the term you will be asked to submit summaries of articles, chapters, and films. An annotated bibliography is a form of academic writing that requires you to abbreviate the thesis, major points, and conclusions introduced in an article, chapter, essay, etc. Its aim is to identify the principle ideas of a work by paraphrasing the information and arguments used.

Closing Assessment: (10%)

The closing essay is designed to support the development of your analytic abilities by inviting you to reflect upon, critique, and apply ideas introduced in class. A handout will be distributed outlining the guidelines and expectations for this essay.

Expectations and Policies

- Given that assignments will draw heavily from lectures, class discussions, films, and group activities, regular attendance and diligent reading of all of the assigned material prior to each class meeting are expected and necessary for a passing grade.
- I will not accept late work or allow for late examinations unless prior arrangements have been agreed upon. Absence from class does not constitute an acceptable excuse. Please refer to the course schedule for all due dates.
- Students are to conduct their academic affairs in a forthright and professional manner and adhere to the standards outlined in the University's Student Conduct Code (OAR 571-21-068) available at www.studentlife.uoregon.edu
- Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Cell phone use, late arrival, and inappropriate behavior constitute disruptions.
- Please alert me if you require special consideration regarding class seating arrangements, course materials, assignments and classroom activities.
- If you are having difficulty and/or are in need of academic support, check in with me as soon as possible. You may be eligible for academic accommodations through Disability Services.

Principles of Learning and Community

Community educator and activist William Ayers once wrote, “When teaching is done well, it resonates in the deepest part of your being, it satisfies your soul.” I find this statement is true for both the “teacher” and participants. Teaching is an endeavor like no other—it requires us to expose our thoughts, take risks, and explore unfamiliar areas. Consequently, in this process we are challenged to see, think, do things in new ways, and as such, dimensions of our thoughts and actions change.

Good teaching and learning experiences don’t just happen. Rather, they reflect individual responsibility and collective courtesy from everyone involved. All students share in the responsibility to create a positive atmosphere for learning by extending respect for one another and for the learning process. While we commonly take for granted the qualities and contributions that create optimal learning experiences it is useful to clearly identify some basic commitments here.

1. Attendance – Simply, come to class. To pass the course regular attendance and participation is required. Students must arrive to class on time and remain until the class is dismissed. A sign-up sheet will circulate each class session. To receive full attendance points you must be on time and ready for class to begin. If you anticipate being absent or are unexpectedly unable to attend a session please contact a classmate to obtain the day’s notes and announcements. If you exceed two absences your grade will be affected.
2. Participation Before Class – Participation is generally thought to be achieved through the frequency of comments made in class. However, participation includes attentiveness, preparation for activities, involvement in discussions, and classroom decorum.

First, participation involves the preparation that is done *before* each class. Preparing before class is not optional and should be taken seriously. Students must have their assignments read prior to coming to class. The reading schedule indicates the readings and topics that will be covered during each session. Please plan ahead to complete the day’s reading assignment. You will be expected to enter each class session able to discuss the assigned reading.

3. Participation In-Class – Students should take notes on lectures and discussions, and devote their full attention to the class. During class refrain from side conversations, reading, cell phone use, text messaging, etc. When visual images are presented or musical selections are played, they should be treated as part of the course, not an invitation to talk, leave the room, or check out.

4. Initiative - Nearly all students enrolled at the University have the ability to succeed, however, not all do. Success in higher education is rarely a matter of intelligence or ability but rather a matter of attitude, effort and initiative. Your success is determined by your choices as well as your ability to make use of the many resources available to you. In all of our endeavors we must rely on the support and wisdom of others.

5. Contributions – Your contributions in this course include your written work and comments during in-class discussions and activities. Please check in with me during the quarter if you have any questions about your standing on course contributions. Students must complete and submit all written assignments in-class by the due date. I will not accept late work or allow for late examinations unless prior arrangements have been agreed upon. Please refer to the course schedule for all due dates. In-class contributions, questions, and commentary should adopt a professional “academic” tone; you may certainly disagree with the readings, one another, and the instructor, but must do so in a manner suitable for public discussion. Remember this is a college course, you may believe anything you wish, but not all the things you believe should be or need be expressed in the classroom; the college classroom is a forum focused on specific intellectual tasks.

This course has been designed to include you, *the student*, as an integral part of the subject. Your insights and perspectives will be incorporated in weekly activities and discussions. This will provide you with an opportunity to apply new concepts, process through new information, and improve your ability to articulate yourself, and collaborate with your peers. Ultimately, I intend for this course to be interesting, dynamic, and memorable.