Course Description:
This class will introduce students to the major topics in studies of the Korean American community today, especially relating to history and diaspora, women’s issues, youth concerns, family matters, interethnic relations, religion, and issues related to empowerment and activism. The class moves away from the economic study of Korean American small businesses towards more cultural and political analysis. It pays specific attention to the diversity, complexity, contradiction, and hybridity in the Korean American community. The course emphasizes four objectives:

- First, an ethnological exploration of the Korean American community, with emphasis on the underrepresented subjects of race, class, and gender.
- Second, a broad overview of the central topics in Korean American studies.
- Third, a close examination of current problems facing Korean Americans, specifically issues affecting each generation and questions of religion, politics, and empowerment.
- Fourth, an analysis of the experience of the growing number of young Korean/Asian Americans.

As a case study, the course will also examine the role of Korean American communities in the 1992 Los Angeles Crisis.

Requirements:
1. Midterm exam (30 points); February 5 (Thursday)
2. Final exam (40 points); March 13 (Friday), 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
3. Short paper on Assigned Project (30 points; 6-7 pages per group of 3); February 17 (Tuesday Class)

Readings: The following texts are available at the bookstore.
- Kim, Kwang Chung (Ed.), Koreans in the Hood: Conflict with African Americans.
In addition to the above textbooks, the rest of readings will be posted on the class website.

**Class Schedule**

**Part I: Introduction and Overview**

**W 1, What It Means to Be Korean/Asian American?**


**Optional**


**How Do We Study the Korean American Experience?**


**Optional:**


**W 2, What is the New Generation of Korean/Asian Americans?**

- Park, Kyeyoung, “I Really Do Feel I’m 1.5!”: The Construction of Self and Community by Young Korean Americans. *Amerasia Journal* 25(1):139-64, 1999
• Chung, Angie, 6, The Historical Evolution of KYCC and KIWA 7, Giving Back to the Community 8, Doing Politics without the Politics

Optional

**Part II: Korean Diaspora and Korean American History**

**W 3, Labor Migration to Hawaii and California Korean American History**

*Video, Arirang: The Korean American Journey I*

• Choi, Anne Soon, “Are They Koreaned Enough?”: Generation and the Korean Independence Movement before World War II. *Amerasia Journal* 29 (3): 57-78

**Korean Diaspora**

*Video, Koryo Saram: the Reliable People (Dir., David Chung)*

• *Schusky, Ernest, Korean Exodus. *Anthropology & Humanism Quarterly 13 (3): 80-85
• Ryang, Sonia, Koreans in Japan. *Amerasia Journal* 29 (3): 31-36

Optional:
• Yim, S., *The Social Structure of Korean Communities in California 1903-1920. Labor Immigration under Capitalism*. 

3
• Kim, Ronyoung, *Clay Walls*. Univ. of Washington P., 1987

**W 4, Migration after the Korean War, 1950-1964**


*Video, First Person Plural (or Crossing Chasms)*

Optional:

• Choy, B., *Koreans in America*, 141-84

**W 5, The New Immigration, 1965-present**

• Park, Kyeyoung, *Korean Migration to America: Dependent Development and American Fever (Ch. 2)*. In *The Korean American Dream*, 7-35
• Yu, Eui-Young, *Korean Community in the United States: Socio-Economic Characteristics and Evolving Immigration Patterns*. (forthcoming)

*Video, Arirang: The Korean American Journey II (?)*

**Midterm Exam**

Optional:

• Yoon, I., *The Social Origins of Korean Immigration to the United States*,
1903-the Present (Ch. 2). In On My Own: Korean Businesses and Race Relations in America, 48-99. Univ. of Chicago P., 1997


Part III: Contemporary Korean American Community

W 6, Work, the Ethnic Economy, and Class Differentiation

- Kang, Miliann, Korean Immigrant Women's Work in the Nail Salon Industry: Gender, Race, and Class in the Service Sector. In Korean-Americans, 150-179


- Park, Edward, J. W., Korean Americans and the U.S. High Technology Industry: From Ethnicity to Transnationalism. (forthcoming)

Optional:


- Yoon, I., Class, Family, and Ethnicity in Korean Immigrant Entrepreneurship (Ch. 3). In On My Own, 100-73


W 7, Gender and Sexuality


Video, I’m the one that I want: Margaret Cho filmed live...

Optional:
- Park, Kyeyoung, 6, Women’s Changing Viewpoints: The Pursuit of Human Dignity. In The Korean American Dream, 113-38

W 8, Family Issues and Education
1991

Optional:
• Ngin, C., Racialized Struggles in Suburbia: Contested Ideologies on Belonging. California Politics and Policy, 75-84, 1995

W 9, Religion and Political Participation
• Chong, Angie, 3. Convergent Destinies and the Ethnic Elite 4. The Events that Shook the World 5. The Politics of Incorporation and Marginalization Today

Optional
• Park, K., The Comforts of Christianity for Korean Immigrants: Religion and Reproduction of Small Business Activity (Ch. 9). In The Korean American Dream, 155-200

A Commitment to Social Change and Empowerment
Video, Grassroots Rising (or Metro es para todos, dir. By Eurie Chung)
Guest Speaker

Optional:
• Omatsu, G., The ‘Four Prisons’ and the Movements of Liberation: Asian American Activism from the 1960s to the 1990s. In The State of
Asian America, K. Aguilar-San Juan (ed.), 19-70. South End P.


Part IV: A Case Study

Video: Sa-I-Gu (or Clash of Color)

- Park, Kyeyoung, Use and Abuse of Race and Culture: Discourses on Black/Korean Tension. In Koreans in the Hood, 60-74

Optional:
- Min, P., Caught in the Middle: Korean Communities in New York and Los Angeles. Univ. of California P., 1996
Assignment

Be a participant observer of public or private events or activities involving 1.5 or 2nd generation Korean Americans at various locations in Korea Town or other Korean American places (at least through a couple of visits); write an ethnography and comparative analysis (6-7 pages = 4 page field data, 1 page summary plus 1 page analysis)

- collect documents
- map/describe setting (e.g., City/Neighborhood) Council meetings, churches, schools or other educational settings, workplaces, market places, community/neighborhood events, places of leisure (karaoke/noraebang, coffeeshops, cafes, restaurants, bars, nightclubs, etc.), family gathering or rituals
- identify audience: leaders, VIPs; ethnicity, age, gender, etc.

- course of events: those you observe, and fill in accounts before and after (documents, interviews)
- describe as fully as you can—so you can use this description later—

- event (e.g., Korean Festival) as a series of events—main sequence—on stage
- side events (demonstrations, food and other booths); informal events
- audience—families—picnics—role of organizers (& guests)
- watch people’s actions

- informal or casual interviews: talk to at least 3 persons there: identify yourself and your purpose
  - UCLA student studying Los Angeles Korean American community—questions: have you bee here before; why have you come; what do you like most; know other people here; why do you think this is important to Korean Americans living in LA
  - observe how they interact with others

- think of points of comparison with another event—record what you think may be similar or different—form hypothesis as you go

Short Paper (double spaced; 12 points) due by February 17 (Tuesday)