

Asian American Studies 119
Summer 2001

Building 387, Room 104
Daily 9:30-10:35

Asian American Race Relations

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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2:00-4:00 p.m.
and by appointment

Course Description

This course seeks to place Asian Americans in the context of their relationships to other racial groups in the United States. Throughout, it examines the position of Asian Americans in three interconnected contexts: (a) Asian Americans in relation to the dominant society, (b) Asian Americans in relation to other peoples of color, and (c) pan-Asian relations.

The course takes approaches that are theoretical, historical, and topical. It begins with an introduction to racial theory. It examines historical instances of Asian American race relations in the labor movement, in World War II concentration camps, and in 1990s conflicts that have been interpreted as racial in nature. It explores how relationships between Asian Americans and others are affected by the legal system and how they are experienced in the worlds of romance and marriage. Finally, it analyzes the historical and contemporary struggle for Hawaiian sovereignty in the face of American colonialism.

Required Reading

Nancy Abelmann and Jon Lie, *Blue Dreams: Korean Americans and the Los Angeles Riots*

Angelo Ancheta, *Race, Rights, and the Asian American Experience*

Roger Daniels, *Prisoners Without Trial: Japanese Americans in World War II*

Chris Friday, *Organizing Asian American Labor*

Paul Spickard, *Mixed Blood: Intermarriage and Ethnic Identity in 20th-Century America*

Paul Spickard and G. Reginald Daniel, *Uncompleted Independence: Creating and Revising Racial Thinking in the United States* (available at Grafikart)

Haunani-Kay Trask, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai`i*

Except for *Uncompleted Independence*, these books are available for purchase in the UCSB book store and on reserve in the library.

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Aug. 6 Introduction to the course

Understanding Race

7 Class reading: Spickard and Daniel

For oral reports:

Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the US*

Stephen Cornell and Douglas Hartmann, *Ethnicity and Race*

8-10 Reading period

13

14

The Labor Movement

15 Class reading: Friday

For oral reports:

Ronald Takaki, *Pau Hana: Plantation Life and Labor in Hawai'i*

Edward Beechert, *Working in Hawai'i*

16

17

World War II Japanese American Concentration Camps

20 Class reading: Daniels

For oral reports:

Dorothy Thomas and Richard Nishimoto, *The Spoilage*

Lane Ryo Hirabayashi, *The Politics of Field Work*

Movie: *Rabbit in the Moon*

21

22

Midterm Exam

23 Bring a bluebook

Koreans and African Americans in the 1990s

24 Class reading: Abelman and Lie

For oral reports:

In Jin Yoon,

Reading Rodney King/Reading Urban Uprising

27 Reading day

28

The Legal System

29 Class reading: Ancheta

For oral reports:

30

Intergroup Romance and Marriage and Multiethnicity

31 Class reading: Spickard

For oral reports:

Maria Root, *Racially Mixed People in America*

Teresa Williams-León and Cindy Nakashima, *The Sum of*

Our Parts

Sept. 3 Labor Day holiday

4

Hawaiian Sovereignty

6 Class reading: Trask
For oral reports:

7

Final Exam

10 Bring a blue book

Course Requirements

1. **Readings** completed before the class period for which they are assigned.
2. **Attendance and participation** in lecture and discussion sections.
3. **Quizzes and short written projects** as assigned by the instructor.
4. **Midterm exam**, in class on August 23. Please bring a bluebook.
5. **Oral report**. Sign up to read a book from the oral report list or another approved by the instructor. On the designated day, give a 10-minute oral report on the book and hand in a two-page outline (with copies for all class members). Both the oral report and the outline should describe the book's topic and approach, summarize its major points, and offer observations, criticisms, and questions.
6. **Final exam**, September 10 in class. Please bring a bluebook.
7. **Course evaluation**, completed in class near the end of the term.
8. **Self evaluation**, due at the final exam. On one side of one sheet of paper, write or type your name; assign yourself an advisory grade; and tell me, in terms of the course objectives, course requirements, grade definitions, or other issues you believe pertinent, why you should have that grade. I do not promise to give you that grade, but I do promise to read your self evaluation and take it seriously.

Course Grades

Broadly speaking, this is how I view each of the following grades:

- A** You did everything I could possibly ask of you, and you did it extremely well. You worked very hard, learned a great deal, and showed conspicuous intelligence. The quality of your work was outstanding.
- B** You did all the work, and you did it well. You worked hard and learned a good deal. The quality of your work was good.

- C** You did all the work. It is clear that you learned a number of things, though those things may not hang together in a systematic and critical understanding of the course material. The quality of your work was adequate.
- D** You did most of the work, including all the major course requirements. You may have learned some things, but it is not clear that you learned anything important. The quality of your work was less than adequate.
- F** You have demonstrated an obstinate ignorance. You did not complete the course requirements. You have proved unwilling or unable to do college level work in this subject area.

While the above paragraph describes how I will arrive at your grade, I find students frequently want to know how I view the relative weights of the various course requirements. Very roughly, I see them about like this:

Attendance, participation, short assignments, quizzes	20%	
Midterm exam	20	
Oral report		30
Final exam		30

I reserve the right to adjust the percentages in individual cases so that each student's final grade will best reflect my judgment of how much she or he has learned in this course.

Course Policies

Policy on Late Papers and Exams

No late assignments or makeup exams will be allowed, unless an emergency arises that is beyond the student's control. A plane ticket or a ride home is not an emergency beyond the student's control.

Rule of Courtesy and Engagement in Scholarly Discourse

In this course, we will be discussing complex issues about which many people have passionate feelings. We must be intellectually open to perspectives that may conflict with our presuppositions. It is essential that we treat each other's opinions and comments with courtesy and respect, even when they diverge from our own. We must avoid personalizing our disagreements and turning them into attacks on the character of our colleagues. Rather, we must develop a culture of civil argument, where every person has the right to be heard and taken seriously, where all positions have the right to be defended or challenged in intellectually reasoned ways.

Coming in late, leaving early, and talking privately with neighbors during lectures and discussions are signs of disrespect for one's fellow students, the instructor, and the course materials. As part of the rule of courtesy and engagement in scholarly discourse, students will be required to remain respectful toward all members of the class. Everyone must accept this standard of courtesy in discourse in order to remain in this course.