



C-ID Descriptor

Introduction to Asian American Studies

Descriptor Details

- **Descriptor Title:** Introduction to Asian American Studies
- **C-ID Number:** 100
- **Units:** 3
- **Date of Last Revision:** 9/3/2025 04:17:54 PM GMT+0000

General Description

The introductory-level course is a critical study of the Asian American experience. Students will read scholarly, literary, and visual texts in order to understand how the interdisciplinary field of Asian American Studies confronts issues of Asian American immigration, racialization, exclusion, social and political activism, assimilation, community-building, and transnationalism. It explores questions of gender and sexuality, race and class, war and imperialism, and culture and memory, and the forces that have shaped the experience of Asian Americans. It will also focus on how Asian Americans negotiate and often resist such forces through political and creative means of expression.

Any rationale or comment:

On some campuses, Introduction to Asian American Studies is the main course intro to the Asian American Studies discipline and one of the four (4) core areas of Ethnic Studies.

Prerequisites

None

Corequisites

None

Advisories

None

Content

1. Early Immigration Histories of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino and South Asian American Communities
 - A. Push and pull reasons for immigration
 - B. Early identity and community
 - C. Impact of local, state, federal, international policies
2. World War II and Asian American Communities
 - A. Comparing and contrasting wartime experience of different Asian American communities
 - B. Local, state, federal policy towards Asian Americans before and during the war
3. Asian American Communities in the Post-War Period
 - A. Changes in local, state, federal policies
 - B. Civil rights, immigration and Asian Americans
 - C. Growth of Asian American movements, identity, humanities
 - D. Southeast Asian Refugees
4. Theories, Perspectives, Histories, Concepts, Cultures, and Intellectual Traditions of Asian Americans
 - A. Agency
 - B. Lived experiences and social struggles
5. Struggle, resistance, racial and social justice, solidarity, and liberation
 - A. Current and structural issues: communal, national, international, and transnational politics (for example, immigration, reparations, settler-colonialism, multiculturalism, language policies)
6. Intersection of Gender, Culture and Class in Asian American Experience
7. Asian American and African American Relations
8. Intersections of Culture, Race and Sexuality
9. Constructions and Reconstruction of Ethnicity
 - A. Digital Cultures
 - B. Performing Race and Gender
 - C. Stereotypes and Hate Crimes
 - D. Media Representations of Asian Americans
 - E. Popular images of Asian families
 - F. Exhibiting Asian Culture
10. Transnational Practices

Lab Activities

The course may include a lab component.

Objectives

Course Objectives: At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

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 anti-racism as analyzed in Asian American Studies.
2. Apply theory and knowledge produced by Asian American communities to describe the critical events, histories, cultures intellectual traditions, contributions, lived experiences, and social struggles of those groups with a particular emphasis on agency and group affirmation.
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 in Asian American communities.
4. Explain and assess how struggle, resistance, racial and social justice, solidarity, and liberation, as experienced, enacted and studied by Asian Americans 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.
5. Examine the influence of inclusion and participation of various Asian American communities in civic duties and responsibilities based on historical and political precedent.
6. Demonstrate a familiarity with the history of more than one Asian American ethnic group before and after arrival in the United States where appropriate, including the obstacles they have faced and the contributions they have made to our society.
7. Identify important similarities and differences between different Asian American groups and non-Asian American groups.

Evaluation Methods

May include, but are not limited to:

- Writing Assignments: Term or Other Paper(s)

- Problem Solving Demonstrations: Exams
- Examinations: Class Performance(s)
- Skill Demonstrations: Essay

Textbooks

Okihiro, Gary Y. American History Unbound: Asians and Pacific Islanders, University of California Press, 2015.

Lee, Erika. The Making of Asian America: A History, Simon & Schuster, 2015.

Wu, Jean Yu-Wen Shen. Asian American Studies Now: A Critical Reader, Rutgers University Press, 2010.

Or equivalent Open Educational Resource