

Assignment 4: Learning New Approaches to Asian American Studies from Teachers in Our Communities

(due by Friday, Feb. 25)

Through this class, students are gaining the opportunity to learn (and teach) Asian American Studies beyond the four walls of a traditional university classroom. To fully take advantage of this opportunity, students need to change their existing mindsets, especially their deeply ingrained traditional ideas about learning and teaching. This assignment will help students change their mindsets. For this assignment, students are required to write a short report (two pages minimum) about what they learned by attending or participating in a community event related to low-income immigrants or immigrant workers. There will be about five events to choose from. Events will include participating in picket lines and demonstrations and attending community forums and other programs.

To write the report, students should use the following questions as guidelines, focusing especially on questions 3 and 4:

1. What did you learn by attending this event? First, what did you learn in terms of issues facing people in communities? Second, what did you learn in terms of ways that learning and teaching occurs in a non-classroom setting? For example, at this event, how did event organizers “teach” participants? Which methods were similar to those used in university classrooms, and which were different?
2. Learning in a community-based setting requires some students to participate in new activities, such as participating in picket lines or interacting with immigrant workers. By attending this event, did you do anything new?
3. In preparation for attending or participating in this community event, what preparation did you do to better understand the issues involved? If you did no preparation, why not? How should you have prepared to better gain from this learning experience?
4. Based on attending this event, what new ideas did you gain for expanding the ways that Asian American Studies can be learned and taught?