

History of Japanese Americans Section 01

AAS 192

Spring 2025 In Person 3 Unit(s) 01/23/2025 to 05/12/2025 Modified 01/22/2025

Contact Information

Instructor: Yvonne Y. Kwan, PhD

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Course Description and Requisites

The Japanese in America from approximately 1800. Includes relocation, wartime conditions, post-war history and contemporary situations.

Letter Graded

* Classroom Protocols

Class Schedule and Location

- Section 1. MW 10:30AM-11:45AM in DMH 162

Office Hours

- M 12:00PM-1:00PM in DMH 213
- Tu 10:00AM-11:00AM in DMH 213
- If you would like to make an appointment outside of regular office hours, please email me.

Workload and Credit Hour Requirements

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction, preparation (i.e., reading/engaging with assigned course materials), studying, or other course-related activities.

- MATH: 3hrs * 3units = 9hrs
- MORE MATH: -2.5hrs for class time

- **EVEN MORE MATH: 6.5 HOURS/WEEK (OUTSIDE OF CLASS TIME) FOR THIS CLASS** (but TBH, you can be successful with like 4 hours outside of class time/week)

AI Policy

AI tools are generally not allowed but may be approved for specific tasks or activities with prior instructor consent. See Canvas Module 1 for additional details.

Canvas

All course materials, including readings and assignments will be accessed and submitted via Canvas. No physical papers or assignments emailed will be accepted.

Attendance - Absences or Leaving Early

1. Although attendance is not directly factored into your grade, your presence in class helps assure that you'll be prepared for graded assignments and in-class quizzes or participation.
2. There's no need to ask for permission. Take responsibility for your own decisions.
3. Don't simply ask your professor what you missed. First, review the syllabus. Second, check in with a classmate for notes. Third, come to office hours to discuss follow-up questions.
4. If there is a matter that is detrimental to your wellness or performance in the course, notify your professor as soon as you can.

Disclaimer: The Importance of Attendance and Collaboration

This course emphasizes collaboration and teamwork as integral parts of the learning experience. We will be forming groups in **Week 2**, and much of the coursework—including major projects and in-class activities—will require strong group communication and participation.

To ensure your success in this class, it's essential to:

1. **Show Up for Class:** Attendance is critical to understanding the material, participating in discussions, and staying informed about group activities. Missing class may put you at a disadvantage when it comes to contributing effectively to your group.
2. **Get to Know Your Classmates:** Building relationships early on will help create a supportive and productive group dynamic. Strong connections with your peers will make collaborative work more enjoyable and effective.

By attending class regularly and engaging with your classmates, you'll not only enhance your understanding of the course content but also contribute to the success of your group projects. Remember, your effort and presence are vital to both your individual learning and the collective progress of your team.

Communication

Before you send me an email, consider that I require the following:

1. Include a subject line, greeting, and a sign off. This is a professional norm and a sign of respect that will serve you well beyond SJSU.

2. Double check that the question you are asking is not already answered in the syllabus, assignment prompts, or any other materials that have been distributed.
3. Evaluate whether the question you are asking is better suited for a conversation during office hours. Typically, email questions are better for simple yes or no questions. Feedback for major assignments, clarification of prompts, and explanations for grading must happen in office hours.
4. Expect your email to be returned within 48 hours, not inclusive of weekends.

Late Work

No late work will be docked points unless it is not submitted by the time I grade it. Otherwise, I will retroactively deduct 5% per day that it is late, retroactive to the original due date. I understand that emergencies arise, so please notify me as soon as possible if such emergencies may interfere with your class performance or participation.

Program Information

Asian American Studies Program Learning Outcomes:

1. Apply interdisciplinary knowledge of major concepts, theories, and methods in Asian American Studies (AAS) to analyze historical, contemporary, and comparative formations of race and ethnicity and its intersectional relationship to class, gender, sexuality, religion, spirituality, national origin, immigration status, ability, tribal citizenship, sovereignty, language, and/or age to understand the diversity and complexity of Asian American populations.
2. Communicate knowledge in Asian American studies effectively and creatively through written, visual and/or oral forms appropriate to purpose and audience.
3. Apply Asian American Studies theory and knowledge to describe and actively engage with anti-racist and anti-colonial issues and the practices and movements that have and continue to facilitate the building of a more just and equitable society.

Course Goals

Diversity Goals and Content

San José State University is committed to supporting a diverse community guided by core values of ethical conduct and inclusion and respect for each individual. Such a community enriches the intellectual climate of the university and the educational experiences of its students, promotes personal growth and a healthy society, and supports a positive work environment. By studying issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, students come to appreciate their rights and responsibilities in the free exchange of ideas that is the hallmark of a healthy and productive society.

All Asian American Studies and Ethnic Studies courses are rooted in Access, Retention, and Community. It means that Asian American Studies is not just a subject matter based on surface representation or inclusion. Instead, it is a new consciousness. It's about combatting racism, poverty, and the misrepresentation of People of Color. Thus, this course will prepare students to accomplish the following.

- identify the lenses through which dominant society operates;
- recognize that individuals are often subject to marginalization that creates positionalities of disadvantage;
- engage in ways that help to mitigate societal inequities or deconstruct systems of oppression and colonization;
- listen, act, and speak with open minds, and understand the impact of their viewpoints on others;
- appreciate differing viewpoints and ways of knowing;
- develop skills to work together in a cooperative manner on behalf of the common good.

Learn more about majoring or minoring in Asian American Studies! email yvonne.y.kwan@sjsu.edu

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

1. Critically analyze and synthesize themes of activism, cultural expression, intersectionality, and coalition building in addition to the core themes of nation, identity, loyalty, family, trauma, transgenerational trauma, memory, and expression by engaging with three films, two course books, and other materials as measured by the completion of the Film Analysis and Group Book Discussion Facilitation assignments, with each student demonstrating their ability to connect course readings, external research, and discussions to their analysis.
2. Demonstrate creative and analytical engagement with historical and cultural themes such as activism, cultural expression, intersectionality, and coalition building in addition to the core themes of nation, identity, loyalty, family, trauma, transgenerational trauma, memory, and expression by producing six original zine entries for the Individual Zine Entries assignment, with references to course readings or materials and external research in each entry.
3. Collaborate effectively to curate and present a narrative on Japanese American experiences through group work and research, measured by the completion of the Final Group Curation of Zine and Social Media Campaign assignments, as evaluated by the quality of selected and organized content, teamwork, and individual reflections on the creative and curatorial process.

Course Materials

All course materials are available for free via Canvas, the SJSU Library, the [Santa Clara County Library](https://www.hoopladigital.com/title/12579768) (<https://www.hoopladigital.com/title/12579768>), or provided by Professor Kwan in class. You must be logged into your SJSU account to access course materials.

Through a collaboration with the Japanese American Museum of San Jose, enrolled students will each be provided a copy of "[San Jose's Japantown, California](https://www.arcadiapublishing.com/products/9781467125291?srsId=AfmBOoqb5Pgv5ah6LyAH8Ye_czg_twbwlKShv9a-3qwp-p2bz9CtAZI6)" (https://www.arcadiapublishing.com/products/9781467125291?srsId=AfmBOoqb5Pgv5ah6LyAH8Ye_czg_twbwlKShv9a-3qwp-p2bz9CtAZI6) for free. Based on groups, students will borrow a copy of "[San Jose Japantown: A Journey](https://www.jamsj.org/blog/2022/6/8/read-about-the-history-of-san-jose-japantown-in-a-book-from-jamsj)" (<https://www.jamsj.org/blog/2022/6/8/read-about-the-history-of-san-jose-japantown-in-a-book-from-jamsj>) (aka The Big Japantown Book).

Course Requirements and Assignments

FILM ANALYSIS (15%)

This assignment invites you to engage critically and reflectively with 3 films that depict the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II. Through this process, you will examine the multifaceted themes of nation, identity, loyalty, family, trauma, transgenerational trauma, memory, and expression, considering how these narratives convey the lived experiences and legacies of this historical period.

Objectives:

- Engage with assigned course readings to analyze the portrayal of Japanese American incarceration in film.
- Explore how themes of nation, identity, and loyalty are represented and questioned.
- Reflect on the personal and collective impact of trauma, including transgenerational trauma.
- Consider the role of memory and expression in preserving and understanding history.
- Develop your critical thinking and analytical writing skills by engaging with complex historical and social issues.

Additional assignment details will be provided on Canvas.

INDIVIDUAL ZINE ENTRIES (60%)

This assignment invites you to create a **zine** that reflects your engagement with course themes through creative expression and critical analysis. Each entry will explore one or more themes of the course, considering the ways these topics engage with issues such as **activism, cultural expression, intersectionality, and coalition building** in addition to the core themes of **nation, identity, loyalty, family, trauma, transgenerational trauma, memory, and expression**.

This project combines creativity and analytical depth, encouraging you to make connections between history, identity, and the broader social and cultural movements that shape the Japanese American experience. You will create **six zine entries**, each focused on one of the following topics:

1. *No-No Boy*
2. San Jose Japantown (with an option to include comparative analysis of other Japantowns)
3. Yayoi Crane Project
4. Yuri Kochiyama
5. PJ and/or Roy Hirabayashi
6. Nobuko Miyamoto

Additional assignment details will be provided on Canvas.

FINAL GROUP CURATION OF ZINE (15%)

This group project builds on your individual zine entries by collaboratively curating and editing them into one cohesive group zine. The goal is to transform individual work into a collective expression that reflects shared themes and perspectives on Japanese American experiences. This assignment emphasizes

teamwork, critical decision-making, and the creative process, requiring you to curate, organize, and present your entries as a unified publication.

Additional assignment details will be provided on Canvas.

GROUP BOOK DISCUSSION FACILITATION (7.5%)

This assignment provides an opportunity for small groups to lead a discussion on one of the course books: John Okada's *No-No Boy* or Nobuko Miyamoto's *Not Yo' Butterfly*. As discussion leaders, you will synthesize key themes, pose critical questions, and engage your classmates in a 20-minute discussion. This activity will deepen your understanding of the text while developing collaborative and facilitation skills.

Additional assignment details will be provided on Canvas.

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN (2.5%)

This assignment allows you to creatively reflect on your visit to the Japanese American Museum of San Jose (JAMsj) and collectively (in your group) explore an assigned section of "The Big Japantown Book". Using a social media-style format, you will synthesize insights from your experiences and readings, connecting them to key themes from the course, such as nation, identity, loyalty, cultural expression, intersectionality, and activism. While the section review of the book is based on the group sharing the book, the social media submission can be an individual submission. This project emphasizes individual creativity and critical analysis while showcasing your ability to engage with historical and cultural topics in a contemporary format.

Additional assignment details will be provided on Canvas.

✓ Grading Information

Assessment

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	% POINTS POSSIBLE	CLO ASSESSED
FILM ANALYSIS	15%	CLO 1
INDIVIDUAL ZINE ENTRIES	60%	CLO 2
FINAL GROUP CURATION OF ZINE	15%	CLO 3

GROUP BOOK DISCUSSION FACILITATION	7.5%	CLO 1
SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN	2.5%	CLO 3

Grading Policy

A plus 97 to 100	A 93 to 96.9	A minus 90 to 92.9
B plus 87 to 89.9	B 83 to 86.9	B minus 80 to 82.9
C plus 77 to 79.9	C 73 to 76.9	C minus 70 to 72.9
D plus 67 to 69.9	D 63 to 66.9	D minus 60 to 62.9
	F less than 60	

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9 \(PDF\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<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 (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Course Schedule

When	Topic	Notes
Week 1 1/27/2025 and 1/29/2025	Syllabus Review & General History Overview	Required Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Omi (2016) Trans-Pacific Japanese American Studies: Conversations on Race and • Erika Lee (2015) Japanese Immigrants and the "Yellow Peril"

When	Topic	Notes
Week 2 2/3/2025 and 2/5/2025	Incarceration	Required Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erika Lee (2015) "Military Necessity": The Uprooting of Japanese American in World War Karen Ishizuka (2002) "Arts Saved Us...from What?" Additional Primary Sources from "Asian America : A Primary Source Reader" (See Canvas) <p>WEDNESDAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guest Lecture: yayoi kambara (KAMBARA+), performance artist
Week 3 2/10/2025 and 2/13/2025	Incarceration	Required Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selections from Janice Mirikani (2014) "Out of the Dust : New and Selected Poems" <p>Recommended Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> George Takei (2020) "They Called Us Enemy" (https://sccl.bibliocommons.com/v2/record) <p>MONDAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guest Lecture: Nina Chuang, SJSU Never Again is Now Mural Project
Week 4 2/17/2025 and 2/19/2025 (DOR)	Incarceration	Required Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erika Lee (2015) "Grave Injustices": The Incarceration of Japanese Americans in World W Explore the Densho Digital Repository (https://ddr.densho.org/?_gl=1*vc2uud*_gcl_aw*R0NMLjE3MzcxNTM5NzUuQ2p3S0NBaUFuS2k4QmhCMEVpdC - specific instructions given on Canvas and in class <p>MONDAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual Office Hours with yayoi kambara <p>WEDNESDAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class to attend 3rd Annual SJSU Day of Remembrance Office Hours with yayoi kambara available at 2PM in SISS Conference Room (DMH 240)
Week 5 2/24/2025 and 2/26/2025	Media: Incarceration and Trauma	Required Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glen Mimura (2009) UNCANNY MEMORIES: Post-Redress Media in Japanese American I Donna K. Nagata, Jackie H. J. Kim, and Teresa U. Nguyen (2015) "Processing Cultural Trau <p>Assignment (see Canvas for assignment details)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FILM ANALYSIS DUE

When	Topic	Notes
Week 6 3/3/2025 and 3/5/2025	No-No Boy	Required Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Okada (1857) No-No Boy Assignment (see Canvas for assignment details) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No-No Boy Notes + Group Facilitation
Week 7 3/10/2025 and 3/12/2025	No-No Boy	Reading Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Okada (1857) No-No Boy (continued) • Valerie Matsumoto (2016) Sansei Women and the Gendering of Yellow Power in Southern Assignment (see Canvas for assignment details) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No-No Boy Notes + Group Facilitation • Kambara Crane Project Zine Entry Due
Week 8 3/17/2025 and 3/19/2025	Activism and Racial Logics of Space - Japantowns	Required Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glenn Omatsu (2016) The “Four Prisons” and the Movements of Liberation • Curwen (2024) The fight to save L.A.’s Little Tokyo before it’s too late Assignment (see Canvas for assignment details) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No-No Boy Zine Entry Due
Week 9 3/24/2025 3/26/2025	Activism and Racial Logics of Space - Japantowns	Required Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • James Nagareda (2017) Japantown, San Jose • Julia Halprin Jackson (2024) Kogura Gifts: A Family Legacy Built on Resilience • Clement Lai (2013) Saving Japantown, serving the people: the scalar politics of the Asian SAN JOSE, JAPANTOWN FIELD TRIP - DETAILS TBD IN CLASS
Week 10 3/31/2025 and 4/2/2025	SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS	

When	Topic	Notes
Week 11 4/7/2025 and 4/9/2025	Coalitional Movements - San Jose JAs	<p>Required Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mari Matsuda (2016) Japanese American Progressives: A Case Study in Identity Formation • Susan Hayase and Tom Izu (2018) #Don'tExcludeUs! – San Jose JAs in Solidarity • Julia Halprin Jackson (2023) Taiko: Heartbeat of a Movement • PJ Hirabayashi Oral History (https://aapi-perspectives.jamsj.org/archive/pj-hirabayashi/) • Roy Hirabayashi Oral History (https://aapi-perspectives.jamsj.org/archive/roy-hirabayashi) <p>WEDNESDAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest Lecture: Susan Hayase and Tom Izu, San Jose Nikkei Resisters <p>Assignment (see Canvas for assignment details)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • San Jose Japantown Zine Entry Due
Week 12 4/14/2025 and 4/16/2025	Coalitional Movements - Yuri Kochiyama	<p>Required Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott Kurashige (2014) Serve the People at the Bottom: Yuri Kochiyama • Diane Fujino (2005) Asian Americans and the Rise of a New Movement • Smithsonian Asian Pacific Center on Yuri Kochiyama (https://apa.si.edu/yuri/) • Film: Mountains That Take Wing: Angela Davis & Yuri Kochiyama (2009) (https://www.film.com/mountains-that-take-wing-angela-davis-yuri-kochiyama-2009) <p>Assignment (see Canvas for assignment details)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PJ and Roy Hirabayashi Zine Entry Due
Week 13 4/21/2025 and 4/23/2025	Coalitional Movements - Nobuko Miyamoto	<p>Required Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin Nobuko Miyamoto (2021) Not Yo' Butterfly • Nobuko Miyamoto: A Song in Movement (https://www.pbs.org/video/nobuko-miyamoto-a) <p>Assignment (see Canvas for assignment details)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yuri Kochiyama Zine Entry Due
Week 14 4/28/2025 and 4/30/2025	Coalitional Movements: Nobuko Miyamoto	<p>Required Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nobuko Miyamoto (2021) Not Yo' Butterfly
Week 15 5/5/2025 and 5/7/2025	Coalitional Movements: Nobuko Miyamoto	<p>Required Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nobuko Miyamoto (2021) Not Yo' Butterfly <p>WEDNESDAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IN-CLASS GROUP WORK

When	Topic	Notes
Week 16 5/12/2025	Final Prep - Group Work	MONDAY <ul style="list-style-type: none">• IN-CLASS GROUP WORK Assignment (see Canvas for assignment details) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nobuko Miyamoto Zine Entry Due• Social Media Campaign Due
Finals Week 5/16/2025		FINAL GROUP ZINE DUE + PRESENTATION <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Friday 6/17/2024 10:45 AM-12:45 PM