

Political Tour of Communities

This assignment is due by February 18

Each student is required to participate in and/or lead a political tour of one community where low-income Asian Pacific immigrants either live or work in Southern California, such as Chinatown, Little Tokyo, Carson, Little Saigon, Koreatown, Gardena, Little India, historic Filipino town, Panorama City, Monterey Park, Rosemead, Little Phnom Phen, or the Garment District.

This assignment should not be done individually but rather in small groups. Students are encouraged to organize tours with classmates. Students with some prior work in specific communities are strongly encouraged to take the initiative in organizing tours, but other students should not wait for others to provide leadership. Actually, any student who majors or minors in Asian American Studies at UCLA should have the expertise to conduct political tours of several local communities.

Political tours are different from tourist tours and community tours. To understand how political tours differ from tourist tours and community tours, see Aimee Pham's "Notes on Political Tours" at the following website:

<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/aasc/classweb/winter02/aas197a/notespt.html>

Students are required to write a report (five pages minimum) around the seven questions listed below, focusing especially on answers to questions 3, 4, and 7. Reports on political tours may be written individually or by groups of students. For students submitting a report as a group, include at the end of the group report one-page reflection essays by individual students from the tour group explaining what that person gained from participating in the group tour.

1. Why did you choose the particular community for your political tours? (Note: Please start on this assignment early — don't wait till the last minute. Also, this assignment tests the capacity of students to take initiative and work with others. Thus, no students should answer this question by writing that they wanted to participate in a political tour of one community but joined a tour of another community due to time problems or inability to organize a tour group.)
2. What have you learned in your previous Asian American Studies, Ethnic Studies, and related classes about this community?
3. How did you prepare for your political tour? For example, what did you find out about the history of this community, size of population, other demographic characteristics, etc.? What are current issues facing low-income residents or immigrant workers in this neighborhood — e.g., housing, health care, education, police abuse, etc.? Where did you find information for your tour preparation?
4. What did you learn from your political tour? How can you share this expanded awareness with others, such as other UCLA students?

5. What are ways that you will continue to increase your understanding of this particular community? Be specific.

6. Do you feel that in the future you can lead a future political tour for other students? Why or why not?

7. Begin to envision an expanded role for students in our communities. Based on your political tour, what can this expanded role be? Be specific.