

“Ethnic Identity in Asia and the Asian Diaspora”

PBRC-Sponsored Learning Cluster
Winter 2008

VISITING INSTRUCTOR: **Dr. Gladney** is President of the Pacific Basin Institute and a Professor of Anthropology at Pomona College. An internationally respected Asia specialist, Gladney is the author of four books and more than 50 academic articles and book chapters on topics spanning the Asian continent.

For Dr. Gladney’s bio, please visit: <http://www.pomona.edu/pbi/drugladney.shtml>

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This Learning Cluster will examine contemporary theories of ethnic and cultural nationalism from the perspective of Asia. Considering the Eurocentric nature of most theories of ethnic nationalism and nation-state formation, this course will ask: Are these theories useful for the Asian context? Do they help or hinder understanding of recent and current ethnic nationalisms in Asia? How does the colonial and post-colonial context radically alter the nature of ethnicity and nationalism? Are there different styles of nationalism in Asia and Europe? What is the role of religion, ritual, and representation in constructing nationalist ideologies in Asia? How has the internet and globalization influenced contemporary ethnic nationalism in Asia?

State-influenced “identifications” contribute to personal and group identity constructions that are highly relational in nature, especially in diasporic and border-crossing contexts. The course will take advantage of the large, historic presence of Asian diaspora communities in Southern California to examine some of these contexts and to acquaint students with the Asian-American struggle for identity. While case studies presented in the course will often reflect the instructor’s own expertise in China and Central Asia, students will be required to conduct substantial social, internet, and library research on an ethnic or national identity issue of their own choosing in papers and seminar presentations.