

SAN DIEGO MESA COLLEGE

AAPI

Asian American Pacific Islander

Student Success Guide



WE ARE *Mesa*



I am Dr. Ashanti Hands, the proud President of San Diego Mesa College. As an institution committed to equity and excellence, and an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI), we are excited to provide this Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Resource Guide for both new and returning students and their families. This Guide is our way of saying that we see you, and that we recognize your worth, dignity, life experiences, interests, challenges, abilities, needs, and potential. You are valuable to us and we want to create clear pathways to your success.

In this Guide, you will find information about academics, student support services, campus life, events, clubs, history, and information on our vibrant AAPI community and programs. There are many ways for you to get involved, excel, and thrive here at Mesa College.

We hope this Guide helps you find your community, your why, and your authentic self. In these pages, you will also see names and faces of some of the Administrators, faculty and classified professionals who are here to support you. Please take advantage of all the programs and support that you can find here at Mesa; get involved, contribute in a way that brings value and significance and don't hesitate to reach out.

I look forward to seeing you at Mesa!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ashanti Hands".

Dr. Ashanti T. Hands
President of San Diego Mesa College



AAPI

The Term

As of the 2022-2023 Academic Year, San Diego Mesa College has nearly 29,326 students, of whom nearly 4,408 students (15%) self-identify as having ties to Asia or the Pacific Islands with over 20 ethnic groups, such as Filipino, Vietnamese, Chinese, Native Hawaiian, etc.

Numerous terms have been used to collectively represent the Asian and Pacific Islander populations: Asian Americans (AA), Asian Pacific Islanders (API), and Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islanders (AANHPI). To best reflect the collective group of the Asian Pacific Islander communities, we use the term Asian American Pacific Islander to remain consistent with terms used historically at the local, state, and national levels. We recognize the rich range of identities and ethnicities within the AAPI umbrella such as East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander.

The grouping of AAPIs are generally categorized together based on government classifications. However these government categories may conflict with the self-identification of the ethnic groups as it leads to misleading data, stereotypes, and misrepresentation.

The usage for different terms to define the collective AAPI community may vary due to: community input, historical consistency, funding definitions, political organizing, etc. To briefly introduce the rich diverse ethnic groups within the AAPI community, below are a few ethnic groups categorized based on geographical regions.

SAN DIEGO
MESACOLLEGE

Who is your AAPI role model? and Why?

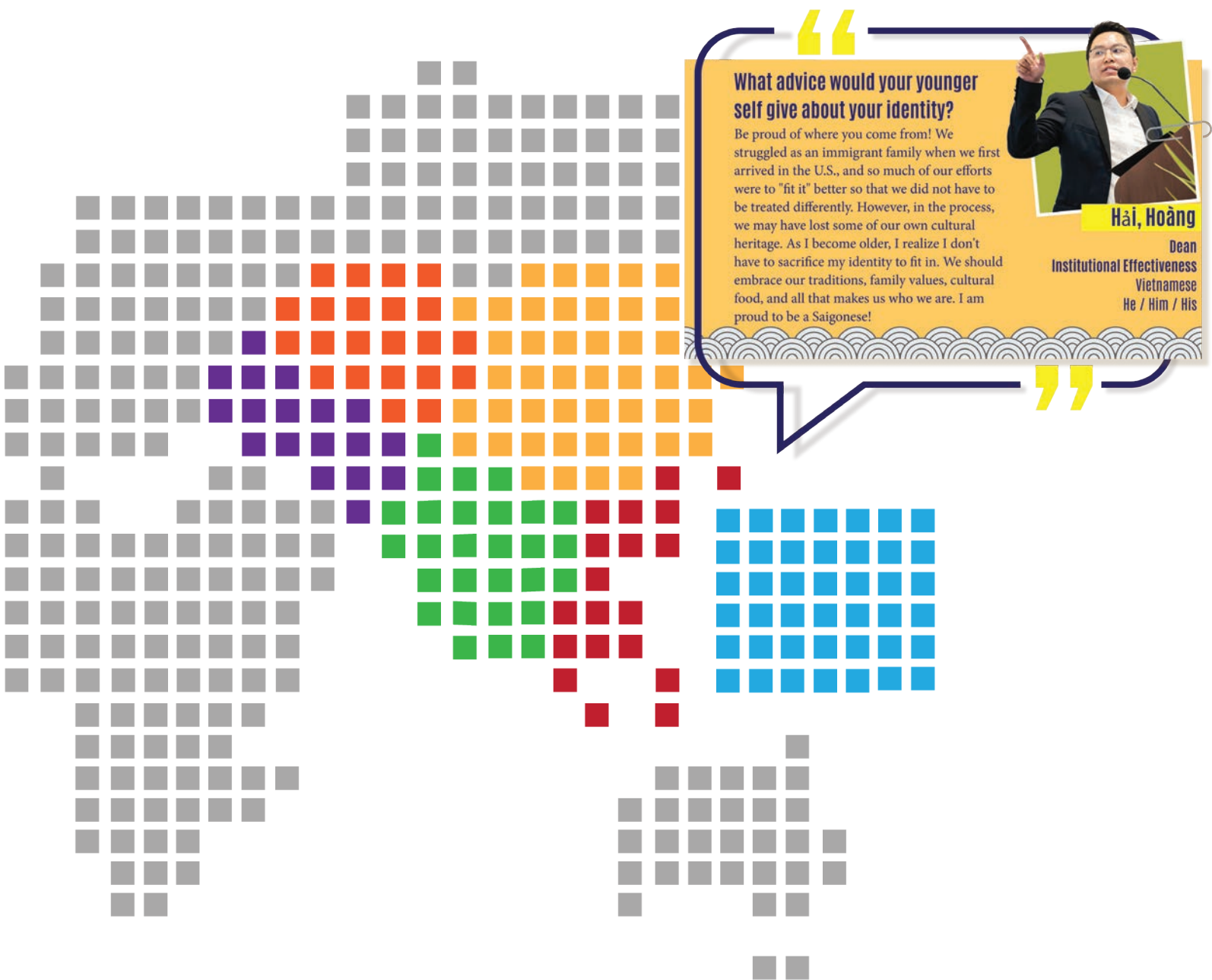
I am my AAPI role model. AAPI people are underrepresented in leadership roles in Higher Education, and through my own difficult and uphill journey, I have been able to ascend to the level of Vice President.

What advice would your younger self give about your identity?

Lean in to your culture. You are enough. You are valued.

Vice President
Administrative Services
Filipino, Chamorro
He / Him / His

Lorenze Legaspi



What advice would your younger self give about your identity?

Be proud of where you come from! We struggled as an immigrant family when we first arrived in the U.S., and so much of our efforts were to "fit it" better so that we did not have to be treated differently. However, in the process, we may have lost some of our own cultural heritage. As I become older, I realize I don't have to sacrifice my identity to fit in. We should embrace our traditions, family values, cultural food, and all that makes us who we are. I am proud to be a Saigonese!



Hải, Hoàng

Dean
Institutional Effectiveness
Vietnamese
He / Him / His

Central Asians:

Afghan, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Georgians, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Mongolian, Tajik, Turkmen, Uzbek

Southeast Asians:

Bruneian, Burmese, Cambodian, Filipino, Hmong, Indonesian, Laotian, Malaysian, Mien, Papua New Guinean, Singaporean, Timorese, Thai, Vietnamese

Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders:

(in the United States Jurisdictions & Territories) Carolinian, Chamorro, Chuukese, Fijian, Guamanian, Hawaiian, Kosraean, Marshallese, Native Hawaiian, Niuean, Palauan, Pohnpeian, Samoan, Tokelauan, Tongan, Yapese

South Asians:

Bangladeshi, Bhutanese, Indian, Maldivians, Nepali, Pakistani, Sri Lankan

East Asians:

Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Okinawan, Taiwanese, Tibetan Native

West Asians: This is a contested term, most people from the region do not self-identify as such. West Asia is typically referred to as the Middle East; and geographically includes the countries of Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey (straddles Europe and Asia) United Arab Emirates and Yemen



According to the 2010 and 2020 U.S. Census, there is remarkable diversity within San Diego's minority populations. San Diego County has the 7th largest AANHPI community in the U.S. with over 425,000 people. Asians, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders are projected to be one of the fastest-growing communities, a testament to their enduring presence and contributions for centuries.

One of the earliest Asian immigrant populations to settle in San Diego was of Chinese descent. Many of these immigrants were from the Guangzhou province and arrived in the U.S. via San Francisco's Angel Island. At this processing and detention site, many of these immigrants faced racism and adversity. A Chinese laborer, Tom Ah Quin, became a prominent figure in San Diego's Chinese community in the late 1800s. During his life, he was eventually employed by the California Southern Railroad to support the rail construction that would connect Los Angeles to San Diego in 1882.

The Convoy District, originally an area for industrial enterprise and military development, became a central location for Asian American communities to open service businesses such as restaurants, offices, and meeting locations. In 2022, this area was designated as the Convoy Asian Cultural District both by the City of San Diego and the State of California.

Linda Vista became a residential neighborhood built essentially overnight in the 1940s as part of the World War II effort in San Diego. After the end of the Vietnam War, many refugees from Southeast Asia arrived in San Diego via Camp Pendleton. In the 1980s, while most Vietnamese refugees lived in City Heights, many families would also settle in nearby communities such as Linda Vista because of its proximity to Asian businesses and services. The Linda Vista Shopping Center was one of the first malls in the U.S., built in 1943, is now home to prominent Vietnamese grocery and food businesses.

Clairemont Mesa became the City of San Diego's largest post-World War II subdivision of community living in the 1950s under the development of Carlos Tavares and Lou Burgener. The two developers mapped a new type of community living at the time that did not intend to incorporate a grid system of blocks and streets and instead utilized winding roads that took advantage of scenic views. By the mid-1950s, thousands of new homes were built and sparked a wave of San Diego's expansion into suburban living.

In 1990, San Diego Mesa College established the Asian Pacific Islander American (APIA) Advisory Committee, a longstanding group. By 2019, nearly 15% of the AAPI population was reflected in

San Diego Mesa College's serving area. Thus, the Kapwa Learning Community (KLC), the first of its kind in the San Diego Community College District, along with the Asian Pacific Diversity (APD) club was established. Students were inspired to learn about the AAPI community and to explore their identities as AAPI and/or AAPI allies while navigating their first year in college. Furthermore, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness created the first API Student Data Dashboard to help the campus make more culturally responsive decisions in terms of curricula and support services.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic was a devastating time and deeply affected the AAPI community through increased hate crimes. In response, San Diego Mesa College deepened its support and advocacy for AAPI students. Despite being a competitive grant, The Department of Education recognized these efforts and Mesa was awarded \$1.5 million dollars, being the first Title III Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI) grant awarded to a San Diego County community college. San Diego Mesa College supportive of AAPI student success; join us as we continue to pave a better future for our community!

*Contributed by Kathleen Dang,
Educator of San Diego API History*

Academic and Career Pathways

www.sdmesa.edu/pathways



Find your path to success with courses that lead to further learning and dream careers. Our academic and career pathways (ACPs) are designed to help you explore related programs in the areas that interest you, and connect you to relevant resources and support. Choose what you want to do, and we will help you get there.



Art, Design & Performance

Programs and career fields related to art, music, theatre, dance, architecture, interior design, and fashion.



Business & Entrepreneurship

Programs and career fields related to business, accounting, construction, manufacturing, and marketing.



Earth & Environment

Programs and career fields related to sustainability, physical sciences, geology, and geography.



Education & Guidance

Programs and career fields related to teaching, child development, and communication.



Engineering, Math & Sciences

Programs and career fields related to science, technology, engineering, and math.



Health, Medicine & Wellbeing

Programs and career fields related to physical health, nutrition, fitness, and rehabilitation.



Language & Literature

Programs and career fields related to language studies, communication, and composition.



People, Culture & Society

Programs and career fields related to ethnic studies, communication, and social and behavioral sciences such as anthropology, sociology, and psychology.



Still Exploring

Build a roadmap to success. Get help creating an educational plan that identifies the courses you need to take in the timeframe that works best for you. Our counselors are here to help.

ACADEMIC



Courses that Celebrate Asian Pacific Islander Desi Heritage



AAPI 124 Introduction to Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies

This course is an introduction to Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Studies and the evolution of the disciplines within the field of Ethnic Studies. Emphasis is placed on the formation of AAPI identities, and the experiences of AAPI communities through the lens of equity, self-determination, liberation, decolonization, and antiracism. Topics include AAPI engagement with the U.S. political and legal system and the US Constitution, California state and local governments, immigration legislation, white supremacy, and settler colonialism; historical and contemporary AAPI social justice movements to address anti-Asian violence; transnational familial and community politics; and the intersection of race, class, gender, and sexuality in the formation and development of AAPI communities in the United States. This course is intended for all students interested in Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies.

ARTF 125 Art History: Arts of the Asian Continent

This course provides a survey of paintings, sculpture, architecture, and associated fine arts from India, China, Japan, and other countries throughout the Asian continent. It emphasizes the social, religious, and political highlights of each culture and their effects on art forms from prehistoric to modern times. This course is designed not only for art students, but also for those who are interested in history, religion, philosophy, humanities, and cultural enrichment.

CHIN 101 First Course in Mandarin Chinese

This interactive, entry-level course introduces students to the Mandarin Chinese language and to Chinese culture. Emphasis is placed on the basic phonetic system, characters, grammar and common daily expressions. Topics also include Chinese culture, geography and history. This course is intended for students interested in an introduction to Mandarin Chinese language.

Advanced level courses are available (CHIN 102, 201, 202)



ENGL 230 Asian American Literature

This course is a survey of Asian American literature. The relationship between identity and the creative work of prominent Asian American writers is explored, as well as the ways in which Asian American writers have been influenced by various artistic, cultural, linguistic, and socio-political forces. Students are introduced to prominent Asian American texts and encouraged to analyze through writing and discussion the defining conversations and controversies in Asian American literary history. This course is intended for all students interested in Asian American Literature and Asian American Studies.

FILI 100 Filipino American Experience

This course is an overview of the history, cultures, values, contributions, experiences, and social struggles of Filipinos in America. Students apply theory and knowledge produced by the Filipino American community to analyze the history and lived experiences of Filipino Americans in relation to integration, acculturation, social struggles, and ethnic identity and affirmation. Students also critically evaluate the role of race and racism in Filipino American communities and experiences as well as the relevance of resistance, racial and social justice, and solidarity to current U.S. institutions and structures. This course is intended for anyone interested in the field of Ethnic Studies or the history and experiences of Filipino Americans.

What advice would your younger self give about your identity?

My younger self was insecure about being Korean American, largely because I lived in places where there were hardly any Asian American kids around, and I was teased for having slanted eyes and eating traditional foods at school. I doubt saying, "Just be proud and ignore the haters," would resonate with my younger self, but I would say to hang in there because embracing your identity once you find your footing in the world becomes much easier.



Gloria Kim

Professor of History
Korean American
She / Her / Hers

HIST 120 Introduction to Asian Civilizations

This course examines the social, cultural, and political evolution of distinct civilizations in East, South, and Southeast Asia from prehistory to the end of the sixteenth century. Emphasis is placed on topics such as the development of indigenous religions/philosophies, the rise and decline of regional kingdoms/dynasties, cultural achievements, and gender roles. This course is intended for all students interested in Asian history and culture.

HIST 121 Asian Civilizations in Modern Times

This course examines the evolution of the distinct cultures, thought, and institutions in East, South, and Southeast Asia from the sixteenth century to the present through critical investigations into the impact of modernization on the political, social, economic, and cultural dimensions of these societies. Emphasis is placed on topics such as the first encounters with Western powers, the evolution of Western imperialism, the rise of nationalist movements and independent nation states, and their evolution and progress to the present. This course is intended for all students interested in Asian history and culture.



HIST 123 U.S. History from the Asian Pacific American Perspective

This course examines the global, national, and local forces that shaped the lives of Asian Pacific Islander Americans (APIA) from the 1850s to the present. Topics include labor, migration, and settlement of diverse APIA groups; national debates over legal, social, and economic inclusion and exclusion; American overseas expansion; racial and gender politics; family formation; pan-ethnicity; and California constitutionalism. This course is intended for all students interested in history, ethnic studies, and Asian American studies.

HIST 130 The Modern Middle East

This course is a survey of modern Middle Eastern history from the Nineteenth Century to the present. Emphasis is placed on analyzing modern Middle Eastern historical events and processes within a global context. Topics include the historical development and role of Islam in the region, the 'decline' and dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, imperialism, Arab independence movements, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the resurgence of Islam and the role of the United States in the region. This course is intended for history majors and all students interested in the contemporary Middle East.



What advice would your younger self give about your identity?

I have grown into my identity, and I feel that it is only in the past decade or so that I have come to really understand how my ethnicity is interwoven into my identity. I can now honestly say that I am comfortable and satisfied with this because this is who I am. That makes me proud.



Dina Miyoshi

Professor of Psychology
Japanese American
She / Her / Hers

JAPN 101 First Course in Japanese

This is an entry-level course designed to introduce students to the Japanese language and cultures of Japan. In this interactive course, students learn and use the language by speaking, listening, reading, and writing at the novice level. Basic language structures and vocabulary for communication are examined and explored in Japanese.

Advanced level courses are available (JAPN 102, 210, 211)

MUSI 118 Asian and Pacific Music

This course introduces various traditional Asian music including India, the Middle East, East Asia, Southeast Asia, Central Asia, and Oceania. Areas of emphasis will be on learning about types of musical instruments, ensembles, musical styles, relevant history & geography, cultural contexts, and functions of music in traditional societies. This course is intended for music majors, or anyone interested in music.



PERG 120 College Success & Lifelong Learning (from an AAPI perspective)

This course teaches success strategies to enhance academic and lifelong learning skills. Students explore topics such as motivation and attitudes, values, goal setting, decision-making processes, critical and creative thinking, personal health topics, interpersonal communication, developmental psychology, and learning and personality theories, as well as other techniques for maximizing their abilities to succeed as lifelong learners. Students apply these topics as they relate to their self-development as integrated physiological and psychological entities and acquire strategies to effectively deal with issues in their personal lives and educational and career plans. *This course is a part of the Kapwa Learning Community.*

PHIL 106 Asian Philosophy

This course explores issues in the philosophical study of Asian philosophy, including questions relating to the nature of the universe, the status and meaning of humankind, and the qualities characterizing the good life. This course may be of special interest to students pursuing Pacific Rim or International Studies.

VIET 101 First Course in Vietnamese

This is the first course in Vietnamese with emphasis on understanding, speaking and reading the language of everyday life. In this interactive course, the elements of grammar are examined with practice in writing Vietnamese, using the subject matter relating to the culture and traditions. Basic language structures and vocabulary for communication are examined and explored in Vietnamese. This course may especially be of interest to students preparing for a career in education.

Advanced level courses are available (VIET 102, 201)

How do you celebrate/honor your heritage?

I celebrate Seol-nal (Lunar New Year's Day) and Chu-seok (15th of Eighth month of Lunar Calendar) with my family and friends with traditional Korean dishes.



Kyung Ae Jun

Research Planning Analyst
Korean
She / Her / Hers



AAPI 125 Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Identities and Cultures

This course explores the identity formation and the ongoing experiences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) through an analysis of culture and power. Students will examine how cultural productions – literature, film, visual art, music, performance, museums, national monuments and memorials, among others – produce ideas, stories, values and ideologies in different moments during the history of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Using various methods of cultural inquiry, students explore how race, class, gender, sexuality, immigration status and indigeneity together produce intricate arrangements of power in U.S. society as well as how Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders politicize(d) themselves through their cultural expressions. This course is designed for all students interested in Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies.

What advice would your younger self give about your identity?

Take pride in your Samoan culture by honoring your family and ancestors, and always remember your roots wherever you go.



Grace Aumoeualogo
CalWORKS Coordinator
Samoan
She / Her / Hers

AAPI 130 Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Women

This course is an introduction to the interdisciplinary study of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) women in American society. The course explores AAPI women's lived experiences as shaped by race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, immigration status, and other aspects of identity. Emphasis is placed on AAPI feminist scholarship; cultural productions and practices; immigration, refugee, and diasporic experiences; and resistance to various systems of oppression such as racism, sexism, classism, (neo)colonialism, militarism, imperialism, and global capitalism. The course is designed for all students interested in Women's and Gender Studies as well as those interested in Asian American Pacific Islander Studies.

Kapwa Learning Community

Kapwa is a Learning Community (LC) taught through an Asian Pacific Islander (API) lens. You will be enrolled with the same group of students for your first year allowing you to create safe spaces to explore your identity.

You don't have to identify as API to join Kapwa: we welcome all students! No matter how you identify, you will discover that Kapwa is a welcoming and accepting space.

Semester Commitments

Fall

Personal Growth 120
English 101

Spring

AAPI 124
English 205



For more information, please contact

Patricia "Trish" Guevarra at pguevarra001@sdccd.edu

How do you celebrate/honor your heritage?

I celebrate and honor my heritage by showing up. I show up authentically as a Filipina American and Asian American woman. I embrace all that I am and share that with others. Sometimes, I like to wear some cool earrings that I purchased from Filipino/ AAPI vendors and small businesses.



Patricia "Trish" Guevarra

General Counselor /
AANAPISI Co-Coordinator /
Faculty Mentor Coordinator
Filipina American
She / Her / Siya



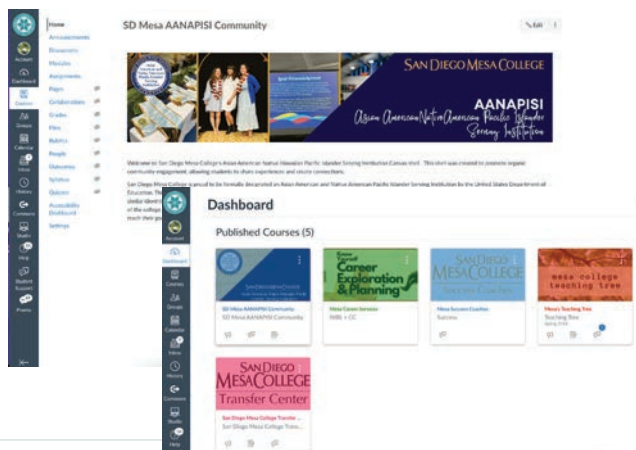
San Diego Mesa College Campus AAPI Community Canvas Shell



Not only do students spend time studying and going to school, but nearly 80% also serve as a family caretaker or work to make ends meet. Thus it may be a challenge for students to be present for any on campus opportunities (classes, workshops, social events, etc). The San Diego Mesa College AAPI Campus Community Canvas Shell serves as a tool for students to stay connected via online.

Benefits

- Build an online community
- Stay in touch with service opportunities or events
- Sharing resources beyond academics
- Food recipes
- Music playlist
- Community events



Supports for Your Needs

- Academic Support
- Educational Planning
- Personal Counseling



Counseling

📍 I4-303 📞 619-388-2672

- Assessment
- Class Placement



Testing and Assessment

📍 TBD 📞 619-388-2718

- Student Involvement
- Clubs
- Leadership Organization



Associated Student

📍 I4-408 📞 619-388-2699

- Book Loan
- Computer Use
- Copy Machines
- Study Space



Library

📍 LRC 📞 619-388-2880

- Bus Pass
- Payment Fees
- Class Holds



Accounting

📍 I4-103 📞 619-388-2704

Childcare



Child Development Center

📍 CDC 📞 619-388-2812

- Kapwa
- Umoja
- Puente



Learning Communities

📍 I4-201 📞 619-388-TBD

Disability Accommodations



DSPS

📍 I4-405 📞 619-388-2780

Financial Support



Financial Aid

📍 I4-100 📞 619-388-2817

Dreamers/AB540



Borderless Scholars

📍 I4-204 📞 619-388-2706

- Health Services
- Mental Health counseling
- Disease testing



Health Center

📍 I4-208 📞 619-388-2774

- Food Insecurity
- Housing Instability
- Clothing



The Stand

📍 I4-208 📞 619-388-2706

LGBTQIA+
Safe Space and Supports



Pride Center

📍 D-102 📞 619-388-5096

- Register for classes
- Residency clearance
- International Student
- Student ID



Admission

📍 I4-102 📞 619-388-2682

Academic Enhancement



Honors

📍 I4-109 📞 619-388-2341

- Scholarship Application
- Student Complaints
- Student Rights & Safety



Student Affairs

📍 I4-408 📞 619-388-2699

Veteran, active duty
military and military
dependent support



Veterans

📍 K-103 📞 619-388-2885

- San Diego Promise
- Campus Tour
- Initial Mesa questions



Outreach

📍 I4-104 📞 619-388-2230

NEXT STEPS

Transferring locally?

Stay connected with the AAPI Community with our local universities!

California State University, San Marcos



■ 9.5% AAPI Students

Center: Yes

Learning Community: No

Clubs: Yes(4)

Academics: Ethnic Studies Courses

Contact: tsuarez@csusm.edu

AANAPISI designated: Yes



What advice would your younger self give about your identity?

Embrace and honor your bicultural identity. You are not Asian or American, but both. Who you are and what you express reflects your circumstances and the context of what you bring to each situation. Both enrich what you offer.



Jaye Van Kirk

Professor of Psychology
Chinese American
She / Her / Hers

San Diego State University



■ 13% AAPI Students

Center: APIDA Center

Learning Community: (Residential)

Clubs: Yes

Academics: Major and Minor

Contact: vloh-hagan@sdsu.edu

AANAPISI designated: Yes

University of California, San Diego



■ 38% AAPI Students

Center: APIMEDA

Learning Community: No

Clubs: Yes

Academics: Minor

Contact: wsasaki@mail.ucsd.edu

AANAPISI designated: Yes



Student Clubs and Organizations



Asian Pacific Diversity Club

The Asian Pacific Diversity Club creates a safe space for those who are allies to the Asian, Asian American, and Pacific Islander populations at Mesa College. We represent diversity and open our club to all, regardless of ethnicity and identity. We aim to cultivate an inclusive community that promotes awareness, learning, support, and appreciation for our Asian American and Pacific Islander cultures and allies.



Tomiki Aikido Club

The Tomiki Aikido Club, as the name implies, focuses on the instruction and practice of martial arts, which can provide numerous benefits to participants, including social interaction, fitness, and resiliency. This club has been around for many years and the Interclub Council (ICC) regards it as a solid and reliably active student organization.



Lion Dance Club

The mission of Lion Dance club is to preserve and promote the art of lion dance through practices and performances at local and private events. A main goal of the club is also to help spread Asian culture, promote good health, women empowerment and help make the art more known in today's modern times.



Japan Club

The mission of Japan Club is to promote and introduce Japanese culture and linguistics to any who wish to learn and explore with peers.

How do you celebrate/honor your heritage?

I celebrate/honor my heritage by learning and continuing it on. Regarding the elders who blazed the path before me, I remember and honor them for their traditions and customs. I understand not many know my culture, so I learn and share it by cooking a dish, representing designs, or sharing cultural traditions that inspire and help others.



Leland Simpliciano

AANAPISI Director
Filipino-American
He / Him / Siya



The many activities sponsored by student clubs and organizations provide a rich and exciting multicultural dimension to college life at San Diego Mesa College. Clubs contribute to a lively and student-oriented environment. Examples of student activities include the following:

- Asian Pacific American Heritage Month
- Black History Month Celebration
- Cinco de Mayo Celebration
- Club Rush
- Community Service Activities
- Cultural Events
- Holiday Fair
- Leadership Retreats
- Workshops and Conferences
- Scholarship Workshops
- Spring Fling
- Student Appreciation Day
- Women's History Month
- Cultural Unity Week
- Festival of Colors

Careering While Asian

Join Mesa College as we connect students to professionals in both popular and unconventional career fields to help students have a better understanding of those careers.

Film Viewing

Representation matters on the big screen so AAPI viewers can visualize possibilities, relate to stories, or normalize AAPI culture on customers to a bigger audience. Mesa College provides AAPI themed films to bring awareness about AAPI issues.

Mentorship Program

Words matter!
Express yourself
through our poetry jams.

Healing Session

Your mental health matters. Various types of workshops and activities are available to support students through their academic and life journeys.

AAPI Recognition Ceremony

Come join Mesa College as we celebrate the milestones of our AAPI students as they obtain a program award or prepare to the next academic level of transferring to a university.

Kapwa Pop-Up Museum

Guests will have the opportunity to engage with the Kapwa Learning Community Students through storytelling of personal artifacts they choose to bring.

Kapwa Scholars Summit

Join the Kapwa Learning Community to see the final project students have been working on throughout the semester.

Career Preparation and Work Based Learning activities



Recommended AAPI Books and Reading



Minor Feelings: An Asian American Reckoning Cathy Park Hong

A poignant memoir delving into the intricate layers of Asian American identity, exploring the nuances of marginalization, stereotypes, and the emotional complexities that arise from these experiences.



Crying in H Mart Michelle Zauner

A moving memoir that navigates grief, cultural identity, and the author's relationship with her Korean heritage, vividly portraying her experiences through poignant reflections on loss, food, and the complexities of family.



Banyan Moon Thao Thai

A sweeping, evocative debut novel following three generations of Vietnamese American women reeling from the death of their matriarch, revealing the family's inherited burdens, buried secrets, and unlikely love stories.



Good Talk Mira Jacob

A graphic memoir that delves into the complexities of race, identity, and family through candid conversations with her young biracial son, offering a poignant exploration of challenging societal issues.



Long Live the Tribe of Fatherless Girls T. Kira Madden

A memoir chronicling the author's coming-of-age in Florida, exploring themes of family, identity, queerness, addiction, and the search for belonging amidst a backdrop of privilege, trauma, and personal growth.



On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous Ocean Vuong

A poetic and intimate novel written as a letter from a young Vietnamese-American man to his illiterate mother, exploring themes of identity, family, love, trauma, and the complexities of being an immigrant in America, all wrapped within beautiful, lyrical prose.



The Bandit Queens Parini Shroff

A young Indian woman finds the false rumors that she killed her husband surprisingly useful—until other women in the village start asking for her help getting rid of their own husbands—in this razor-sharp debut.



Pachinko Min Jin Lee

A gripping multigenerational novel that chronicles a Korean family's experiences in Japan, exploring love, identity, and the challenges of immigration across the 20th century.



The Magical Language of Others E.J. Koh

A memoir that explores the author's family history, focusing on her mother's letters and their impact on her life, examining themes of identity, belonging, and the complexities of intergenerational relationships shaped by distance and language.



Dust Child Nguyen Phan Que Mai

A suspenseful and moving saga about family secrets, hidden trauma, and the overriding power of forgiveness, set during the war and in present-day Viet Nam.



Shark Dialogues

Kiana Davenport

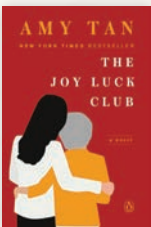
a multilayered novel that traces the history of a Native Hawaiian family across generations, exploring their culture, traditions, and the impact of historical events on their lives.



Biting the Hand: Growing Up Asian in Black and White America

Julia Lee

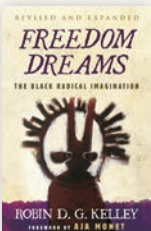
Whip-smart and iconoclastic, author takes her readers along with her journey through America and academia, coast to coast, as she grows up obliterates all the stereotypes into which she has been forced: woman, American, conformist, and rebel.



The Joy Luck Club

Amy Tan

A novel that intricately explores the relationships between Chinese immigrant mothers and their American-born daughters, delving into cultural identity and the challenges of generational differences through interconnected stories.



Freedom Dreams

Robert D. G. Kelley

Kelley explores the history of Black activism and the powerful visions of freedom that have driven movements for social change in the United States. Kelley delves into the radical traditions and cultural expressions that have shaped these struggles for liberation.



No-No Boy

John Okada

A novel that delves into the struggles and identity conflicts of a Japanese American man named Ichiro Yamada, who faces challenges post-World War II after refusing to serve in the US military while his family was interned.



If They Come for Us: Poems

Fatimah Asghar

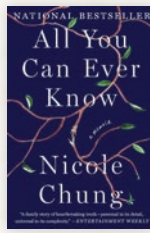
A poetry collection that delves into themes of identity, migration, partition, and belonging. Asghar's work explores the complexities of being a Pakistani Muslim immigrant in America and addresses the intersections of personal and political histories through evocative and powerful poetry.



Dear Girls: Intimate Tales, Untold Secrets & Advice for Living Your Best Life

Ali Wong

Wong shares personal stories, candid advice, and humorous anecdotes about her life, career, relationships, and the experiences that shaped her, aiming to impart wisdom and humor to her daughters while offering insights and entertainment to readers.



All You Can Ever Know

Nicole Chung

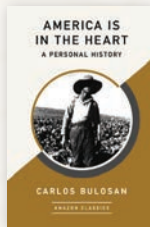
A memoir that reflects on the author's experiences as a transracial adoptee, exploring identity, family, and the complexities of her search for her birth parents, offering a poignant narrative that delves into themes of belonging and acceptance.



The Body Papers

Grace Talusan

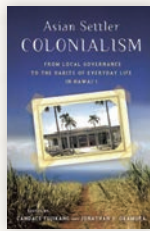
a memoir chronicling the author's immigration to the United States from the Philippines and delves into her personal experiences with trauma, family, and the complexities of identity.



America is in the Heart

Carlos Bulosan

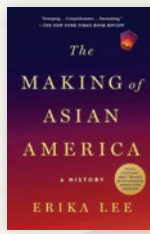
A semi-autobiographical novel that portrays the struggles of Filipino migrant workers in the United States during the early 20th century, highlighting themes of racism, labor exploitation, and the pursuit of the American Dream amidst adversity and discrimination.



Asian Settler Colonialism

Candace Fujikane

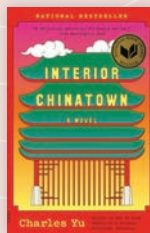
Candace Fujikane investigates the role of Asians in settler colonial contexts, exploring how their immigration and settlement intersect with colonialism, race, and the experiences of Indigenous peoples.



The Making of Asian America: A History

Erika Lee

The book offers a comprehensive exploration of the diverse experiences and contributions of Asian immigrants and their descendants in shaping the identity of Asian Americans in the United States across history.



Interior Chinatown

Charles Yu

A novel that uses a unique screenplay-style narrative to depict the challenges and stereotypes confronting Asian Americans in Hollywood, focusing on an actor striving to transcend limited roles and societal perceptions of identity.



The Farm: A Novel

Joanne Ramos

a novel that explores the lives of women, many of them immigrants, serving as surrogates in a luxurious facility, delving into themes of privilege, class, and the ethical questions surrounding commercialized reproduction.

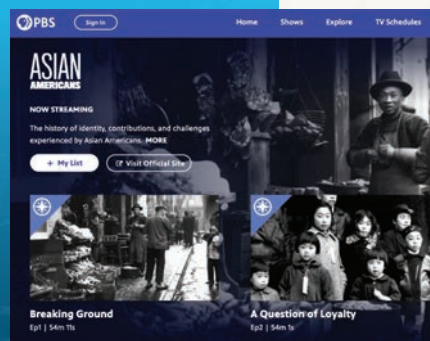
Recommended Audio and Video



ASIAN AMERICANS DOCU-SERIES - PBS



Asian Americans is a five-hour film series that delivers a bold, fresh perspective on a history that matters today, more than ever. As America becomes more diverse, and more divided while facing unimaginable challenges, how do we move forward together? Told through intimate personal stories, the series will cast a new lens on U.S. history and the ongoing role that Asian Americans have played.



Dear Asian Americans Just Like Media - Apple Podcast



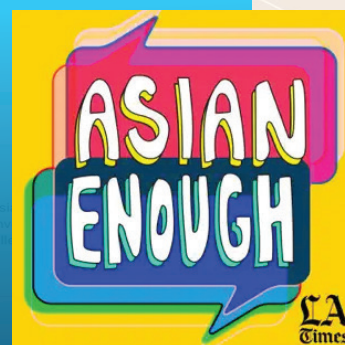
Dear Asian Americans is a podcast for and by Asian Americans, focusing on authentic storytelling rooted in origin, identity, and legacy. Host Jerry Won brings on guests from diverse backgrounds and career paths to celebrate, support, and inspire the Asian American community.



Asian Enough Los Angeles Times - Apple Podcast



Asian Enough is a podcast about being Asian American -- the joys, the complications and everything in between. In each episode, hosts Jen Yamato, Johana Bhuiyan, Tracy Brown and Suhauna Hussain of the Times invite special guests to share personal stories and unpack identity on their own terms. They explore the vast diaspora across cultures, backgrounds and generations, and try to expand the ways in which being Asian American is defined.



Rock the Boat Podcast - gorocktheboat.com



Craving fresh stories that challenge the status quo? Rock The Boat is your anchor. This podcast and online platform amplifies diverse voices of Asian Americans who are boldly shaping the future. Dive deep into inspiring interviews, thought-provoking articles, and a vibrant community, all celebrating resilience and pushing boundaries. From Andrew Yang to Michelle Phan, discover perspectives that will rock your world.





Podcast

Escape from Plan A Podcast



Created by writers from Plan A Magazine, this podcast aims to encourage critical thought, discussion and action amongst the Asian diaspora to collectively empower the AAPI community. The show alternates between group commentary and interviews on issues like anti-Asian violence, politics and pop culture. Started in 2017 and on its way to its 500th episode, this prolific and long-running podcast continues to examine critical issues relevant to the AAPI community.

Politically Asian Podcast



Through incisive humor and sharp insight, comedians Aaron Yin and Gerrie Lim tackle current events and politics affecting the AAPI community in this podcast. Every week, the hosts dive into topics like caste, Ivy League universities and white supremacy through satire and close analysis. They describe their show as: "Think John Oliver's show, but there's two of us, and we're Asian."

Dear White Women Podcast



Hosted by Sara and Misasha, two half-Asian women and mothers of multi-racial children, this podcast aims to reveal and uproot systemic racism and center conversations relating to social justice, equal rights and community organizing. Talking about the intersections of race, class and gender, the hosts share their experiences as biracial women straddling the color line between Asian and white identities.

Mx. Asian American Podcast



This podcast hosted by Karen Zheng explores the complicated intersection between Asian and American identity. Semi-weekly, Zheng invites business owners, creators and politicians from around the country to talk about all things Asian American. Join in on conversations about AAPI food, the stigma of mental illness, racism, parenting models and love languages.

Asian American History 101 Podcast



Daughter and father podcasting team Gen and Ted Lai lead listeners through deep dives into critical and sometimes overlooked moments and figures in Asian American history. The hosts have covered tasty topics like the history of Ketchup and Vietnamese food and serious ones like the impact of anti-miscegenation laws on AAPI communities. They also shed light on important but neglected figures in AAPI history, like Wataru Misaka, the first nonwhite and first person of Asian descent to play in the NBA.

Time to Say Goodbye Podcast



Hosted by a trio of Asian creators, Jay Caspian Kang, Tammy Kim and Andy Liu, this podcast opens each episode with a round of applause and a snippet of the overture of the Italian ballad "Time to Say Goodbye." The eclectic show interviews an AAPI guest each week to talk about a wide range of topics relating to the Asian diaspora like identity politics, gender roles and grief.

What advice would your younger self give about your identity?

Carefully hold and nurture the pieces of you that confess secrets of your bicultural body, that confound your loved ones, and and incite anger in your family. Don't change and don't fit in. Eventually, these things will become precious details of your beauty.



Ranmali Rodrigo

Associate Professor
Sri Lankan American
She / Her / Hers



www.sdmesa.edu/aanapisi



@aanapisi_sdmesacollege

Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI) is a federal designation that acknowledges the college has at least 10% of the student population is of Asian or Pacific Islander descent. This designation helps campuses qualify for funds to support the AAPI community such as the AANAPISI grant and the AANHPI- SAP. As the leading college in equity and excellence. We acknowledge the challenges that our AAPI students face and support them through our programs and services.

APIAC (Tri-Chairs)

Ranmali Rodrigo

Patricia Guevarra

Alexi Balaguer

Oversight Committee

Dr. Ashanti Hands

Dr. Isabel O Connor

Larry Maxey

Lorenze Legaspi

Linda Hensley

Jennifer Derilo

Patricia Guevarra

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Adriana Caetano Fournier

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Faith San Jose

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Aracely Bautista

Tassanee Chitcharoen

Katlin Choi

Jennifer Derilo

Shirley Flor

Sean Flores

Trish Guevarra

Vera Hanaoka

Hai Hoang

Christina Huynh

Ron Israel

Kyung Ae Jun

Sarah Kim

Gloria Kim

Pearl Ly

Ranmali Rodrigo

Ruth San Filippo

Leland Simpliciano

Hai Ly Ly

Jaye Van Kirk

Mike Williams

Robert Wong

San Diego Mesa College supports me and my identity as an Asian American Pacific Islander by promoting inclusionary practices and safe spaces that address everyone's unique needs. In my position, I have many opportunities to value students' quests for identity. Being surrounded by faculty, classified professionals, and administration who support courageous conversations, resourcefulness to question, and the ability to provide spaces for shared identities have been incredibly valuable and impactful.



Dr. Ailene Cua Crakes

Former Dean of
Student Development
Filipino-American
She / Her / Sly



San Diego Mesa College is a fully accredited, comprehensive college committed to equity and excellence. We honor our diverse community of students, faculty, professional staff, and administrators who collaborate to foster scholarship, leadership, access, and innovation in an inclusive learning environment. By promoting student learning and achievement that leads to degrees and certificates, transfer, workforce training, and lifelong learning, we empower our students to reach their educational goals and shape their future. Among the largest community colleges in California, Mesa College serves approximately 30,000 students per year, 20% of whom are full-time. Mesa College offers over 200 associate degree and certificate programs and is one of 15 California community colleges offering a four-year baccalaureate degree. Mesa College ranks as one of San Diego's top transfer institutions, is a proud Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI), and a military friendly institution, serving nearly 4,500 active duty servicemembers, veterans, and their families.

San Diego Mesa College Leadership

Ashanti T. Hands, Ed.D., President

Isabel de Los Angeles O'Connor, Ph.D., Vice President, Instruction

Larry T. Maxey II, Vice President, Student Services

Lorenze A. Legaspi, Vice President, Administrative Services



This publication is made possible through a partnership between San Diego Mesa College Student Services, Instruction, Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (IAANAPISI), and Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander - Student Achievement Program