

CHINESE IN THE UNITED STATES

Although relatively low in numbers, Chinese in America have served as important symbols demarcating foreignness and assimilability around whom major ideas and restrictions regarding citizenship and immigration have been framed. Since the founding of the United States, Chinese have struggled for inclusion and equal opportunity despite persistent perceptions of their ineradicable foreignness. This course offers an historical overview of Chinese American identity and community formations as they evolved from the Yellow Peril to model minorities. We will focus particularly on patterns of work, family, immigration law, racism, class, culture, and gender in order to understand changing roles and perceptions of Chinese from the early days of the republic to the present.

Required Texts:

Iris Chang, *The Chinese in America* (Penguin, 2003).

Yung, Chang, and Lai, *Chinese American Voices: From the Gold Rush to the Present* (University of California Press, 2006)

Additional course materials are on eReserve including maps for the quiz, chronology of important events, and excerpts from the following:

Chan and Hsu, ed., *Chinese Americans and the Politics of Race and Culture* (Temple University Press, 2008)

Philip Choy et al, *Coming Man: 19th Century American Perceptions of Chinese* (University of Washington Press, 1995)

Gloria Chun, "Go West . . . to China": Chinese American Identity in the 1930s" in K. Scott Wong and Sucheng Chan, ed., *Claiming America: Constructing Chinese American Identities During the Exclusion Era* (Temple University Press, 1998)

Franklin Odo, ed., *The Columbia Documentary History of the Asian American Experience* (Columbia University Press, 2002)

Vivian Wu Wong, "Somewhere Between Black and White: The Chinese in Mississippi"

<http://www.oah.org/pubs/magazine/asianamerican/vivian-wong.html>, accessioned Jan. 9, 2009

Judy Yung, ed., *Unbound Voices: A Documentary History of Chinese Women in San Francisco* (University of California Press, 1999)

Grade Distribution: Final grades will be allocated as follows: A 93-100; A- 90-92; B+ 88-89; B 83-87; B- 80-82; C+ 78-79; C 73-77; C- 70-72 and so forth.

30 % research essay

5 % Map quiz

15 % Class attendance and discussion

50 % Examinations

Description of course requirements:

Map Quiz (5%): Covering the western and eastern Pacific and particularly Guangdong province. Jan. 30.

Class participation (15%): You are expected to attend each class and participate fully in class discussions by contributing questions and comments. Class discussions of lectures and assigned readings will be conducted at least once each week.

Reading assignments are to be completed by Monday of each week.

Midterm Exam (20%): Short answer and short essay.

Final Exam (30%): Short answer and essay questions.

Research essay (30%): Research paper due 5 p.m., May 8.

Typed, double-spaced, 6-7 page-long analysis of whether and how biographical accounts can be used to understand Chinese American history. This paper should draw upon research into the life and times of one Chinese American whose experiences can be interpreted to exemplify certain aspects of Chinese American history. Your paper must present a clearly articulated argument and conform to a standardized style manual and a title.

Based on your chosen Chinese American biographical account, you must address the following questions: How typical was the life of your subject for Chinese Americans of his/her era? What can be learned about Chinese American experiences of their generation from the biography? Would you recommend the book to other readers to help them learn more about Chinese American history? Why or why not?

In addition to your chosen biography, you will be expected to employ multiple sources apart from assigned class readings in completing this project. A summary or description of your sources is insufficient for a good grade; you must critically analyze your chosen biography and compare its representations with the opinions of other writers. The research

paper must include a properly formatted bibliography and footnotes/endnotes. You may consult either the [MLA Handbook](#) or the [Chicago Manual of Style](#) for assistance.

I strongly encourage you to use the Undergraduate Writing Center (UWC), FAC 211, 471-6222: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>. The UWC offers free, individualized, expert help with writing for any UT undergraduate, by appointment or on a drop-in basis. Any undergraduate enrolled in a course at UT can visit the UWC for assistance with any writing project. Getting feedback from an informed audience is a normal part of a successful writing project.

Papers that are turned in late will be penalized with point deductions. Papers turned in after the lecture begins will be considered late. Each day 1 percentage point will be deducted--Saturday, Sunday, and holidays count as one day each. No credit for the paper will be given if it is turned in after ten days. NOTE: Slipping papers under the instructor's door does not guarantee they will be received on the same day. They will be dated in accordance to when the instructor picks them up.

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from Services for Students with Disabilities.

Lecture and Reading Assignment Schedule (Subject to Change)

Week 1: Introduction

Jan. 18: Course themes--What does it mean to be both Chinese and American? How does living in America change Chinese and how has Chinese settlement changed America? How does a Chinese American perspective change our understandings of American history and what it means to be American?

*Reading: Chang vii-52

Week 2: East Across the Pacific

Jan. 27: Map quiz

*Reading: Chang 53-115; Yung et al, "Letter by a Chinese Girl," "Documents of the Chinese Six Companies," "Reminiscences of a Pioneer Student," and "Reminiscences of an old Chinese Railroad Worker"

Week 3: Chinese on the American Frontier F1/3

*Reading: Chang 116-156; excerpts from Choy et al *Coming Man*; Odo, "Memorial on Chinatown, Investigating Committee of the Anti-Chinese Council, Workingmen's Party of California, March 10, 1880"

Week 4: Becoming the Yellow Peril F8/10

Feb. 8 Documentary "Carved in Silence" [Available from the AV Center]

*Reading: Chang 157-172; Yung, Jew Law Ying readings

Week 5: Experiences of Exclusion

*Reading: Chang 172-198; Yung 113-124 "Kwong King You, Sau Saang Gwa"

Week 6: Between East and West F22/24

Feb. 22: "Mississippi Triangle" [Available from CAAS]

*Reading: Chang 199-214; Wong, "Somewhere Between Black and White: The Chinese in Mississippi" <http://www.oah.org/pubs/magazine/asianamerican/vivian-wong.html>; Yung et al 97-107 "Kam Wah Chung Letters"

Week 7: Midterm

March 1/3: Midterm—bring a bluebook

*Readings: Yung et al 165-176 "Second-Generation Dilemmas"

Week 8: Between American and Chinese

March 8/10: Paper topics due

*Reading: Yung 297-327--Esther Wong, "Story of a Chinese College Girl," "Flora Belle Jan, Flapper and Writer," "Gladys Ng Gin, Cocktail Waitress"; Yung et al 177-182 "I am Growing More Chinese--Each Passing Year!"; Chun "Go West . . . to China"

Spring Break March 12-20

Week 9: Domesticating the Yellow Peril

March 22/24: Documentary “Forbidden City, USA” [Available from the AV Center.]

*Readings: Chang 215-235; Chang and Hsu 153-172--Wong, “From Pariah to Paragon: Shifting Images of Chinese Americans during World War II”; Yung et al 212-220 “There But for the Grace of God Go I”; Odo 253-255 *Life Magazine* “How to Tell Japs from the Chinese” (Dec. 22, 1941)

Week 10: World War II [AAS]

March 29/31: Documentary “Sewing Woman” [Available from the AV Center.]

*Readings: Chang 236-260; Chang and Hsu 173-194--Hsu, “From Chop Suey to Mandarin Cuisine: Fine Dining and the Refashioning of Chinese Ethnicity during the Cold War Era”; Yung et al 247-238 “My Bitter Experience in the United States” and “Father and Son”

Week 11: Enemies and Friends: The Cold War

April 5/7: Documentary “Chinatown Files” [Available from CAAS.]

*Readings: Chang 261-282; Yung et al 240-246 “I want to Marry an American Girl”; Odo 374-382, 385-391--“Preface to Roots,” “Yellow Pearl,” and “We Are the Children”, and “Preface to Aiiieeeee!, 1973”

Week 12: Chinese American Culture and Hybrid Identities A12/14

A12 “Who Killed Vincent Chin?” [Available from AV Center]

*Readings: Chang 283-333; Yung et al 312-320, 327-335 “Major Education Problems Facing the Chinese Community,” and “Asian American Women and Revolution”; Odo 361-364, 370-373 “San Francisco State University Third World Liberation Front Position, 1968” and “The Need for a United Asian-American Front”

Week 13: Chinese American Civil Rights A19/21

*Readings: Chang 334-388; excerpt from Zia

Week 14: Astronauts and Illegals A26/28

*Readings: Chang 389-403; Yung et al 383-402, 423-428 “Affirming Affirmative Action,” “Countering Complacency: An Interview with Daphne Kwok,” and “One Mile, One Hundred Years: Governor Gary Locke’s Inaugural Address,” and “We are Americans: The Story behind *Time Magazine’s* Man of the Year”; Odo 541-550 “Committee of 100: American Attitudes Toward Chinese Americans and Asian Americans, 2001”

Week 15: Yellow Peril Revived May 3/5

May 3: Final review session

May 5: Final exam; research papers due