Introduction to Asian American Studies
Spring 2017
TR 1:25-2:40
230 Rockefeller Hall

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Course Description: This course examines Asian American historical and contemporary issues from the 1960s to the contemporary moment. We will examine major themes such as race and class relations, gender and family, immigration and globalization, politics, and community activism. We will become familiar with fundamental concepts and ideas by examining major events, including the Asian American Movement, the murder of Vincent Chin, and the Los Angeles Uprisings. In the second half of this course, we will ask the question of cross-racial intersections and coalition building in a post-civil rights era and examine new forms of American empire through a variety of topics including affirmative action, transnational adoption, reparations, War on Terror and Black Lives Matter.

For students taking the course for 4.0 credit hours, this course has four aims:

For students taking the course for 2.0 credit hours, the course has three aims:

Required texts
For Purchase at Buffalo Street Books (see attached sheet, or visit http://www.buffalostreetbooks.com/#/students/cuiy)


Other required readings will be available electronically on the course’s Blackboard site either as downloadable files (usually in pdf format) or as links to on-line journals or e-books via the Cornell University Library. You can access Blackboard at the following url: http://www.blackboard.cornell.edu/.

Hard copies of the readings will also be available at the Asian American Studies Resource Center in 422 Rockefeller Hall. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Resource Center may add periodic evening hours during the semester. Please contact the staff for more information: aasp@cornell.edu or (607) 255-3320.

The AASRC also has extensive book and video libraries, which may be useful for research projects and/or additional readings. Check out the AARC website for additional
information: asianamericanstudies.cornell.edu/resources/index.cfm.

Requirements for 4.0 Credit Hour Students
1. Attendance and Participation (20%): Attendance is mandatory. After the first week of the semester, if you miss more than 4 classes, you will forfeit the entire portion of the final grade designated for attendance and participation. In a class of this size, in-class participation is often difficult. The Teaching Assistant and I will evaluate both attendance and participation through various means, including pop quizzes, “exit tickets,” and sign-in sheets.

2. In-Class Quizzes (2 x 10% = 20%)

3. Contemporary Asian America in the News (2 short papers x 15% = 30%): Detailed assignment to be distributed in class February 2nd.

4. Final Exam (30%): Take home essays

Requirements for 2.0 Credit Hour Students
1. Attendance and Participation (20%): Attendance is mandatory. After the first week of the semester, if you miss more than 4 classes, you will forfeit the entire portion of the final grade designated for attendance and participation. In a class of this size, in-class participation is often difficult. The Teaching Assistant and I will evaluate both attendance and participation through various means, including pop quizzes, “exit tickets,” and sign-in sheets.

2. Active Participation in one of a number activities organized through the Asian and Asian American Center (A3C), the Asian American Studies Resource Center, the Asian American Studies Program, or Asian American focused student organizations (30%): You must sign up for one of the options no later than Tuesday, February 7th. The full range of approved options will be available to you Tuesday, January 31st. Priority is given to current A3C interns; all others must sign up on a first-come-first-served basis during the designated time in-class on February 7th.

3. Journal (20%): You must keep a journal, chronicling your thoughts about your experience. You must make entries for each meeting or event you attend. The journal should link your activities to what we discuss in class.

4. Reflection Essay (30%): A reflection essay on your experience, relating your work to course materials. Assignment to be distributed in class on February 7th.
Course Schedule

**Week 1: Introduction (1/26)**

**Week 2: Foundations (1/31 & 2/2)**
“Foreign,” “Immigration,” “Labor,” “Minority,” “Nationalism,” “Orientalism,”
“Race,” and “Yellow,” in *Keywords*.

**Week 3: What is Politics? Who is Political? (2/7 & 2/9)**
Read: “Commodification,” “Law,” “Movement,” “Politics,” “Resistance,” and “Riot” in *Keywords*;
Robin D. G. Kelley, “‘We Are Not What We Seem’: Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the South,” *Journal of American History*, 80:1 (June 1993);

**Thurs., 2/9: In-class Quiz**

**Week 4: Third World Studies to Ethnic Studies (2/14 & 2/16)**
Read: Okihiro, *Third World Studies*

“Fusion,” “Globalization,” “Identity,” “Minority,” “Multiculturalism,” “Multiracial,”
“Postcolonialism,” and “Transnationalism,” in *Keywords*;

**Tues., 2/21: (February Break)**

**Week 6: Electoral Politics (2/28 & 3/1)**

**Week 7: Campus Politics: Affirmative Action & the Model Minority (3/7 & 3/9)**
Vijay Prashad, Chapters 1 & 2, *Uncle Swami: South Asians in America Today* (2012);

**Week 8: Grassroots Politics & Social Movements** (3/14 & 3/16)
Monisha Das Gupta, Introduction, *Unruly Immigrants: Rights, Activism, and Transnational South Asian Politics in the United States* (2006);
Monisha Das Gupta, Chapter 1, *Unruly Immigrants* (2006);

https://lettersforblacklives.com/dear-mom-dad-uncle-auntie-black-lives-matter-to-us-too-7ca577d59f4c#.af2p0qfpa;

**Thurs., 3/23: In-class Quiz**

**Week 10: Class Politics** (3/28 & 3/30)
Read: “Class,” in *Keywords*;
Readings to be determined

**Tues., 3/28: No class, but students must attend a lecture by Professor Chrissy Lau at 4:30; location to be determined**

**SPRING BREAK**

**Week 11: Cultural Politics** (4/4 & 4/6)
Read: “Art,” “Commodification,” “Culture,” “Film,” “Food,” “Media,” “Performance” in *Keywords*;

**Week 12: Gender & Sexuality** (4/11 & 4/13)
Read: “Gender,” “Queer,” “Sexuality” in *Keywords*;
Yen Le Espiritu, “We Don’t Sleep Around Like White Girls Do’: Family, Culture, and Gender in Filipina American Lives,” *Signs* 26:2;
Rhacel Salazar-Perreras, “Servants of Globalization: Women, Migration, and Domestic Work” (2001);
Thurs., 4/13: No class

Week 13: Politics of Immigration (4/18 & 4/20)
Read: “Citizenship,” “Exclusion,” “Immigration,” in Keywords;
Selected documents on Asian exclusion

Read: “Genocide,” “Militarism,” “Refugee,” “Terrorism,” and “War” in Keywords
Lila Abu-Lughod, “Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?” American Anthropologist 104:3 (September 2002);

Week 15: Politics of War, Part 2 (5/2 & 5/4)
Read: Selected documents, re: Japanese Internment During World War II;

Week 16: Wrapping Up (5/9)