

**AMST/ES 318: ASIAN AMERICAN SURVEY**  
**FALL 2009**  
**T,TH : 1:30-2:45 PM**  
**KUY 305**

Dr. Monisha Das Gupta  
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**Office Hours:** Th 3-5pm, F 9:30-10:30am

or by appointment

[Monisha Das Gupta's Home Page](#)

**Course Description:**

Who are Asian Americans and how can we go about understanding their experiences in the United States? This course provides an overview of Asian American history, experiences, and identities. We are centrally concerned with two sets of questions. 1) How does centering Asian America transform our understanding of U.S. history, society and culture? Moving through time, we will look at the treatment of Asian Americans and their multiple resistances to such treatment. 2) How does Asian America look when we take into account differences in ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, and generation among Asian Americans? By exploring the structures that shape Asian American experiences and Asian American challenges to those forces, the course asks students to consider their own role in transforming the state of Asian America.

\* Please use my office hours. If you cannot make those, make an appointment to see me. One-to-one meetings enable us to discuss your ideas, help you with any difficulty you face with the course material, and help me to get to know you better.

\* Students who have special needs should make an appointment to see me within the first week of class so that we can ensure your full participation.

**Learning Objectives:**

- Become familiar with Asian American issues in the past and present as well as debates within Asian American Studies
- Become critical thinkers. The course challenges you to move away from description to analysis by learning to ask “what,” “why,” “how” questions about the material.
- Link historical events and issues to contemporary concerns.
- Develop writing and oral presentation skills.

**Required Readings:**

The following books are available at Revolution Books, 2633 S. King St, 973-6599

1. Mary Danico and Franklin Ng. 2004. *Asian American Issues*. Greenwood Press.
2. Linda Trinh Vo and Rick Bonus. 2002. *Contemporary Asian American Communities: Intersections And Divergences*. Temple University Press
3. Sunaina Maira. 2009. *Missing: Youth, Citizenship, and Empire after 9/11*. Duke University Press

### **Getting a major, minor or certificate in Ethnic Studies:**

Many of you have been taking Ethnic Studies courses that qualify you for a major, minor, or certificate in these fields. AMST/ES fulfills Ethnic Studies' course requirements. To learn how to get a major, minor, or certificate in Ethnic Studies go to the [Ethnic Studies Academic Programs](#) and contact Prof. Ibrahim Aoude at [aoude@hawaii.edu](mailto:aoude@hawaii.edu) or at 956-4000.

### **Assignments and Grade Distribution (Total=100)**

Weekly Assignments (Weeks 2-16): 15%

Group Presentations (See Course Outline): 15%

10/13 Take Home Mid Term : 25%

Ad Analysis: 10%

Take Home Final Exam: 25%

Participation: 10%

### **Course Requirements:**

#### **Attendance:**

Attendance is mandatory. You are not supposed to be anywhere else during the scheduled class period. An attendance sheet will be passed around at the beginning of class. You cannot sign the sheet if you come in late. Early departures or coming late to class — unless by permission — will be considered as absences. You are allowed two unpenalized absence during the semester (this amounts to a week's worth of class) but in all cases of absence, you need to inform me via e-mail. I reserve the right to fail a student whose attendance is irregular. Please understand that if you are absent then you obviously cannot participate in class. Your absences will be reflected in the grade you receive for participation.

#### **Participation:**

Speaking and active listening in class counts for participation. The success of this E focus class depends on honest and respectful discussion that engages with the ideas presented in the readings, lectures, videos, and by your classmates. The grade of students who do not participate in class discussion will automatically drop to a "B." If you have problems speaking in a classroom setting, please talk to me about it.

#### **Readings:**

You must come to class having done the assigned reading. You cannot participate in class discussions or do the weekly assignments without doing the readings. This is an upper level class. In taking it, you are making a commitment to come to class prepared. Please bring the readings we are covering on a particular day (books or reader or both) to class.

**Writing:**

All written work for this course needs to be word-processed, grammatical, free of spelling errors, and well-organized. All direct quotations taken from the readings must be cited. A paper that does not cite direct quotes taken from the readings by author and page number or that inadequately paraphrases the readings will receive an "F."

**Group Presentations:**

I will give you a list of suggested topics to research for your group presentation. You will get guidelines from me as to how to go about the research, and how to organize the presentation. The oral presentations should be polished and well-organized. *All* group members need to be equally involved and need to plan the presentation in consultation with me.

**Extra credit:** (4 credits per semester)

You can earn extra credit by attending a maximum of four events on campus that I will announce in class or post on this page. To get credit you need to submit short write up within a week of the event. The write-up should explain the event and your response to it, including a question you asked or wanted to ask.

**Policies:**Late papers:

All assignments are due at the beginning of the class. The dates on which the papers are due are firm deadlines. You will lose 1/3 of a grade for every day that an assignment is late. For eg., if you submit a A- paper a day late, the grade will be scaled down to a B+.

Absences:

Attendance is mandatory.

Academic honesty:

Any infraction of codes of academic honesty will lead to sanctions from the instructor. You will receive a failing grade if you copy or submit other people's work, or do not properly attribute ideas that are not original to you. Please read Section H of Impermissible Behavior of the Student Conduct Code for familiarizing yourself with what constitutes academic dishonesty

<http://www.hawaii.edu/student/conduct/imper.html>. See also

<http://studentaffairs.manoa.hawaii.edu/policies/> to understand the working of the Academic Grievance Procedure.

**Course Outline:**

Week I

What is Asian American Studies?

8/25: Introductions

8/27: Danico and Ng, Ch1, pp. 1-14, Whitson, "[The San Francisco State College Strike Collection: Introductory Essay](#)" (webpage)

## UNIT I: [Who is Asian American?](#)

### Week 2

- 9/3 Weekly Assignment

9/1: Okamura, “Why are there no Asian Americans in Hawai’i” (Download), Vo and Bonus, Ch 6 (Wright and Spickard)

9/3: Omi and Espiritu, “Who Are You Calling Asian?': Shifting Identity Claims, Racial Classifications, and the Census” (Handout)

[Census Bureau Fact Sheet on Asian Pacific Islanders](#) (Download)

### Week 3

- 9/10 Weekly Assignment

9/8: Danico and Ng, Ch 6

9/10: Vo and Bonus, Ch 7 (King); Le, C.N. ["Multracial/Hapa Aisan Americans"](#) (webpage)

### Week 4

- 9/17 Weekly Assignment
- 9/17: Group Presentation

9/15: Tuan, ["Neither Real Americans nor Real Aisans: Multigeneration Asian Ethnicities Navigating the Terrain of Authenticity"](#) (download)

9/17: Volkman, ["Embodying Chinese Culture: Transnational Adoption in North America"](#) (download)

## UNIT II: Histories of Migration

### Week 5

- 9/24: Weekly Assignment

9/22: [Asian American Timeline](#) (webpage); Danico and Ng, Ch 3;

9/24: E. Kosasa, "Sites of Erasure: The Representation of Settler Culture in Hawai'i" (Handout)

Video: *Ancestors in the Americas, Part 1: Coolies, sailors, settlers: Voyage to the New World*

### Week 6

- 10/1: Weekly Assignment

9/29: Espiritu, “Stretching gender, family, and community boundaries” (Handout)

10/1: Izumi, ["Prohibiting American Concentration Camps"](#) (Download); Lin, ["Korematsu Continued..."](#) (Download)

Video: *Rabbit in the Moon*

### Week 7

- 10/8: Weekly Assignment

10/6: Danico and Ng, Ch 5  
10/8: Vo and Bonus, Ch 5 (Ignacio)

### **UNIT III: Model Minority?**

Week 8

- 10/13: Mid Term due in class
- 10/15: Weekly Assignment

10/13: Danico and Ng, Ch 2  
10/15: Vo and Bonus, Ch 8 (Ho) and Ch 10 (Park)

Week 9

- 10/22: Weekly Assignment
- 10/22: Group Presentation

10/20: Vo and Bonus Ch 3 (Jeung) and Ch 12 (Abraham)  
10/22: Park, " A Letter to my Sister" (Handout)

Week 10

- 10/29: Weekly Assignment

10/27: Hsiao, ["The Hidden History of Asian American Activism in New York"](#); Das Gupta, "Know Your Place in History" (Handout)  
10/29: Vo and Bonus, Ch 13 (E. Park) and Ch 15 (Shiao)

### **UNIT IV: Representations**

Week 11

- 11/5: Weekly Assignment

11/3: Danico and Ng, Ch 7; Vo and Bonus, Ch 9 (Danico)  
11/5: Kahananui, "Colonialism's daughters" (Handout); Lim, "Contested Beauty" (Handout)  
Video: *Miss Georgia India*

Week 12

- 11/10: Ad Analysis due in class
- 11/12: Weekly Assignment

11/10: [Uba, "From Signifying to Performance: International Ballroom Dance and the Choreographies of Transnationalism"](#)  
11/12: 10. España Maram, "'White Trash' and 'Brown Hoards': Taxi Dance Halls and the Policing of Working Class Bodies" (Handout)

Week 13

- 11/19: Weekly Assignment

11/17: Manalansan, "The Borders between *Bakla* and Gay" (Handout)

11/19: Hom, "Stories from the Homefront: Perspectives of Asian American Parents with Lesbian Daughters and Gay Sons" (Handout)

### **UNIT V: Empire and Citizenship after 9/11**

Week 14

- 11/24: Weekly Assignment

11/24: Maira

11/26: THANKSGIVING BREAK

Video: *Harold and Kumar go to Guantanamo*

Week 15

- 12/3 Weekly Assignment
- 12/3: Group Presentation

12/1: Maira

12/3: Maira

Week 16

- 12/10: Weekly Assignment

12/8: Maira

12/10: Review

**FINAL TAKE HOME DUE 10/14 IN GEORGE HALL 301 AT 3PM**

\* This syllabus is subject to minor changes