ASIAN AMERICAN HISTORY

3 credits

Spring 2010

Time: MW 9:00-9:50am

ASY 1213

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces the history of Asian Americans and the field of Asian American Studies. Topics include theories of race, ethnicity, and immigration; Asian migrations and diasporas in the Americas; Asian American work and labor issues; gender, family, and communities; nationalism and nativism, and anti-Asian movements; Asian Americans, World War II, the Cold War, and the issues in the civil rights & post-civil rights era.

We will focus on the personal voices of Asian Americans as means of understanding how individuals made choices and interpreted their situations. Through personal stories, we will explore the meanings of Asian American experiences, mapping their influence within main currents in American and global history.

Because we will spend much time examining Asian Americans' stories, we will often have discussion in class. The course has a lecture-discussion format so come prepared to read, think, write and debate.

Prerequisites & CORE Designation

No prerequisites are required for this course.

This course meets following requirements: CORE Social or Political History (SH) Course and Diversity (D) Course.
CONCEPTUAL GOALS

The course will introduce you to both Asian American Studies and History.

*Asian American Studies* joins the strengths of many different academic fields to inquire into the past and present status of Asian Americans. Its versatility is its strength. It provides more ways to explore Asian American experiences than any one discipline. This class, for example, combines history with literature, sociology, and anthropology.

In society, *History* serves as our collective memory. It shapes our sense of where we came from, it informs our knowledge about ourselves, and it guides our sense of who we may become. Academic historians are part-storytellers and part-social scientists. They write narrative arguments that interpret the past based on evidence.

SKILL GOALS

This course prepares you think historically about controversial issues that relate to Asian Americans. By the end of this course, students can expect to be able to critically analyze arguments and evidence, to develop their own interpretations, and to debate the meanings of events.

CORE QUESTIONS FOR EXAMS AND PAPERS IN THE COURSE

This course aims to develop your analytic skills. While pop quizzes will test that students are keeping up with the readings, discussion sections, papers, and exams will focus on your original arguments about problems in Asian American history.

Therefore I am announcing the topics of the first paper and the exam questions in advance.

**First Paper:** An Analysis and Critique of the “Takaki Thesis” in *Strangers from a Different Shore*. Based on evidence from the course, what do you see as most useful and limiting in Takaki’s argument about the centrality of race in Asian American history? What approach would you recommend to the topic?

**Midterm Exam:** In U.S. society, immigrants who settle permanently and become citizens are often celebrated. In the past, many mainstream Americans feared that Asians might be another type of immigrant, which might not fully assimilate to the society and culture of their new nation. Many 19th and early 20th century mainstream commentators referred to Asian Americans as being possibly unable or unwilling to become American. They feared that Asians would remain permanent foreigners. In recent decades, scholars have developed a term, “transnational,” to describe the large number of past and present immigrants who retain some foreign ties. However, these “transnational migrants” often are “nowhere” in American history. Explore to what extent the society and culture of early Asian America in relation to both assimilation and transnationalism. To what extent does each process each apply? What do you see as their relationship?

**Final Exam:** The final exam will have two essay questions. The first question will ask you to extend your analysis of the Takaki thesis, and address its relevance to more recent Asian American history. To what extent are more recent decades similar to or different from the past? The second question will ask will ask you write an argument analyzing the historical process of creating Asian American identities in light of the wider exploration of social and cultural influences in latter part of the course.

**Second Paper:** The second paper will require you to analyze the significance of a primary source or set of primary sources in relation to Asian American history. I will provide a list of possible options. Students may also propose their own topics with the consent of the instructor or TA.
TEXTBOOKS


A required course packet will be available for sale at the textbook dept. desk of the Maryland Book Exchange.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Participation in class discussions with evidence of preparation and thought about assigned readings required; additional credit given for participation in the lecture class and on-line via Blackboard.</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Paper</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>March 1, 2010 at the start of lecture class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>March 24, 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Pop quizzes on readings and lecture. They can occur in any lecture or discussion section.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Paper</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>April 26, 2010 at the start of lecture class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>TBA, as scheduled by the university on Testudo. Review session will be on May 10, 2010.</td>
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REQUIRED ON-LINE COMPONENTS

1. E-Mail. We will assume that the e-mail address that you provided to the university is accurate, up to date and checked daily during the business days. If your official e-mail address is not up to date, please update it.
2. Blackboard. All students will be required to sign into Blackboard and check it regularly. On Blackboard we will have on-line discussion forums, links and handouts relating to the course. You can find information relating to getting started with Blackboard here: http://elms.umd.edu/

**HONOR PLEDGE & ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

The University has approved a **Code of Academic Integrity** which prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures. Plagiarism policy: all quotations taken from other authors, including from the Internet, must be indicated by quotation marks and referenced. Paraphrasing must be referenced as well.

The University Honor Council suggests that on every paper assignment and exam you write and sign the following honor pledge:

*I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination.*

I cannot accept any work for credit that does not properly credit the ideas or words of others. Please scrupulously cite all references in your work because plagiarism is a serious academic offense. You must footnote in history format any reference to the ideas or writings of others whether you quote it or not. Footnoting helps me properly distinguish between your original contribution and your research.

University guidelines on proper citation of sources are here: http://www.lib.umd.edu/UES/plag_stud_what.html If you have any questions about proper citation formats, please consult me and I would be happy to discuss citation guidelines with you.

**EXPECTATIONS**

1. All papers should be submitted on paper, typed in 12 point font, and double-spaced. They should be spell-checked, edited and proof-read.

2. E-mailed and faxed assignments will not be accepted.

3. Written assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. The late submission penalty is 2% of the assignment grade for each day late including weekend days. Assignments handed in after class has begun are considered late to be fair to students who are on time.

4. The TA and I can grant reasonable extensions for course assignments and exams only for reasons beyond your control such as illness, emergencies, car problems, inclement weather, religious holidays, etc. Missing discussion section requires a make-up assignment. If you miss an exam, please contact the instructor immediately to arrange a make-up exam.

5. To hand in assignments on days that we do not have class, please place papers in my History Department mailbox on the second floor of Key Hall by 4:00pm. If they are late, you should ask the receptionist in the History Department to stamp and date them. Please do not put your essay under my office door.

6. In the event of an emergency that closes the University for an extended period of time, please check your email for news about how the course may continued or completed.
7. Students with disabilities should contact the TA or instructor at the beginning of the semester to discuss accommodations needed for this course.

8. Religious observance: Please inform your instructor of any intended absences for religious observance in advance.

9. This syllabus may be subject to change. Students will be notified in advance of important changes that could affect grading, assignments, etc.

**NOTICE**

Course materials are copyrighted. Hence selling or distributing copies or modified copies of instructors’ course materials or assisting another person or entity in selling or distributing those materials may be considered a violation of the University’s Student Code of Conduct.

**TIPS FOR PREPARING COURSE READINGS**

Your class preparation should demonstrate that you have done the readings and that you have reflected on their meaning for interpreting past events.

We will read two kinds of materials.

1. **Primary sources** -- This is direct evidence about the past, such as first hand testimony, letters, speeches, newspaper articles, memoirs, interviews, and novels, in short "the raw materials of history." Here your task is different. The writers of your primary sources may have an agenda, but it may be subtle. You should read like a detective looking for clues about what the source’s meaning. Every source has a point of view. How would the author’s perspective or agenda affect its perspective? When you interpret the source, assess its contributions to larger conversations about a social, cultural or political debate in the past.

2. **Secondary sources** -- These are academic books and articles written by scholars that use evidence to make arguments about interpreting historical problems. Consider what assumptions and concepts the author uses. How might the way that the question asked affect the answer? How persuasive is the argument? What limitations does it have? When you read, what thoughts come to mind about its implications? What is its relationship to themes or problems that we are discussing in the class?

**COURSE READINGS AND LECTURES**

Readings are due in the week that they are listed.
Abbreviations: MP = Major Problems, CR = Electronic Course Reserve, P = Course Packet, RP = Research Port

**WEEK ONE**
Jan 25  Introduction: What is Asian American History?
Jan 27  Global Origins of Asia’s Meeting with America

Readings
Kuragshige and Murray, “Framing Asian American History,” 1-2, MP
R. Daniels, “Neglect and Distortion of Asian Americans by American Historians,” 3-9, MP
S. Yanagisako, “Rethinking the Centrality of Racism in Asian American History, 15-22, MP
B. Hing, “What Does It Mean to Be Asian American?,” 29-33, MP.
R. Takaki, Strangers from a Different Shore, xi-75

I. EARLY ASIAN AMERICAN HISTORY

WEEK TWO
Feb 1 & 3 Immigrant or Coolie?: Asian Migration at Slavery’s End

Readings
Gary Y. Okihiro, "Is Yellow Black or White?", Margins and Mainstreams, 31-63, packet.
Takaki, Strangers from a Different Shore, 79-131.
Three Primary Sources on the “Coolie Trade in the 19th Century,” University of Minnesota “Global Race, Ethnicity, and Migration” blog at http://blog.lib.umn.edu/globerem/main/2008/07/the_coolie_trade_in_the_19th_c.html
- Excerpts of The Cuba Commission Report (1874)

WEEK THREE
Feb 8 Hawaii: An Asian American Immigrant Society
Feb 11 Between Family and America?: Immigrant Parents and U.S. Born Children

Readings
Milton Murayama, All I Am Asking For Is My Body, all.
Takaki, Strangers from a Different Shore, 132-176.

WEEK FOUR
Feb 15 Defining “Oriental Problem”: Chinese, the First Mass Migration of Asians to North America
In class film excerpts: Ancestors in the Americas, Part II, Chinese in the Frontier West
Feb 17 Transpacific Families: Chinese Migrations & Diasporas in the Americas

Readings
“Journalist Helen Gray Exposes the Activities of a Chinese Brothel Owner, 1899,” MP 70-74.

WEEK FIVE
Feb 22 America’s Pacific Empire and Asian Americans: the Filipino Case
Feb 24 Whose America?: Filipino Americans, Ethnic Relations and Belonging

Reading
Carlos Bulosan, *America is in the Heart*, 63-71, 97-151, Packet.

**WEEK SIX**
Mar 1 Korean Pioneers in America and the Korean Independence Movement **FIRST PAPER DUE**
Mar 3 Growing Up Asian American in the Exclusion Era
Reading
Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore*, 270-293.
“Life History of J. Lim,” Box 29, File 270, Survey of Race Relations, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University, 1-5 (circa 1924)
“Korean Immigrant Margaret Pai Joins the Korean Independence Movement, 1919,” MP 159-161.
“Sociology Graduate Student Rose Hum Lee Lists American Beliefs About the Chinese, 1927,” MP 192.

**WEEK SEVEN**
Mar 8 Orientalism, Empire & Immigrants from India
Mar 11 The Indian Independence Movement in North America
Reading
Takaki, 294-314.
“Indian Nationalists and American Journalists Disagree Over the Route to India’s Independence, 1923,” MP 150-151.

**WEEK EIGHT**
**SPRING BREAK**

**WEEK NINE**

II: ASIAN AMERICANS, ASIA & AMERICAN SOCIETY IN THE 20TH CENTURY
Mar 22 Perils of Body and Mind: The Anti-Asian Movement
Reading
Takaki, 179-229.
Chinese Exclusion:
Japanese and Korean Exclusion:

Defining Asian Immigrants as Excluded from American Citizenship:
“Ray E. Chase and S.G. Pandit Critique Supreme Court Ruling Excluding East Indians from Citizenship, 1926,” MP 118-123.

Mar 24 ***MIDTERM EXAM***

WEEK TEN
Mar 29 The “Oriental Problem” and Assimilating Asians
   In Class Film Excerpts: The Cheat, directed by Cecil B. DeMille, 1915

Mar 31 Dating, Marriage, and Sexuality

Readings:
Takaki , Strangers from a Different Shore, 230-269.
“Indian Immigrant Inder Singh Discusses His Marriage with a Mexican Woman, 1924,” MP 223-224.
“Sociologist Emory Bogardus Analyzes an Anti-Filipino Riot,” MP 225-228.
“Time Magazine Reveals Sexual Basis for Filipino Repatriation,” MP 228-229.

WEEK ELEVEN
Apr 5 Japanese Americans in World War II
   In Class Film: Rabbit in the Moon

Apr 7 Japanese Americans in World War II

Readings
Takaki, 357-405

Japanese American Internment:
“Journalist James M. Omura Condemns the Mass Exclusion of Japanese Americans, 1942,” MP 297
“The Fair Play Committee Calls on Nisei, Second Generation Japanese Americans, to Resist the Draft Within the Heart Mountain Internment Camp, 1944,” MP 298
Sample “Camp Harmony Exhibit” of the University of Washington Libraries located at http://www.lib.washington.edu/exhibits/harmony/Exhibit/
“American Intelligence Officer Promotes Nisei Americanization,” MP 262-264.
War and other Asian Americans:

“Sociology Graduate Student Rose Hum Lee Describes How World War II Changed the Lives of Chinese Americans,” MP 287-290.


WEEK TWELVE
Apr 12 Refugees and US Wars in Southeast Asia
Apr 14 Vietnamese Americans

Lan Cao, Monkey Bridge, all.

WEEK THIRTEEN
Apr 19 Yellow and Brown Power: The Asian American Movement, 1960s and 1970s
Apr 21 Asian American Activism from the 1980s to 2000s.

Readings
Asians Who Chose to Not be Activists as “The Model Minority” in the Civil Rights Era:

Overview of the Asian American Movement:
Yen Le Espiritu, “Panethnicity and Asian American Activism,” MP 442-449.
Takaki, Strangers from a Different Shore, 406-471.

Case Studies from Asian American Movement Politics:
Fred Ho, Ed. Legacy to Liberation, packet.

WEEK FOURTEEN
Apr 26 Asian Americans as Makers and Subjects of Culture
Film in class: Slaying the Dragon **SECOND PAPER DUE**
Apr 28 Post-1965 Changes & Continuities– Social Mobility, Race Relations, and Highly-Skilled Immigrants

Takaki, 473-491
“The Media Action Network for Asian Americans Condemns Hollywood Stereotypes,” MP 470-472
Sandhya Shukla, “Transnational Community, Culture, and Little India,” MP 480-485
Abraham Verghese, “The Cowpath to America,” The New Yorker, (June 23 and 30, 1997), 70-88, ER.

WEEK FIFTEEN
May 3 Asian Americans and Urban Conflict
In Class Film: Sa-I-Gu: From Korean Women's Perspectives
May 5  Social Mobility Through Entrepreneurship: Immigrant Small Businesses


**WEEK 16**

May 10  **FINAL EXAM REVIEW SESSION**
Constructing Asian American Youth Identities in Contemporary Society


Cynthia Nakashima, “Approaches to Multiraciality,” MP 512-521

**FINAL EXAM**
At date scheduled by university on Testudo, TBA.

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**University of Maryland**
**Department of History/Asian American Studies Program**
**AAST 201/HIST219M: Asian American History**

**Teaching Assistant:** Steph Reichelderfer

**Discussion Sections:**
- 101 M........10:00am-10:50am (ASY 3203)
- 102 M........12:00pm-12:50pm (WDS 1127)
- 103 M......... 2:00pm- 2:50pm (WDS 0104)
- 104 W......... 1:00pm- 1:50pm (WDS 1131)

**Office:** Francis Scott Key Hall, 3115
**Office Hours:** Tuesday, 11-1 or by appointment
**Email:** sreichel@umd.edu * Please allow 24 hours for a response.*

**Goals:** Our discussion sections will expand on various themes, concepts, and questions of Asian American history. Each week, we will read both primary and secondary source materials that will highlight a key subject of the course. Discussion sections will help you to connect course readings to larger topics. In section, students will discuss the readings and their own interpretations of the sources with their classmates, enriching their study of Asian American History.

**Expectations:** In order to achieve these goals, thoughtful participation is required for this course. Participation is also an important component of your overall grade. Please come to section prepared: read the assigned material and come ready to contribute to the discussion. Before class, please think about how each week’s readings connect to larger themes in the course, consult the discussion questions on Blackboard, and think about how these sources contribute to our understanding of Asian American history. **All students are required to bring the materials for each week to discussion section. It is important that the readings are at hand to refer to specific passages.**

Respect for other classmates is a vital component of discussion sections. All students are required to respectfully listen and respond to other classmates’ comments and thoughts. Having respect for everyone in the classroom also means no disruptions to the section. Please arrive on time, turn off your cell phones, and
use laptops only for taking notes. Using laptops for purposes other than taking notes and cell phone texting are not permitted.

**Grading:** Regular attendance and participation in section is required. Writing at least one comment or question relating to the weekly readings before class will help with contributing to our discussions. You are more than welcome to discuss any grades received for exams, written work, etc. during my office hours or by appointment.

**Absences:** If you are going to be absent from section, let me know as far in advance as possible. If you have an excused absence due to an event beyond your control (illness, death, accident, court appearances, job interviews, etc.), I require you to write a 1-2 page summary of the weekly readings. Any students who will be absent from section to observe a religious holiday should let me know in advance.

**Honor Code:** ***All written and oral work must conform to the University of Maryland Code of Academic Integrity. Please see [http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/code.html](http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/code.html). It is your responsibility to understand this code. Ask the instructor if you have any questions about academic integrity.***