This course will focus on how certain legal structures have shaped the Asian American experience. We will examine the impact of the laws that are part of the anti-Chinese movement, the Chinese Exclusion Act, the incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII, school desegregation, citizenship cases, and other legal decisions that have influenced the development of Asian American history.

This is a DPE course because it examines the comparative history of a number of Asian immigrant groups and their relationship with each other and other racialized peoples in American culture, especially in terms of legal structures of power.

Evaluation will be based primarily on three writing assignments. There will be two 5-7 page essays written on a topic of your choice that deals with one or more of the legal cases we will have read up to the time the papers are due (March 9 and April 27.) You can also choose legal cases or legislation that we have not covered but come from the same time period. A final 15-page paper research (due May 22) can be on any legal aspect of Asian American history.

All students are expected to abide by the College Honor Code. If you have any questions concerning this, please see me. In addition, students with disabilities who may need disability-related classroom accommodations for the course are encouraged to set up an appointment to meet with me as soon as possible and to contact the Dean’s Office (x4262) to better insure that accommodations are provided in a timely manner.

Laptop computers are to be used in class only with special permission from the professor, and the use of cell phones will not be tolerated.

The following books can be purchased at the Williams Bookstore. There are also a number of packets of required readings available at the Office of Print and Mail (‘37 House, 51 Park Street, M-F, 8:00-3:30. These readings are marked by an asterisk (*) in the syllabus.

Angelo N. Ancheta, Race, Rights, and the Asian American Experience  
Erika Lee, At America’s Gates: Chinese Immigration During the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943  
Ian Haney Lopez, White by Law: The Legal Construction of Race
Roger Daniels, *The Japanese American Cases: The Rule of Law in Time of War*

Feb. 5: Introduction to the Class


Feb. 20: Showing of “The Chinese Exclusion Act”

Feb. 24: Lee, *At America’s Gates*, 1-76


*”The Page Law” Forty-Third Congress, Sess. II. CH. 141, 1875*

*In re Ah Yup, Circuit Court, D. California. April 29, 1878, Case No. 104*

Feb. 27: Lee, *At America’s Gates*, 77-145


March 2: Lee, *At America’s Gates*, 147-255

March 5: Citizenship cases based on Exclusion

*Fong Yue Ting v. United States*, 1893.

*United States v. Wong Kim Ark*, 1898.


**PAPERS DUE**


*Ozawa v. United States*, 1922.


*US v Bhagat Singh Thind*, 1923.
April 9: Immigration Act of 1924


April 13: Showing of “Unfinished Business”

April 16: Daniels, The Japanese American Cases, xv-80.

April 20: The Four Important Cases

*Yasui v. United States, 1943.

*Hirabayashi v. United States, 1943.

*Korematsu v. United States, 1944.

*Ex parte Mitsuye Endo, 1944.

April 23: Daniels, The Japanese American Cases, 80-135.


April 30: The Coram Nobis Litigation, Redress and Reparations, and the Civil Liberties Act


*“The Civil Liberties Act of 1988” Public Law H.R. 442

May 4: Showing of “Who Killed Vincent Chin?”

PAPERS DUE

May 7: The Vincent Chin Case


May 11: Issues of Language


*Sarah Henry, “Fighting Words,” Los Angeles Times Magazine* (June 10, 1990.)

*Dimaranan v. Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center*, 1991.

May 11: Access to Education I


*Tape v. Hurley*, 1885.

*Adrienne Berard, Water Tossing Boulders: How a Family of Chinese Immigrants Led the First Fight to Desegregate Schools in the Jim Crow South* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2016,) 92-146.

*Gong Lum v. Rice*, 1927.

May 14: Access to Education II


May 22: FINAL PAPERS DUE