

# Asian American History

History 512.231

Fall 2020

Tuesday, 2:30-5:10

Professor Kornel Chang

Office Hours: available by phone or zoom, by appointment

Email: [kchang4@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:kchang4@newark.rutgers.edu)

\* \* \*

## Course Description

This course offers an introduction to the history of Asian Americans from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. Drawing from a range of interdisciplinary approaches and sources, we will explore the importance of the Asian American experience to U.S. history while also giving due consideration to the global and international forces that shaped it. In doing so, we will probe the varied experiences of people identified as “Asian Americans,” examining what it has meant to be Asian American and how it has changed over time. Students will use the experience of Asian Americans to investigate broader themes including migration, diaspora, race, labor, citizenship, community formation, war, empire, nation, and transnationalism.

## Learning Objectives

- Acquire a basic knowledge of Asian American history from the mid-nineteenth century to the present including the key people, events, and ideas that have shaped this history.
- Develop critical reading skills by learning how to evaluate scholarly arguments and the evidence and reasoning behind them.
- Learn to identify and distinguish between primary and secondary sources.
- Learn historical methods to interpret primary sources.

## Assignments and Grade Breakdown

Class Participation	15%
2 Reading Quizzes	20%
2 Response Papers	20%
Primary Source Paper	15%
Take-Home Final Exam	30%

## Class Rules

I expect students to behave in a manner that shows respect for the civic community: for others' needs and desire to learn. Any behavior that might be disruptive to other students, making it difficult for them to hear or distracting them from the lecture, or in any way intimidates them from participating in class, will be counted against the participation grade.

This means, in concrete terms:

- no talking in private conversations (even in whispers),
- no cell phone use or any other form of texting,
- no use of computers or laptops for any purpose except to take notes or review assigned readings under discussion,

- no working on other course homework.

### **Technology Rules**

Students may use laptops and tablets during class for class-related activities only. If I learn that students are using these devices for any other purpose, I may impose further restrictions. Students are also prohibited from listening to any other device in this class that has not received prior authorization. Further, do not keep headphones in your ears even if you are not listening to anything. In essence, you are in class approximately 3 hours a week. Please be present and prepared when you are here.

### **Attendance Policy**

Attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to attend every class, arrive on time and stay for the duration of the class. *Excused vs. Unexcused absences*: The Rutgers-Newark Undergraduate catalog ([http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nwk-ug\\_current/pg576.html](http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nwk-ug_current/pg576.html)) states: “The recognized grounds for absence are illness requiring medical attention, curricular or extracurricular activities approved by the faculty, personal obligations claimed by the student and recognized as valid, recognized religious holidays, and severe inclement weather causing dangerous traveling conditions.”

I will take attendance at the beginning of every class. After three unexcused absences, your overall course grade will be lowered by a partial grade (from B+ to B, for example) for every further unexcused absence. Any student who misses four or more sessions through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will have missed more than a quarter of the class time and will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw from the course to avoid an F.

If you arrive late, after I have taken attendance, I will give you half credit for being in class. This means that two late arrivals will count as one unexcused absence. I realize that delays are sometimes inevitable, and I would rather that you come to class late than not at all. To accommodate that, I will give you three free late passes – after the third late arrival, the late policy as stated above will kick in, with no exceptions. Leaving early without prior permission will count as an unexcused absence.

### **Policy on Academic Integrity (Cheating and Plagiarism)**

Rutgers University treats cheating and plagiarism as serious offenses. Cheating is both a moral and an ethical offense. It violates both your own integrity and the ethics of group commitment: when you cut corners and cheat, you undermine those students who took the time to work on the assignment honestly. As a standard minimum penalty, students who are suspected of cheating or plagiarism are reported to the Office of Academic Integrity. Pending investigation, further penalties can include failure of the course, disciplinary probation, and a formal warning that further cheating will be grounds for expulsion from the University.

All students are required to sign the Rutgers Honor Code Pledge. To receive credit, every assignment must have your signature under the following phrase: “On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this assignment.”

Generally speaking, it is a violation of the academic integrity code to:

- Use someone else’s words or ideas without attribution
- Copy content from someone else’s paper, quiz, or exam
- Have someone else complete course assignments

## **Names and Pronouns**

An important part of creating a respectful learning environment is knowing and using the name you use, which may differ from your legal name, as well as the gendered pronouns you use (for example, I go by he/him/his). Please feel free to let me know your name and/or the pronouns you use at any time.

## **Students with Disabilities**

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>. For more information please contact Kate Torres at (973) 353-5375 or in the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219 or by contacting [odsnewark@rutgers.edu](mailto:odsnewark@rutgers.edu).

## **Additional Resources**

Rutgers faculty are committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. Rutgers has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The University strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the University. Please be aware that all Rutgers employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as advocates, counselors, clergy and healthcare providers as listed in Appendix A to [Policy 10.3.12](#)) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the University. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the University's Title IX Coordinator. If you wish to speak with a staff member who is confidential and does **not** have this reporting responsibility, you may contact the Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance at (973)-353-1918, or at [run.vpva@rutgers.edu](mailto:run.vpva@rutgers.edu). Learn more about the office here: <http://counseling.newark.rutgers.edu/vpva>

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

**All required readings are available on canvass. Films can be accessed through the Rutgers library website or streaming platform.**

### **Week 1**

#### **9/1 Introduction – Who is an Asian American?**

<https://www.library.unsw.edu.au/study/information-resources/primary-and-secondary-sources>

### **Week 2**

### 9/15 Early Chinese Immigration and Race in Early America

- *Chinese English Phrasebook* (1875)
- Madeline Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold, Dreaming of Home*, 16-54.

Response Paper#1 to *Race: Power of an Illusion* (Part II)

### Week 3

### 9/22 The “Chinese Must Go” and the Beginnings of Exclusion

- *Samuel Gompers Racializes Chinese American Labor* (1902).
- Mae Ngai, “That Chinese Girl,” 43-57.
- Erika Lee, “The Chinese Are No More,” 75-112.

Reading Quiz#1

### Week 4

### 9/29 Japanese and South Asian Immigration

- Vivek Bald, “American Orientalism,”  
<https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/american-orientalism>
- Erika Lee, “Japanese Immigrants and the Yellow Peril,” 109-136.
- The Asiatic Exclusion League Argues That Asians Cannot Be Assimilated (1911).

### Week 5

### 10/6 Exclusion and Citizenship Denied

- Ian Haney-Lopez, *White By Law*, 56-77
- Watch *Race: Power of An Illusion* (Part III)

Primary Source Paper on *The Cheat* is due before class.

### Week 6

### 10/13 American Colonialism in Hawai’i and the Philippines

- Mae Ngai, “From Colonial Subjects to Undesirable Aliens,” 96-126.
- Daniel Immerwahr, “Shouting the Battle Cry of Freedom,” 88-107.
- Noenoe K. Silva, “The 1897 Petitions Protesting Annexation” (1897).

### Week 7

### 10/20 World War II and Japanese Internment

- John Dower, *War without Mercy*, Chapter 3, “War Crimes and War Hate.”
- “How to Tell Japs from the Chinese” (1941).
- *Korematsu v. United States* (1944)

## Week 8

### 10/27 Korean War and Migration

- Arissa Oh, "A New Kind of Missionary Work," *Women's Studies Quarterly* (2005).
- Ji-Yeon Yuh, "Out of the Shadows: Camptown Women, Military Brides, and Korean (American Communities).
- Watch: *First Person Plural*

Reading Quiz#2

## Week 9

### 11/3 Southeast Asian Wars and Refugee Communities

- Viet Thanh Nguyen, "Black-eyed Woman"  
<https://electricliterature.com/black-eyed-women-by-viet-thanh-nguyen/>
- Eric Tang, "Collateral Damage: Southeast Asian Poverty in the United States," 454-474

## Week 10

### 11/10 Inventing the Model Minority

- William Petersen, "Success Story, Japanese American Style," *New York Times Magazine*, 9 January 1966, 20-21, 33, 36, 38,40-41, 43.
- "Success Story of One Minority Group in U.S.," *U.S. News and World Report*, 26 December 1966, pp. 73-76.
- "Orientals Find Bias Is Down Sharply in U.S.," *New York Times*, December 13, 1970.
- "Asian-Americans: A 'Model Minority,'" *Newsweek*, 6 December 1982, pp. 40-51
- David A. Bell, "The Triumph of Asian-Americans: America's Greatest Success Story," *New Republic*, 15 and 22 July 1985, pp. 24-31

## Week 11

### 11/17 Asian American Civil Rights

- Sucheng Chan, "Asian Americans Struggle for Civil, Political, Economic, and Social Rights," 221-232.
- Glenn Omatsu, "The 'Four Prisons' and the Movements of Liberation: Asian American Activism from the 1960s to the 1990s."

## Week 12

### 11/24 Post-Civil Rights Asian America

- Elaine Kim, "Home is Where the Han is: A Korean American Perspective on the Los Angeles Upheavals."
- Helen Zia, "Detroit Blues: "Because of you Motherfuckers," 35-54.

Response Paper#2 to *Who Killed Vincent Chin?*

**Week 13**

**12/1 Contemporary Asian America**

- Amy Chua, “Why Chinese Mothers are Superior” (2011).  
<https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748704111504576059713528698754>
- Wesley Yang, “Paper Tigers” (2011).  
<https://nymag.com/news/features/asian-americans-2011-5/>
- Martin Manalansan, “Searching for Community: Filipino Gay Men in New York City.”
- Sunaina Maira, “Youth Culture, Citizenship, and Globalization: South Asian Muslim Youth in the United States after September 11<sup>th</sup>.”

**Week 14**

**12/8 TBD**

**Final Paper Due (Date TBD)**