

South Asian Migration to the United States
AAS 325 (32189) / ANS 372 (32367) / HIS 365G (39352) / WGS 340 (46099)
MWF 10-10:50 AM CMA 3.114

Instructor: Dr. Aarti Bhalodia

Office: BUR 562

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 1-2:30 PM or by appointment

Email: bhalodia@austin.utexas.edu

Course Description

This course examines the South Asian diaspora in the 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 the U.S. We will then move on to studying the formation of Bengali-African, Punjabi-Mexican and other multiracial communities. We will study how American immigration laws have facilitated or inhibited South Asian migration to the U.S. 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 will bring to your attention relevant films, lectures, art, music, and dance performances. Our class meetings will be a blend of lectures and discussions.

Reading Assignments

Book chapters and articles on Canvas. The course is listed as AAS 325 for all students.

The following books are available in a digital format (“electronic resource”) through the UT libraries. You can download relevant chapters in PDF format. Use the following link to do a title search.

<http://catalog.lib.utexas.edu/search/t>

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

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).

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

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

Karen Leonard, *Making Ethnic Choices: California’s Punjabi Mexican Americans* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992).

Vijay Prashad, *Uncle Swami: South Asians in America Today* (New York: New Press, 2012).

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

Assignments and Grading

Attendance and Class Participation: 10%

Written Assignments: 10%

Class Presentation: 15%

Quizzes: 15%

Exam 1: 25%

Exam 2: 25%

Attendance: You are required to attend all class meetings. 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 two unexcused absences will affect your grade.

Class participation: You are responsible for completing all the assigned readings **before** each class meeting. Participation in class activities is crucial and a component of your final grade. We will have regular class discussions based on required readings in which you are expected to participate. In class and take home written assignments will also count towards class participation. If I am not satisfied with class participation I will give a pop quiz.

Written Assignments: Take-home written assignments will be based on assigned reading and other relevant course material.

Class Presentation: 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 the U.S., examples of acculturation, reasons for migration out of South Asia, transnational religious cultures, diasporic culture, South Asian inspired American material culture. Besides material objects you can also focus on famous South Asian Americans or characters from popular culture. If you are focusing on popular culture or famous personalities you can bring an object related to them or pull up photographs on the class computer. Tell us why you chose this particular object/person/character. Identify the relation to class material. Connect the object/person/character to class readings and discussions. What sparked your interest in the object/person/character? Prepare an oral presentation that is approximately 8 minutes in length. Use of visual aides (Power Point, Prezi etc.) is optional. Individual class 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. Along with the class presentation you will also submit a five page (double spaced) essay related to your presentation topic. This assignment is worth 15% of the overall grade.

Quizzes: You are responsible for completing three quizzes, each worth 5%. Quizzes will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions.

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

Deadlines: Hardcopy of written assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. For every day that your assignment is late you will lose one 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 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.

Emergency Situation

Please familiarize yourself with recommendations from the Office of Campus Safety and Security (512-471-5767) on what to do in the event of an emergency.

<http://www.utexas.edu/safety/>

Link to information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: utexas.edu/emergency.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL): 512-232-5050.

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