

ETHN 5: INTRODUCTION TO ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES

Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Summer 2025
Units:	4
Hours:	4 lecture per week (48 total per quarter)
Advisory:	Not open to students with credit in ETHN 55.
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Area 3: Arts & Humanities, Area 6: Ethnic Studies
Transferable:	CSU/UC
Grade Type:	Letter Grade (Request for Pass/No Pass)
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable
Formerly:	ETHN 55

Description

Introduction to Asian American Studies, focusing on Asian American experiences from the nineteenth century to the present. Includes issues of identity and positionality as they relate to race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, socioeconomic class and labor, national origin, mixed heritages, religion/spirituality, generation, and ability. Explores Asian American experiences via theoretical frameworks and historical, social, cultural, political, legal, and environmental contexts, including colonialism and decolonization, immigration, activism and resistance.

Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Critically analyze and investigate ethnic studies concepts, including race and ethnicity, social justice and equity, anticolonization, anti-war, anti-Eurocentrism/Orientalism, white and Judeo-Christian supremacy, and other racially constructed power structures as conceptual contexts for studying Asian American histories and current issues.
2. Identify and critically analyze relevant U.S. governmental actions, law, and policies, and their impacts on Asian Americans past and present.
3. Analyze with relevant theory produced by and about Asian American communities the intersectionality of Asian American lived experiences along various vectors of identity, including race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, socioeconomic class and labor, national origin, mixed heritages, religion/spirituality, generation, age, and ability.
4. Critically review how Asian American social and political activism, resistance to Eurocentric racialization, and solidarity, from early immigration to the present, including current Asian American social justice issues and possibilities for change, are relevant to current and structural issues such as communal, national, international, and transnational politics.
5. Demonstrate contributions towards Asian American communities, directly engaging with anti-racist, anti-colonial issues, theories, practices, programs, and social and political movements towards

diversity and equity in and out of the classroom, with a thorough consideration of service ethics.

6. Describe and actively engage the term "Asian American" as a category constructed in response to legal and social exclusion.

Course Content

1. Critically analyze and articulate concepts of race and racialization, ethnicity and ethnocentrism, social justice and equity, (de/neo/anti-)colonization/colonialism, self-determination and sovereignty, resistance to Eurocentrism, Orientalism, Judeo-Christian supremacy, and white supremacy, and other racially constructed power structures as conceptual contexts for studying Asian American histories and current issues
 - a. Chinese American historical contexts; e.g., sugar making in Hawai'i, Paper Sons and Daughters, Angel Island Immigration Station, 2020 U.S. government response to COVID
 - b. Japanese American experiences, including World War II and Executive Order 9066 for Japanese American internment, agricultural labor and resistance
 - c. Filipinx American issues, such as U.S. colonization (1898-1945), World War II and its legacies, Filipinx Veterans' equity
 - d. Korean American historical contexts: Japanese colonialism, comfort women, Saigu (1992 Korean riot victims in Los Angeles)
 - e. Historical and cultural circumstances of American Pacific Islander groups, including Hawai'ian and Chamorro (e.g., the illegal overthrow and annexation of Hawai'i and the aftermath of cultural suppression, environmental destruction in Guam as a result of U.S. colonization)
 - f. Southeast Asian American contexts: U.S. neocolonialism and the Vietnam War, refugee crises, Hmong immigration, Muslim American discrimination
 - g. South Asian American histories, including vestiges of British colonialism and post-9/11 profiling
2. Identify and critically analyze relevant U.S. governmental actions, law, and policies, and their impacts on Asian Americans past and present; including, but not limited to:
 - a. Immigration legislation; e.g., Chinese Exclusion Act(s) (1880ff), McCarran Walter Act (1952), 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act, post-9/11 immigration policy, 2017 Executive Order 13769 - the Muslim Ban
 - b. History of citizenship rights
 - c. Historical "Affirmative Action" programs at local, state, and federal levels
 - d. U.S. policy history regarding undocumented Asian Americans
 - e. U.S. colonial and neocolonial intrusions abroad (the Philippines, Southeast Asia), postcolonial analysis
3. Analyze with relevant theory produced by and about Asian American communities the intersectionality of Asian American lived experiences along various vectors of identity, including race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, socioeconomic class and labor, national origin, mixed heritages, religion/spirituality, generation, and ability; including, but not limited to:
 - a. Family, community, and intergenerational dynamics, social psychology of Asian Americans
 - b. Politics of gender and sexuality, gender and queer theories
 - c. Labor and socioeconomic class, Marxian theory
 - d. Multiethnic and transnational identities, acculturation, connections to the "homeland"; postcolonial theories

- e. Language and linguistic topics, including Asian American literary narratives and their devices, non- or non-"traditional" English language narratives
 - f. Religious contexts, including Muslim Asian Americans' issues of marginalization and religious discrimination
 - g. The "Model Minority" stereotype
4. Critically review how Asian American social and political activism, resistance to Eurocentric racialization, and solidarity, from early immigration to the present, including current Asian American social justice issues and possibilities for change, are relevant to current and structural issues such as communal, national, international, and transnational politics
- a. Labor movements; e.g., Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino farmworkers' labor organization and activism
 - b. Literary and artistic resistance: prose, poetry, film, still, or performance art creating a narrative of Asian American protest and empowerment
 - c. Historical study and practice of community-based activism, including voting enfranchisement, local lobbying and protests (e.g., 1968 San Francisco State student strikes and the establishment of Ethnic Studies programs in California)
 - d. Recognition of media representation and resistance thereto
5. Demonstrate contributions towards Asian American communities, directly engaging with anti-racist, anti-colonial issues, theories, practices, programs, and social and political movements towards diversity and equity in and out of the classroom, with a thorough consideration of service ethics
- a. Experiential knowledge through community service learning defined by communities rather than by the researcher's own interest
 - b. Application of social justice principles within ethical contexts
6. Describe and actively engage the term "Asian American" as a category constructed in response to legal and social exclusion
- a. Examine the history of the Asian American movement of the 1960s and 1970s
 - b. Historicize the formation of Pan-Asian alliances and understand the struggles encountered inside and outside of political community
 - c. Trace the cultural and legal usages of the term "Asian American" since its inception

Lab Content

Not applicable.

Special Facilities and/or Equipment

1. When taught on campus, no special facility or equipment needed.
2. When taught via Foothill Global Access, on-going access to computer with email software and capabilities; email address.

Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Critical papers
Class presentations
Reading journals
Midterm examination
Final examination

Social justice/service learning project

Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Reading of multidisciplinary texts from fields including history, social and political sciences, literature, cultural studies
Viewing and analyzing various media regarding contemporary Asian American issues
Viewing/observing/hearing Asian American cultural artifacts, including art, performance, film, theater, music
Class discussion on relevant topics
Writing analytical responses to course materials
Actively engaging in social justice/service learning
Guest speakers
Field observation and field trips
Collaborative learning and small group exercises
Discussion of course topics and videos in relation to real life examples drawn from students' experiences and observations

Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Fong, Timothy. [The Contemporary Asian American Experience: Beyond the Model Minority](#). 3rd ed.. 2020.

Hong, Cathy Park. [Minor Feelings: An Asian American Reckoning](#). 2020.

Lee, Erica. [The Making of Asian America: A History](#). 2015.

Parikh, Crystal. [Writing Human Rights: The Political Imaginaries of Writers of Color](#). 2019.

Srikanth, Rajini, ed.. [Bold Words: A Century of Asian American Writing](#). 2001.

Zia, Helen. [Asian American Dreams: The Emergence of an American People](#). 2000.

Note: Text(s) may be chosen at the instructor's discretion.

Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

1. Reading multidisciplinary texts from fields including history, social and political sciences, literature, cultural studies
2. Viewing and analysis, including information literacy and media regarding Asian America
3. Attending Asian American theater, film, or musical performances, or museums, and responding in writing
4. Analytical essays on readings
5. Journal entries
6. Social justice/service learning project (e.g., Foothill Research and Service Learning Symposium)
7. Group projects
8. Reflective essays on personal experiences or interviews

Discipline(s)

Ethnic Studies