

AAS 1: Introduction to Asian American Studies

Fall 2024 | AAS 1 Section 12 | Lecture: Monday 6:00 PM - 8:45 PM | DMH 234

Instructor: Kelly Zhao ([she/her](#))

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Office Hours: Friday 3:00 - 4:00 PM, or by appointment

https://calendly.com/kzhao_sjsu/aas-1-kzhao-office-hours

Course Description

This course introduces students to the field of Asian American Studies, examining the historical background and contemporary status of Asian Pacific Islander Desi/American (APIDA) communities. Surveying histories from the nineteenth century to the present day, the course will explore the topics of power, citizenship, and belonging through examining the structural forces that impact contemporary APID/A lives in institutions of media, education, labor, and politics. Examining the effects of colonialism, migration, racism, settler colonialism, nuclearism, and war, this course emphasizes a relational analysis of APID/A communities to understand how Asian American Studies has shifted from beyond a domestic social justice framework toward transnational and globalized understandings of solidarity and social justice.

This course will expand beyond the black-white binary of racialization, examining APID/A communities in the context of U.S. war, empire, and movements for self-determination (sovereignty) in the Pacific Islands and Asia. This course will also complicate the narrative of a homogenous "AAPI/Asian American" identity and contextualize the historical and contemporary production of the "model minority myth". Students will explore course materials through a range of scholarly, literary, and visual texts where they will analyze, examine, and complicate the experiences and existing narratives of APID/A lives and futures.

This course is organized by a series of three major themes. The three units are meant to give you a framework to organize the course materials as you work through written assignments, the final project, and prepare for your exams.

Content Note: *This course contains materials that pertain to sensitive topics, including violence, abuse, death, and other content that may be triggering. Please contact the instructor before the course starts if this will be a concern.*

GE Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this GE course, students will meet three out of the five learning outcomes listed below:

*****Note: This syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.**

- GELO 1: Analyze and articulate concepts such as race and racism, racialization, ethnicity, equity, ethno-centrism, eurocentrism, white supremacy, self-determination, liberation, decolonization, sovereignty, imperialism, settler colonialism, and antiracism.
- GELO 2: Apply ethnic studies theory and knowledge to describe and actively engage with anti-racist and anti-colonial issues and the practices and movements that have and continue to facilitate the building of a more just and equitable society.
- GELO 3: Critically analyze the intersection of race and racism as they relate to class, gender, sexuality, religion, spirituality, national origin, immigration status, ability, tribal citizenship, sovereignty, language, and/or age.
- GELO 4: Critically review how struggle, resistance, racial and social justice, solidarity, and liberation are relevant to current and structural issues such as communal, national, international, and transnational politics as, for example, in immigration, reparations, settler-colonialism, multiculturalism, language policies.
- GELO 5: Describe and actively engage with anti-racist and anti-colonial issues and the practices and movements that have contributed to the building of a more just and equitable society.

Course Learning Outcomes

Area F. Upon successful completion of the course students will be able to:

- CLO 1: Learn various methodologies, concepts, and theoretical contributions of Asian American Studies to comparative critical race analyses of power and structure, including white supremacy, liberation, sovereignty, and settler colonialism
- CLO 2: Identify the intellectual contributions and shared experiences that link Asian Pacific Islander Desi Americans together, as well as the internal diversity (class, gender, sexuality, religion, spirituality, national origin, immigration status, ability, tribal citizenship, sovereignty, language, and/or age) that characterizes this diverse group;
- CLO 3: Describe and actively engage with anti-racist and anti-colonial issues and the practices and movements among Asian Pacific Islander Desi Americans as well as other racial and ethnic coalitional groups to build a just and equitable society
- CLO 4: Explain and assess how struggle, resistance, racial and social justice, solidarity, and liberation, as experienced, enacted, and studied by Asian Pacific Islander Desi/Americans are relevant to current and structural issues such as in immigration, anti-immigrant sentiment, trans-misogyny, and settler-colonialism

Course Format

This course meets in-person once a week. If you are experiencing circumstances that will impact your performance in class, please contact me at kelly.zhao@sjsu.edu.

Course Website

Course materials including syllabus, additional readings, handouts, and notes can be found on the Canvas Learning Management System course website (<http://sjsu.instructure.com>). You are responsible for regularly checking Canvas and the messaging system through OneSJSU to learn of any

updates. **I will post all announcements via Canvas**, so be sure to review your Canvas notification settings to have announcements forwarded immediately to your primary email address. **You are required to submit your assignments via Canvas**. If you have any questions, make an office hours appointment with me or consult the eCampus website (<http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/>).

Required Texts/Readings

All readings will be available on the course website (Canvas).

Student Course Assessment

In-class participation (15%)

Critical Autobiography (15%)

Reading Facilitation (15%)

Course Concept Analysis (20%)

Final Group Project (30%)

Final Course Analysis and Self Evaluation (5%)

Course Requirements and Assignments

In-class Participation - Cumulative (15%)

- Students will be evaluated on the basis of thoughtful participation during in-class activities. This includes reflections, small/large group discussions, in-class activities, and short presentations. Participation means coming to class prepared to engage in the lecture having completed course readings and assignments beforehand. Students are expected to respectfully engage with classmates about the course material, ask/respond to questions, and contribute respectfully to the community and shared learning experience of the classroom.

Critical Autobiography - Week 3 (15%)

- Students will be tasked to write a critical autobiography about themselves. You will be expected to write about how your life intersects with historical events and moments in history. Details about this assignment will be announced in class Week 3 and posted on Canvas.

Reading Facilitation - (15%)

- Each week, 1-2 students will facilitate a class discussion around the week's readings. **Every student is required to sign up to facilitate a class discussion with their peers at least once during the semester.** Each student will share discussion questions related to the readings with the class. You may split the week's materials with another student who signs up in the same week as you. Each student will be expected to submit their own discussion questions. **Discussion questions must be submitted by Sunday evening before class, due at 11:59 PM.** On the day of your assigned section, you will have 15 minutes to present your main takeaways to the class about the readings and share your discussion questions. **Please no PowerPoints!** Just a quick overview is fine. The purpose of having discussion questions is to help facilitate conversations between your peers.

Course Concept Analysis - Week 11 (20%)

- Students will be assigned to identify and analyze key concepts from the course. Details about this assignment will be released two weeks before it is due and posted on Canvas. Students may choose which concepts that they have learned about through the course materials. 3 to 4 pages single or double spaced, Times New Roman, point 12 font. Assignments will be submitted on Canvas.

Final Group Project - Week 7, 14, 18 (30%)

- In groups of 3-4 people, students will work together to design a creative magazine article / magazine spread for a class zine. The articles can be created through Canva or Microsoft Word in PDF format. At the end of the semester, each group will present their spread/article to the class in a short 5-10 minute presentation. **Instructions will be available on Canvas by Week 7.**
- Throughout this course, we will be reading and engaging with materials that critique the U.S. empire, historical events, and orientalist narratives through an ethnic studies lens. This project will require students to understand the deeper message behind the class readings and represent it through a creative magazine article.
- The Final Group Project includes a peer evaluation of your group members due finals week.

Final Project Analysis and Self Evaluation - Due Finals Week (5%)

- Students will be assigned to conduct a self evaluation about what they learned and also reflect on their participation and effort in the course. Details about this assignment will be announced in class and posted on Canvas.

Grading Scale

A+ 97 - 100	A 93 - 96	A- 90 - 92
B+ 87 - 89	B 83 - 86	B- 80 - 82
C+ 77 - 79	C 73 - 76	C- 70 - 72
D+ 67 - 69	D 63 - 66	D- 60 - 62
F <60		

Classroom Protocols

Extra Credit: Extra Credit is available for up to 2% of the final course grade. All students will be notified of opportunities and will be given an equal chance to complete extra credit assignments and quizzes.

Late Policy: There is a 48 hour no-questions-asked policy for submitting late assignments. If an assignment is submitted after the 48 hour policy, students will receive point deductions for each day an assignment is late (2 points per day). Unexcused late work will not be accepted. If an emergency arises,

notify me as soon as possible.

Respect: Respect is the cornerstone of this course. Throughout this course, we will be discussing complex and difficult topics from a critical perspective. This process is meant to challenge how we understand the world with the ultimate goal of transforming how we see ourselves and others. Because of the topics we will be covering, there may be moments where you might feel uncomfortable, frustrated, or embarrassed. However, this can also mean that what we are learning might also feel exciting, new, and motivating. Learning new things from a critical perspective can be a complex and difficult process to navigate with our emotions. Thus, you are expected to treat one another with the utmost thoughtfulness, consideration, and collegiality at all times, especially as we share and exchange ideas. Harassing your peers, plagiarizing ideas, and so on will not be tolerated. When in doubt, model your behavior upon how you expect to be treated by others. Any infringement will be directly addressed by the instructor and may result in severe disciplinary action.

Disrespectful behavior toward your peers, improper citation methods, cheating, plagiarism, tardiness, and the use of cell phones not related to class will not be tolerated. You may use tablets and laptops during class for course activities, note taking, and/or accessing course readings. The purpose of this protocol is to foster a critical, meaningful, and respectful environment for the sharing of ideas.

Cheating and Plagiarism: Cheating during exams, plagiarism or literary theft and other dishonest student behavior will mean that the student involved will receive an automatic no credit for that assignment. Please familiarize yourself with the consequences of unacceptable conduct as described in the University's Academic Integrity Policy and the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development.

Learning Disabilities / Accommodations: Students with learning disabilities or accommodations needed are encouraged to speak to the instructor.

Course Schedule *(Each week covers the following course topics. Please note that this schedule is subject to change and readings will be assigned each week*)*

UNIT 1: SITUATING ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES

Week 1: Classes begin on Wednesday, August 21. No class meeting this week.

Week 2: K(NO)W HISTORY, K(NO)W SELF: What is Asian American Studies? (August 26)

- Introduction & In-class assessment
- Syllabus and Community Agreements

Week 3: LABOR DAY - Campus Closed (September 2)

- No class meeting

Week 4: “The Danger of a Single Story” (September 9)

Readings

- Said, Edward. (1978) “Introduction” *Orientalism*. p. 1-28.
- Choy, Catherine Ceniza. (2022) “Introduction” *The Multiple Origins of Asian American Histories*. p. 16 -24.

News Article

- [“The inadequacy of the term Asian American”](#) Vox Article

Week 5: Third World Solidarities - Part I (September 16)

- Wallace, Nina. “In the Belly of the Monster: Asian American Opposition to the Vietnam War.” *Densho*.
- Habal, Estella. (2007). *Manilatown, Manongs, and the Student Radicals*. In *San Francisco’s International Hotel* (p. 9–32). Temple University Press.

[On Strike: Ethnic Studies](#)

Film: *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* (1987)

[es](#)

Week 6: Third World Solidarities - Part II (September 23)

- **TBD:** Maeda, Daryl J. (2005) “Black Panthers, Red Guards, and Chinamen: Constructing Asian American Identity through Performing Blackness, 1969-1972.” *American Quarterly*. p. 1079-1103.

Article

- Nopper, Tamara. (2012). [“Why Couldn’t Richard Aoki Have Been An FBI Informant?”](#). *The New Inquiry*.

Assignment Due – Critical Autobiography

Week 7: Colonization and Empire (September 30)

- Trask, Haunani-Kay. (2016). *Lovely Hula Lands: Corporate Tourism and the Prostitution of Hawaiian Culture*. *Border/Lines*..
- Glenn, Evelyn Nakano. (2015). *Settler Colonialism as Structure: A Framework for Comparative Studies of U.S. Race and Gender Formation*. *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*. (pp. 52–72).

Week 8: Contemporary APID/A Communities & Formations (October 7)

- Khubchandani, K. (2020). “Chapter 6: Desiring Desis.” *Ishtyle: Accenting Gay Indian Nightlife*. University of Michigan Press.(pp. 81–107).
- Cheng, Wendy. (2013). “The Asian and Latino Thing in Schools”: Academic Achievement and Racialized Privilege. In *The Changs Next Door to the Díazes: Remapping Race in Suburban*

California (pp. 63–90).

UNIT 2: IMMIGRANTS, REFUGEES, AND IMAGINED COMMUNITIES/ENEMIES

Week 9: The War on Terror and Post 9/11 Futures (October 14)

- Naber, Nadine. (2008). "Introduction: Arab Americans and U.S. Racial Formation." *Race and Arab Americans Before and After 9/11: From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects*. Syracuse University Press. (pp. 1–45).
- Maira, Sunaina. (2004). "Youth Culture, Citizenship, and Globalization: South Asian Muslim Youth in the United States After September 11th." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East*. (pp. 221–228).

Week 10: Nuclearism, Militarism, and War (October 21)

- Deepa Kumar and Carol A. Stabile. (2005). "Race and Arab Americans Before and After 9/11: From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects." (pp. 765–782).
- Schwartz, Jessica A. (2021). "Making Waves: Marshallese Youth Culture, 'Minor Songs', and Major Challenges." In *Reppin': Pacific Islander Youth and Native Justice*. Seattle: University of Washington Press. (pp. 150–174).

Week 11: The Politics of Remembering: The "Good" vs. "Bad" Refugee Narrative (October 28)

- "Deconstructing the Good Refugee Myth" Nikki Chau. Plan A Magazine.
- Chea, Jolie. (2009). "Refugee Acts: Articulating Silences Through Critical Remembering and Re-Membering." *Amerasia Journal*. (pp.20–43).
- Shah, Bindi V. (2012). "From Agent Orange to Superfund Sites to Anti-Immigrant Sentiments: Multiple Voyages, Ongoing Challenges." In *Laotian Daughters*. Temple University Press. (pp. 22-36).

Film: Refugees (2003)

Assignment Due - Course Concept Analysis

UNIT 3: CONTEMPORARY MOVEMENTS AND LABOR

Week 12: Microchips for Millions (November 4)

- Lobo Sapigao, Janice. (2016). *Microchips for millions*.

Week 13: VETERAN'S DAY - CAMPUS CLOSED (November 11)

- No class meeting

Week 14: The Domestic Sphere and Gendered Labor (November 18)

- Garcia-Navarro. (2019). "How Vietnamese Americans Took Over The Nail Business: A Documentary." NPR.

- Salazar Parreñas, Rhacel. (2008). "Introduction: Filipina Migrants and the Force of Domesticity". *The Force of Domesticity*. NYU Press. pp. 1–21.

Week 15: The Cost of High Fashion and the Garment Industry (November 25)

- Jennifer Jihye Chun, George Lipsitz, and Young Shin. (2013). "Intersectionality as a Social Movement Strategy: Asian Immigrant Women Advocates." *Intersectionality: Theorizing Power, Empowering Theory*. The University of Chicago Press. (pp. 917–940).
- El Monte Thai Garment Workers, Smithsonian Exhibit
 - <https://americanhistory.si.edu/sweatshops/el-monte>

Week 16: Deportation and Incarceration (December 2)

- Kepa 'Ōkusitino Maumau, Moana 'Ulu'ave Hafoka, and Lea Lani Kinikini (2021). "Raise Your Pen: A Critical Race Essay on Truth and Justice." In *Reppin': Pacific Islander Youth and Native Justice*. Seattle: University of Washington Press. (pp. 50–83).
- Lay, Sody. (2004). "Lost in the Fray: Cambodian American Youth in Providence, Rhode Island". *Asian American Youth*. (pp. 221–231).
- Nourn, Ny (2020). "From Surviving Systemic Violence to Liberating People from Prisons and ICE Detention". Asian Prisoner Support Committee.

Film: a.k.a. Don Bonus (1994)

Week 17: Self Determination, Transnational Solidarities (December 9)

- TBD
- Eve Tuck and Wayne Yang. (2012). "decolonization is not a metaphor." *Decolonization, Indigeneity, Education, & Society*. (pp. 1-40).

Week 18: Finals Week - AAS 1 Class Zine Presentations (December 16)

Assignment Due – Final Group Project presentations

Assignment Due – Final Project and Self Evaluation

Syllabus assignments and course assessments are from UCLA AAS 10W & AAS 30W, DVC SOCIO 135, and SJSU AAS 1.

University Policies

Credit Hours

SJSU classes are designed with an expectation that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (about three hours per unit per week) to be successful, preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on.

Academic Integrity & Plagiarism

Please be aware of our [Academic Integrity Policy](#) (University Policy F-15-7). Cheating, plagiarism, and other dishonest student behavior will result in receiving no credit for the assignment. Learn more on what plagiarism is: <https://libguides.sjsu.edu/plagiarism>

Dropping

It is the student's responsibility to drop or formally withdraw from the course.

Consent Required

University Policy S12-7, <https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf>, requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course. "Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor's permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material." To gain the instructor's permission, you must submit a written request, identifying the period of recording, whether for the whole term or on a class by class basis. In classes where active participation of students or guests may be on the recording, permission of those students or guests should be obtained as well. "Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent."

Campus Resources

Academic Resources and Accommodations (Administration Building Room 110) Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act. If you need course adaptations or accommodations or need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students requesting accommodations must register with the Accessible Education Center (<https://www.sjsu.edu/aec/>) to establish a record of need.

Student Technology Resources (Instructional Resources Center Room 206)

Taking online classes requires some basic equipment needs (wifi, computer) and learning to use common apps (like video conferencing, online discussion boards, learning management systems). Get the basics and help with online learning using the Learn Anywhere eCampus website (<https://www.sjsu.edu/learnanywhere/equipment/index.php>).

Peer Connections (Student Services Center Room 600)

Peer Connections is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. The website is located at <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu>.

SJSU Writing Center (Clark Hall Room 126)

The SJSU Writing Center is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level

writing specialists. Our writing specialists are trained to assist all students within all disciplines to become better writers. The Writing Center website is located at <http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/>.

ACCESS SJSU Social Sciences Success Center (Clark Hall Room 240)

ACCESS (<https://www.sjsu.edu/access/>) provides advising for undergraduate students majoring or wanting to major in any in the Department of Social Sciences. Students can find academic tutoring and advising in critical areas such as writing and statistics in a quiet, comfortable study environment. Students can talk with a professional advisor about requirements for their major, general education courses, changing majors, advice on developing study strategies, improve time management, and general information on how to navigate their SJSU experience. For any student needs, problems or situations, this Center can provide a start for a solution.