



**Fall 2025**

**EALC250 Nation, Culture, and Power in East Asia**

**Wednesday/Friday 12-1:20 p.m.**

**THH205**

**Professor Jenny Chio**

This class explores entanglements of political power, nationalism, and cultural identity in East Asia. The objective of the course is to understand nationalism and nation-building as political, cultural, *and* social projects through case studies from different East Asian nations. We will also investigate the transnational flow of peoples, beliefs, and ideas into and out of East Asia and examine how such movements have sharpened as well as transformed national identities. Ultimately our collective goal is to dive into broader, globally significant questions such as: Why is nationalism dangerous in some contexts and a source of pride in others? How do ideas of national and cultural identity converge and challenge concepts of multiculturalism, diversity, and globalization?

Readings focus on contemporary ethnographic studies of nationalism and multiculturalism in East Asia as well as historical and theoretical studies that provide a broader framework for understanding how social differences have been transformed into political inequality and forms of domination. While the bulk of the course will be on the contemporary context, we will also examine how 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century colonial encounters shaped ideas about cultural difference, including discourses of race, have been used to justify the oppression of certain minority groups up to the present day. Through analytical writing exercises and independent research, students will gain skills in analyzing the relationships between socio-political structures, cultural values, and the lived experience of globalization and social transformation.