

San José State University  
College of Social Science  
Interdisciplinary Social Science and Sociology Department  
AAS 33B-06, Asian Americans and U.S. History and Political Institutions  
Spring Semester, 2025  
Instructor Dr. Soo Choi

Office DMH 238B  
Email soo.choi@sjsu.edu  
Classroom & Hours CLK 234 4:30-5:45 pm, T & Th  
Office Hours DMH 238B 3:00-4:15 PM M & W & Zoom meeting

GE/American Institutions Category: D2 Social Sciences and US 1 American Institutions

### **Course Description**

The purpose of the course is to examine the historical and political development of the United States from a multicultural perspective. The course will examine the principal events, developments, and problems of the United States from the mid-nineteenth century to the present, emphasizing the role of class, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality in American history and politics. The course will examine the diversity of the Asian American experience within the context of the development of the United States as a developing nation-state and world power and within the context of its race relations with other minorities such as Native Americans, African Americans, and Mexican Americans.

The social history of Asian America forms an important part of the broad understanding of the social, economic, and political contours of America. In turn, the contours of American history and political institutions help us to better understand the particular social experiences of Asians and Asian Americans as immigrants, workers, and small business entrepreneurs and the impact of social institutions upon the formation of families, and communities.

In addition, the course will examine the history and politics of California government, contrasting the similarities and differences between California and U.S. Constitutions, the relation between the federal and state and local governments, and contemporary issues of California government and politics.

### **Texts**

Greenberg, Edward S., and Benjamin I. Page, *The Struggle for Democracy*, Longman Publishers  
Jones, Jacqueline, et. al., *Created Equal: A Social and Political History of the United States*, Longman Publishers  
Ronald Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore*, Little, Brown, and Company Publisher

### **Course Requirements and Assignments**

All detailed rubrics of all test and essay grading, uploaded in "files" in canvas.

Class Participations and Weekly quizzes (20%)

Two Midterm Exams (30%)

These two exams will be based on class lectures, activities, and readings. This exam will cover the assigned chapters in the textbooks, Canvas activities, and lectures for five-six weeks. It will be composed of two essays, 20 multiple choice questions, and 20 true/false questions.

Two Essays (30%) The rubric and essay prompts, uploaded in “files” in canvas

Final Exam (20%)

The final exam will cover the assigned chapters in the textbooks, Canvas activities, and lectures for the entire semester. It will be composed of four essays, 30 multiple choice, and 40 true/false questions.

Grading Scale

95-100%: A 90-94%: A- 86-89: B+ 83-85%: B 80-82%: B- 76-79: C+ 73-75%: C 70-72%: C- 66-69%: D+ 63-65%: D 60-62%: D- 0-59%: F

### University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9 (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services are listed on Syllabus Information web page. (<http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo>) hosted by the Office of Undergraduate Education. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

### GE Learning Outcomes (GELO)

As stated above, this course meets the lower division General Education (GE) Learning Outcomes in Social Science (Area D) and American Institutions (US1, US2 & US3). Both 33A and 33B are required in order to receive American Institutions credit.

Area D Social Science. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to

1. demonstrate understanding of the ways in which social institutions, culture, and environment shape and are shaped by the behavior of individuals, both past and present; [Assessed in quizzes, essays 1 & 2]
2. compare and contrast the dynamics of two or more social groups or social systems in a variety of historical and/or cultural contexts [Assessed in midterm and final exam]
3. place contemporary social developments in cultural, environmental, geographical, and/or historical contexts; [Assessed in quizzes and final]
4. draw on social/behavioral science information from various perspectives to formulate applications appropriate to historical and/or contemporary social issues. [Assessed in quizzes, essays 1 & 2]

US1 American Institutions – U.S. History

As students explore the historical development of the United States, they should be able to evaluate and synthesize different positions, support analysis with relevant evidence, and create evidence-based interpretations of:

1. major subtopics in United States history, such as Native Americans and their interactions with the U.S. government; slavery and its legacies; the foundational ideals of the American Republic; colonization and territorial expansion; economic development; political reform and reaction; immigration to the United States and the experiences of immigrants; foreign relations; wars and conflicts; movements including religious, labor, civil rights, feminist, and environmental. [Assessed in midterm and final exam]
2. multiple perspectives related to, for example, diverse cultures, communities, and environments; age, gender, and sexuality; the history and experience of racial, ethnic, and religious minorities; the

experiences of people with disabilities; and patterns of race and class relations. [Assessed in essays 1 & 2]

#### US2 American Institutions – U.S. Constitution

As students explore the meaning and content of the democratic process as it has evolved in the United States, at a minimum they should be able to evaluate:

1. the foundations of the political system, including the evolution of the U.S. Constitution, political culture, separation of powers, federalism, and relations among various levels of government. Students will also analyze the evolving institutions of government, including a study of the powers of the President, Congress, and the Judiciary as well as the bureaucracy; [Assessed in midterm and final exam]
2. the links between the people and the political system of the United States, including voting and other forms of participation, as well as other content areas such as tribal governments, political parties, interest/lobbying groups, and public opinion and socialization. Students should also analyze the rights and obligations of citizens, which may include the tension between various freedoms of expression, including issues related to censorship and freedom of speech, due process, and the maintenance of order; [Assessed in group presentations and final exam]
3. connections to issues of justice/injustice, including the efforts to end racial, gender, and other forms of discriminatory practices in both the public and private sectors. [Assessed in Essays 1 & 2]

#### US2 American Institutions – California Government

As students explore the operations of government at the state level, they should be able to evaluate:

1. the foundations of the California political system, the similarities and differences between the California and U.S. Constitutions, and the relationship between state and local government in California; [Assessed in midterm and final exam]
2. the evolving relationships of state and local government with the federal government, such as the relationship with tribal governments; the generation and resolution of conflicts; the establishment of cooperative processes under the constitutions of both the state and nation; and the political processes involved. [Assessed in Essays 1 & 2]

### **Topics & Readings**

#### **1<sup>st</sup> week**

Reconstruction or Restoration: 1865-1877

Readings: Jones, Chapter 15

The Structural Foundations of American Government and Politics

Reading: Greenberg, Chapter 4

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> week**

Chinese Immigrants, 1830's-1880's

Readings: Takaki, Chapter 3

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> week**

Industrialization, Urbanization, and Capitalism in America, 1877-1890

Readings: Jones, Chapter 16

Challenge to Government and Corporate Power: Resistance and Reform, 1877-1890

Readings: Jones, Chapter 17

**4<sup>th</sup> week**

Political and Cultural Conflict: Depression and War

Reading: Jones, Chapter 18

Progressive Reform, 1900-1912

Readings: Jones, Chapter 19

**5<sup>th</sup> week**

Excluded Chinese Americans: Chinatown, 1880's-1900

Reading; Takaki Chapter 6

Japanese Americans, 1860's-1900

Reading; Takaki Chapter 5

**6<sup>th</sup> week**

Filipino American Immigration, 1900-1945

Reading: Takaki Chapter 9

Korean American Immigration, 1860's-1950

Reading: Takaki Chapter 7

**7<sup>th</sup> week**

World War I and Revolution, 1912-1920

Readings: Jones, Chapter 20

Asian American During and after the WW II

Reading: Takaki Chapter 10

**8<sup>th</sup> week**

1920s: Great Depression and the New Deal

Readings; Jones, Chapters 21-22

**9<sup>th</sup> week**

America at War: World War II.

Reading: Jones, Chapter 23

**10<sup>th</sup> week**

Cold War and the Korean War: 1945-1953

Readings: Jones, Chapter 24

**11<sup>th</sup> week**

Domestic Dreams and Nightmares; Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

Readings: Greenberg, Chapters 15-16; Jones, Chapter 25

Political Linkage, Political Linkage: Public Opinion, the News Media, Interest Groups and Business Corporations

Reading: Greenberg, Chapters, 5-7

**12<sup>th</sup> week**

The Vietnam War; Asian Immigrants and Refugees

Readings: Jones, Chapter 26

**13<sup>th</sup> week**

Political Parties and Social Movements

Reading: Greenberg, Chapters, 8, 9, 10

Asian Americans since 1965

Reading: Takaki Chapter 11

Stagflation and the Overextended Society

Readings: Jones, Chapter 27

The Cold War Returns---and Ends, 1979-1991 (part I)

Readings: Jones, Chapter 28

**14<sup>th</sup> week**

The Cold War Returns---and Ends, 1979-1991 (part II)

Readings: Jones, Chapter 28

Asian Americans since 1980's

Readings: Takaki Chapter 12 & 13

**15<sup>th</sup> week**

America: 1991-2000

Readings: Jones, Chapter 29

The New Millennium & Review

Readings: Jones, Chapter 30

**16<sup>th</sup> week**

Summary & Conclusion

**17<sup>th</sup> week**    Final Exam