Asian American & Asian Diaspora Studies 121: History of the Chinese in the US

Course Description. This course covers the entire history of the Chinese in the U.S., from the Gold Rush period in mid-19th century to the present. Since Chinese immigration and exclusion are two continuous processes throughout this history, both will be the focus of the course. The two processes and their interaction with each other also generated considerable political, economic, and cultural dynamism in the settlement and development of the Chinese American community throughout the U.S. Adding to the complexity of the two processes and the community dynamics has been the continuous impact of the volatile diplomatic relations between China and the U.S. and the ever-present tension and multi-level interactions between the Chinese American community and its homeland, including, the clan, village, county, province, and China, as a nation and a culture. Finally, since Chinese have settled in over 140 countries throughout the world, the continuous Chinese immigration has brought Chinese from Latin America, the Caribbean, Southeast Asia, Africa, and Europe to the U.S., contributing not only to the diversity and hybridity in the Chinese American population but also to a growing global networks, connections, interactions, and cross-fertilization for Chinese Americans. Globalization and global influence of the U.S. have had a tremendous impact on the Chinese diaspora at the grassroots level, at the center of which are the Chinese in the U.S.

Course Objectives. The primary objective of the course is to provide students with a comprehensive, analytical, and complex understanding of the history of the Chinese in the U.S. This means critical reading of books covering aspects of Chinese American life throughout history. Secondarily, this course aims at providing students an opportunity to do original research together with fellow students. Finally, it is the intention of this course to make history meaningful for understanding contemporary issues facing Chinese Americans. For these reasons, students must be prepared to do readings, participate actively in reading discussions, and share their knowledge collectively. Students will also be expected to learn from physical historical sites that have relevance to our understanding of Chinese American history.

Note that this course requires field work and team projects that take the form of short historical video projects. Although multimedia skills are not a prerequisite, willing to work in a collective team situation is required.

Course Requirements

1. Lectures: Tu, Th, 9:30-11am. 102 Wheeler Hall. Instruction begins January 21 and ends May 7, Fri.

2. Discussion & Participation Grade. Includes 4 field trip/forum write-ups in bCourse. (2 field trips include Chinese Historical Society of America and Angel Island Immigration Station) and 2 more field trips of your choice from an online list. Discussion grade would include: 4 field trips, attendance, participation and online quizzes. (30%)

3. Midterm Exam-Mar 5. IDs (identification of concepts, events, person) and essay. (20%)

4. Group Presentation: Create a 2 minute Adobe Premiere Rush video presentation that introduces the team members, the class topic of the week and introduction for their selected final video project. After video viewing: a) re-introduce each member, b) feedback on video quality and message itself; c) questions and answers related to the topic of the week in syllabus; d) introduce supplementary reading; e) summary. See Adobe Student Hub for software information and adobesupport@berkeley.edu for help. See ASAMST 121 Video Project List for project selections. (10%)

5. Video Project: Create a 5 minute video project using Adobe Premiere Rush or Premiere format. Research and select an approved Chinese American history project in consultation with CAA Chinese Chapter, Chinese
Historical Society of America and other community members. Work with your student team to create a finalized version that will be shown at the end of the semester in a community viewing. Content should include a historical theme, interviews with historians, community members, photographs, music, sound and other background elements. (20%)

6. Final Exam. Each student submits an essay that reflects on their contribution to the video project. The paper should have a central theme and includes an abstract of the project, the process of choosing a theme, the research involved, the production itself, group working relationships and what they learned. 8-10 pages double spaced with 5 minimum outside research sources; no dictionary or superficial internet sources.) Standard MLA footnote format, appendix for interviews & bibliography. (20%)

7. NOTE: Due to shelter-in-place, this class will be graded default on P/NP basis. There is agreement by graduate and professional schools to accept P/NP. The idea of having P/NP is to de-stress people including the pressure to get a high grade. I don't want it to snowball into everyone wanting a grade. I also want to let students know that they will get high letters of recommendation for the energy and input they put into the class. If you want to take it for a grade there is an option to change it online. Please check for the early May deadline to change the option from P/NP default into a letter grade.

FIELD TRIP LISTINGS


AAS121 Course Outline & Readings

Books with an asterisk (*) are recommended supplemental readings for discussion and research. Textbooks may be
purchased at Eastwind Books of Berkeley, 2066 University Avenue, near Shattuck. Copies will be placed on reserve in the Ethnic Studies Library, 30 Stephens Hall.


Which perspectives on Chinese American history you find helpful in framing of Chinese American history?


What background context led to migration of Chinese worldwide during the second half of the 19th Century?


**Week 3. Immigration & the Economic Development of the West (2/4 & 2/6)**

In what ways were the Chinese indispensable to the development of the American West? What were their contributions and why weren't they given full recognition?


**Week 4. Exclusion & Chinese as Perpetual Aliens (2/11 & 2/13) Team A-4**

What were the reasons for Chinese exclusion and the idea that the Chinese were perpetual aliens?


Week 5. Development of the Chinese American Community (2/18 & 2/20) Team B-5
How did the community resist, accommodate and survive under exclusion?


Week 6. Great Depression & Class Relations (2/25 & 2/27) Team C-6
What type of organization and resistance took place within Chinese American community during the Great Depression and was this different from previous periods?


Week 8. WW2 and the Chinese American Community (3/10 & 3/12) Team D-8
Group Presentation Outline
Evaluate major changes during and following WW2 that affected Chinese Americans in the social, political and economic realm?


How did the Cold War affect Chinese Americans and what were the different internal community responses to their situation?


SPRING BREAK. (3/23 to 3/27)

Week 10. Rise of Ethnic and Political Consciousness (3/31 & 4/2) (CHSA Field Trip Due 4/6) Team F-10
How were the social movements of the 1960s & 70s a turning point for the community?
Introduction, Timeline. Chapters 1-5.


Week 11. Transition from Student to Community Activism: Going to the Grass Roots. (4/7 & 4/9) Team G-11
In what ways did the Asian American movement build a grassroots movement in the community?

Chapters 6-Conclusion


What changes led to the diversity and make-up of the Chinese American community today?


What issues separate and what issues unite fragmented parts of the Chinese American community today?


Week 15. Review Week
9/5/2020 Tuesday

Final Exam. Each student submits an essay that reflects on their contribution to the video project. The paper should have a central theme and includes an abstract of the project, the process of choosing a theme, the research involved, the production itself, group working relationships and what they learned. 8-10 pages double spaced with 5 minimum outside research sources; no dictionary or superficial internet sources.) Standard MLA footnote format, appendix for interviews & bibliography.

Student questions regarding final paper.

1) In the bCourses description, it mentions providing a central theme in the paper. Is this just the theme topic of our presentation video or is this something else that needs to be formulated for the paper. ANSWER: It can be the central theme of the film but written out in your process of developing the theme in the film.

2) BCourses says to include an abstract of the project. Could you clarify what this means and how we would do this? ANSWER: Your one paragraph write-up of what message you wanted to get out in your project. It should be direct and not too general.

3) The description also asks for a minimum of 5 outside research sources. Are these from doing research for our video presentation or are these additional sources that are found in the duration of the paper? ANSWER: Ideally this part is to help highlight your film project. You can include how you gathered materials, and sources.