

**South Asian Migration to US**  
**AAS 325 (35935) / ANS 372 (31740) / HIS 365G (39655)/WGS 340 (47025)**  
**MWF 10-11 AM                      CMA 3.114**

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### **Course Description**

This course examines the South Asian diaspora in United States. We will cover migration of people from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh to United States and other parts of the world. While studying the history and culture of South Asian America, we will discuss globalization, transnationalism, migration, assimilation, formation of a diaspora, discrimination, and gender and sexuality, all major themes in Asian American Studies. The course is arranged chronologically and thematically. We will start in the nineteenth century following the journey of the first South Asian migrants to US. We will then move on to studying the Bengali and Punjabi immigrants to U.S. and the formation of Bengali-African and Punjabi-Mexican communities. We will study how American immigration laws have facilitated or inhibited South Asian migration to US in the twentieth century. Topics covered include economic and social reasons for migration, adaptation to American life, cultural and religious assimilation, changing family structures, and discrimination and exclusion. We will end the semester by discussing South Asian American life in the twenty-first century.

This course carries the Cultural Diversity in the United States flag. Cultural Diversity courses are designed to increase your familiarity with the variety and richness of the American cultural experience. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one U.S. cultural group that has experienced persistent marginalization.

This course carries the Global Cultures flag. Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. cultural group, past or present.

<http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/ccc/teaching-resources/syllabus>

### **Course Objectives**

Through the semester we will study more than a century of South Asian American history. A primary goal of this course is to highlight the diversity within South Asian America. We will encounter a diaspora whose members belong to different religious, linguistic, economic and

social groups. Many came to the United States forcibly to seek economic opportunities lacking at home. Others came enthusiastically with dreams of making it “big” in the land of abundant opportunities. We will also examine South Asian American interactions with other Americans in the fields of social activism and community development.

You are encouraged to participate in South Asian American life in Austin. I encourage you to visit the Asian American Resource Center and the Austin History Center to familiarize yourself with Asian American life in Austin and beyond, and to explore the variety of sources available for conducting research for the final paper. I will also bring to your attention relevant films, lectures, art, music, and dance performances. Assignments for this course will help you in improving writing and communication skills. Our class meetings will be a blend of lectures and discussions.

### **Required Readings**

Most of the reading for this course is in the form of articles and book chapters. You will find many reading assignments on Canvas, arranged on a weekly basis. Books are available for purchase at the university bookstore and on reserve at the PCL library. Some of the books are also available through the Center for Asian American Studies Library. If you purchase books from another source make sure you have the correct edition.

Textbook: Karen Isaken Leonard, *The South Asian Americans* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1997). Available at the University Coop, PCL reserve, Center for Asian American Studies (CAAS) library

Articles on Canvas. The course is listed as AAS 325 for all students.

**Readings from the following books are available on Canvas or the book is available in a digital format through the UT libraries.**

Vivek Bald, *Bengali Harlem and the Lost Histories of South Asian America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013). – Readings on Canvas

Vivek Bald, Miabi Chatterji, Sujani Reddy, and Manu Vimalassery edited, *The Sun Never Sets: South Asian Migrants in an Age of U.S. Power* (New York : NYU Press, 2013). – Electronic Book (UT Libraries).

Judith M. Brown, *Global South Asians: Introducing the Modern Diaspora* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). – Electronic Book (UT Libraries)

Shamita Das Gupta edited, *A Patchwork Shawl: Chronicles of South Asian Women in America* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1998). – Readings on Canvas

Knut A. Jacobsen and R. Pratap Kumar edited, *South Asians in the Diaspora: Histories and Religious Traditions* (Boston: Brill, 2004). – Electronic Book (UT Libraries)

Khyati Y. Joshi and Jigna Desai, *Asian Americans in Dixie: Race and Migration in the South* (University of Illinois Press, 2013). – Readings on Canvas

Susan Kosby and R. Radhakrishnan edited, *Transnational South Asians: The Making of a Neo-Diaspora* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). – Readings on Canvas

Karen Leonard, *Making Ethnic Choices: California's Punjabi Mexican Americans* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992). – Electronic Book (UT Libraries)

Vijay Prashad, *Uncle Swami: South Asians in America Today* (New York: New Press, 2012). – Electronic Book (UT Libraries)

Lavina Dhingra Shankar and Rajini Srikanth, *A Part, Yet Apart* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998). – Electronic Book (UT Libraries).

Irwin A. Tang, *Asian Texans: Our Histories and Our Lives* (Austin: The it Works, 2007). – Readings on Canvas

### **Assignments and Grading**

Attendance: 5%

Class Participation: 10%

Object Analysis Assignment: 5%

Exam 1: 25%

Exam 2: 25%

Research paper topic and bibliography: 5%

Research paper: 25%

Attendance: You are required to attend all class meetings. If you need to miss class to observe a religious day let me know at the beginning of the semester. I expect to be informed before the start of class if you are unable to attend due to health reasons or family emergency. More than three unexcused absences will affect your grade.

Class participation: You are responsible for completing readings assigned for each week. Participation in class activities is crucial and a component of your final grade. I will hold regular discussions based on required readings in which you are expected to participate. If I am not satisfied with class participation I will give a pop quiz.

Object Analysis: This is the undergraduate version of “show and tell.” You will bring an object to class related to any theme that we have discussed in the course. Examples of themes that you can use – South Asian assimilation in US, reasons for migration out of South Asia, transnational religious cultures, diasporic culture, South Asian inspired American material culture. Tell us why you chose this particular object. Identify how it relates to class material. Connect the object to class readings and discussions. What sparked your interest in the object? Prepare an oral presentation that is approximately 5 minutes in length. Object analysis presentations will be

spread over multiple days. You need to present on the day you signed up for. If you are absent on your chosen date, you will lose all the points for this assignment.

Exams: You are responsible for completing two non-cumulative exams, each worth 25% of the final grade. Both will be in-class exams consisting of short answer and short essay questions. Bring a blue book to class on the day of the scheduled exams.

We will watch documentaries through the semester. These are part of required course material and you will be tested on film content in the exams. You can also use the documentaries as source material for the research essay.

Research Essay: The essay is an 8-10 page (double spaced) research paper due on the last day of class. You are required to formulate an argument using primary sources. I will discuss ways in which one researches and writes a successful paper. A description of the research topic (350 words) along with a preliminary bibliography is due in class on the assigned date. The final assignment for this course will help you improve your research, analytical, organizational and writing skills.

Deadlines: Hardcopy of written assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Everyone needs to follow due dates listed on syllabus. For every day that your assignment is late you will lose 1/3 letter grade on that assignment.

If you are having trouble in class or are dissatisfied with your assignment grade/s come see me promptly. Don't wait until the end of the semester to seek my guidance on how to improve your standing in the course.

### **Academic Integrity**

As per University policy, those who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Refer to [http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint\\_student.php](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php) for more information on academic integrity, plagiarism, and consequences of academic dishonesty.

### **Accommodations**

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 512-471-6259 (voice) or 512-232-2937 (video phone).

<http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>

If you have a disability you need to notify me during the first two weeks of the semester and provide appropriate documentation.

**The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus. All changes will be announced in class and on Canvas.**

## Class Schedule

Readings assigned for each day should be completed *before* class meeting on that day.

### Background and Introduction to the Course

- Jan 18 W We will discuss course objectives and goals for the semester.
- Jan 20 F \*Judith M. Brown, "Introduction," in *Global South Asians: Introducing the Modern Diaspora* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 1-8. E-Book.  
\*Lavina Dhingra Shankar and Rajini Srikanth, "South Asian Identity in Asian America," in *A Part, Yet Apart* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), p. ix-xv. E-Book.

### Migration and Diaspora

- Jan 23 M Brown, "Traditions of Stability and Movement," in *Global South Asians*, p. 9-28. E-Book.
- Jan 25 W Brown, "Making a Modern Diaspora," in *Global South Asians*, p. 29-58. E-Book.

### South Asians in New York and the South

- Jan 27 F *Continuous Journey* – Documentary Screening in Class
- Jan 30 M Vivek Bald, "Out of the East and into the South," in *Bengali Harlem and the Lost Histories of South Asian America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), p. 11-48. Canvas.
- Feb 1 W Vivek Bald, "Selling the East in the American South: Bengali Muslim Peddlers in New Orleans and Beyond, 1880-1920," in *Asian Americans in Dixie*, p. 33-53. Canvas.
- Feb 3 F Bald, "Between Hindoo and Negro," in *Bengali Harlem*, p. 49-93. Canvas.
- Feb 6 M Vivek Bald, "'Lost' in the City: Spaces and Stories of South Asian New York, 1917-1965." *South Asian Popular Culture* 5, no. 1 (April 2007): 59-76. Canvas.
- Feb 8 W Primary Source Analysis – "Jumping Ship", "Shaikh – New Orleans", "DuBois-Ambedkar Correspondence." – Canvas.

### Punjabi-Mexican Americans

- Feb 10 F Karen Leonard, "Early South Asian Immigrants, 1900-47," in *South Asian Americans* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1997). p. 39-65.

- Feb 13 M Karen Leonard, “The World of the Pioneers,” in *Making Ethnic Choices: California’s Punjabi Mexican Americans* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), p. 37-61. E-Book.
- Feb 15 W \**Roots in the Sand* - Documentary Screening in Class  
\*Leonard, *Making Ethnic Choices*, p. 62-100. E-Book.
- Feb 17 F Leonard, *Making Ethnic Choices*, p. 101-120. E-Book.
- Feb 20 M Primary Source Analysis – Agricultural life in California, American Immigration Policy, South Asian students in US – Canvas.

**Submit Migration Stories assignment at the beginning of class on Feb 22.**

### **Second Phase of South Asian Immigration**

- Feb 22 W Leonard, “The New South Asian Immigrant,” in *South Asian Americans*, p. 67-87.
- Feb 24 F Leonard, “The New South Asian Immigrant,” in *South Asian Americans*, p. 88-106.
- Feb 27 M Exam 1 Review
- Mar 1 W **Exam 1**
- Mar 3 F *Desi: South Asians in New York* – Documentary Screening in Class  
\*Irwin Tang edited *Asian Texans: Our Histories and Our Lives*  
“A Historical Overview,” p. 1-23. Canvas.
- Mar 6 M Tang ed. *Asian Texans*, “The Indian Texans,” p. 181-204. Canvas.
- Mar 8 W Tang ed., *Asian Texans*, “The Pakistani Texans, Bangladeshi Texans, Sri Lankan Texans, Nepalese Texans, and Tibetan Texans,” p. 319-40. Canvas.
- Mar 10 F Our Migration Stories
- Mar 13-17 Spring Break**
- Mar 20 M Sharmila Rudrappa, “Braceros and Techno-Braceros: Guest Workers in the United States, and the Commodification of Low-Wage and High-Wage Labor,” in *Transnational South Asians*, p. 291-324. Canvas.
- Mar 22 W Sujani Reddy, “The Hidden Hand”: Remapping Indian Nurse Immigration to the United States,” in *The Sun Never Sets: South Asian Migrants in an Age of US Power*, p. 103-124. E-Book.

## Assimilation and Acculturation

- Mar 24 F Leonard, "South Asian Religions in America," and "Cultural Traditions: Continuity and Change," in *South Asian Americans*, p. 107-44.
- Mar 27 M *Miss India Georgia* – Documentary Screening in Class
- Mar 29 W \*Sayantani Das Gupta and Shamita Das Gupta, "Sex, Lies, and Women's Lives: An Intergenerational Dialogue," in Shamita Das Gupta edited, *A Patchwork Shawl: Chronicles of South Asian Women in America* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1998), p. 111-28. Canvas.  
\*Lubna Chaudhry, "We are Graceful Swans Who Can Also Be Crows: Hybrid Identities of Pakistani Muslim Women," in *A Patchwork Shawl*, p. 46-61. Canvas.
- Mar 31 F \*Anne Vallely, "The Jain Plate: The Semiotics of the Diaspora Diet," in Knut A. Jacobsen and R. Pratap Kumar edited, *South Asians in the Diaspora: Histories and Religious Traditions* (Boston: Brill, 2004), p. 3-22. E-Book.  
\*Clara A.B. Joseph, "Rethinking Hybridity: The Syro-Malabar Church in North America," in *South Asians in the Diaspora*, p. 220-42. E-Book.

## Family and Identity

- Apr 3 M \**Acting Our Age* – Documentary Screening in Class  
\*Leonard, "Keeping the Family Together," in *South Asian Americans*, p. 145-70.
- Apr 5 W \*Kirin Narayan, "Haunting Stories: Narrative Transmissions of South Asian Identities in Diaspora," in *South Asians in the Diaspora*, p. 415-34. E-Book.  
\*Sandip Roy, "Coming Out of the Almirah: South Asian Americans Struggle with Coming Out in a Gay America that Looks Nothing Like Them," in Susan Kosby and R. Radhakrishnan edited, *Transnational South Asians: The Making of a Neo-Diaspora* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 244-70. Canvas.
- Apr 7 F \*Geoffrey Burkhart, "Identity Dilemmas," in Parvati Raghuram, Ajaya Kumar Sahoo, Brij Maharaj, and Dave Sangha edited, *Tracing an Indian Diaspora: Contexts, Memories, Representations* (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2008), p. 299-319. Canvas.  
\*Surina Khan, "Sexual Exiles," in Das Gupta edited, *A Patchwork Shawl*, p. 62-71. Canvas.

## South Asian American Experiences

### Research Topic and Preliminary Bibliography due at the beginning of class on April 10.

- Apr 10 M \**Indian Summer* – Documentary Screening in Class  
\*Aminah Mohammad-Arif, "A Masala Identity: Young South Asian Muslims in the US" in *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*,

Volume 20, Number 1&2, 2000, p. 67-87. Canvas.

Apr 12 W Object Analysis – Group 1

Apr 14 F Nazli Kibria, “Bangladeshi American Dreams,” in *Muslims in Motion: Islam and National Identity in the Bangladeshi Diaspora*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2011, p. 28-56. Canvas.

Apr 17 M Object Analysis – Group 2

Apr 19 W \*Nazli Kibria, “The Racial Gap: South Asian American Racial Identity and the Asian American Movement,” in *A Part, Yet Apart*, p. 69-78. E-Book.  
\*Sumantra Tito Sinha, “From Campus to Community Politics in Asian America,” in *A Part, Yet Apart*, p. 146-67. E-Book.

Apr 21 F Exam Review

Apr 24 M **Exam 2**

Apr 26 W \**Raising Our Voices: South Asian Americans Address Hate* – Documentary Screening in Class.  
\*Vijay Prashad, “The Day our Probation Ended” and “The India Lobby,” in *Uncle Swami: South Asians in America Today* (New York: New Press, 2012), p. 1-24. E-Book.

Apr 28 F \**Whose Children are These?* – Documentary Screening in Class  
\*Prashad, *Uncle Swami*, p. 25-47. E-Book.

May 1 M Object Analysis – Group 3

May 3 W Object Analysis – Group 4

**Research Paper due at the beginning of class on May 5.**

May 5 F Wrap up and Evaluations