

IMMIGRATION & TRANSNATIONALISM

NYU Program in International Relations
Tuesdays, 3:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m., TISC LC2

Fall 2017

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COURSE OVERVIEW

This course explores some of the many challenges and opportunities associated with the movement of people across national borders. Global migration flows have reached unprecedented levels. About a quarter of a billion people—or 3.3 percent of global population—currently live outside their country of birth. These flows, of course, are not without controversy. In the United States, we are debating how to manage a large undocumented population from Mexico and an increase in undocumented children coming from Central America. Meanwhile, debates rage in Europe about Islam and assimilation while thousands of refugees die in the Mediterranean Sea fleeing conflict and repression in countries like Somalia, Eritrea, Afghanistan, and Syria. Many communities in developing countries, on the other hand, depend on and are changed by the massive sums of money that migrants send home. What drives trends like these, and what are their political, economic, and social implications? Why do people emigrate, how are people smuggled and trafficked, and to what extent can states control immigration and manage xenophobia? How do immigration policies affect families, children, and communities? What is the relationship between emigration and human development in developing countries? This course explores these and other questions about human mobility in the 21st century.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students will be evaluated on the basis of their class participation (worth one-third of the final grade) and two take-home essay exams (each worth one-third of the final grade).

Participation. Students are evaluated on both the quantity *and* quality of their class participation. The expectation is that students will engage with the assigned readings and link their comments to content from readings, lectures, and in-class films. Reference specific pages in the text when you make a point. Agree/disagree with the authors and your classmates. Raise questions and build from one another's points. Connect theories we learn about to real world cases that you are learning about in the readings and films. Share your opinions and life experiences, but please try to do so in the context of the readings and other content we study.

To prepare for class discussion, students will write a Critical Reflection Essay for each book we read, due the day we finish a book. Critical reflections should be submitted to NYU Classes by 11:00 am on Sept. 19, Oct. 3, Oct. 24, Nov. 14, and Nov. 28. There is not a word-count requirement for these essays, but a thorough critical reflection will probably be about 300-600 words. A good critical reflection has a few components: (1) it states, reflects on, and critiques the author's main argument(s) or objective(s); (2) it highlights interesting phenomena that you may have not known much about previously; (3) it raises questions for classroom debate; (4) it makes connections between the readings and what we have learned in course lectures, films, books, and from current events. Critical reflections will not be graded, but their quality and on-time completion will impact the class participation component of each student's overall grade.

Essay Exams. Both the Midterm and Final will be take-home essay exams. The deadline to submit them to NYU Classes is 2:00 pm on October 31 and December 19. These are hard deadlines, out of fairness to vast majority of students who turn their exams in on time. The purpose of the exams is to apply what we learn in the course to a new problem involving migration – either a hypothetical or something in the news. Students are evaluated on how effectively they make written arguments and how well those arguments are supported by specific concepts and examples from the course readings, lectures, films, and other course materials. Essays should make direct reference to assigned texts, course films, lectures, and insights from class discussion. There is no need to reference non-course materials in the exams. The Final Essay Exam will emphasize the second half of the course, but it will be cumulative in that questions will draw on concepts and readings covered throughout the course.

READINGS

Students should purchase and read the following books for this course. You may access other readings as PDFs on NYU Classes.

- Jacqueline Bhabha, *Child Migration and Human Rights in a Global Age*, Princeton University Press, 2014.
- David Kenney Ngaruri and Philip Schrag, *Asylum Denied: A Refugee's Struggle for Safety in America*, University of California Press, 2009.
- Patrick Kingsley, *The New Odyssey: The Story of the Twenty-First Century Refugee Crisis*, Liveright Publishing, 2017. [Note: a slightly different edition of this book was published in 2016 in the UK by Guardian Books under the title *The New Odyssey: The Story of Europe's Refugee Crisis*]
- Robert Courtney Smith, *Mexican New York*, University of California Press, 2006.
- Luis Alberto Urrea, *The Devil's Highway: A True Story*, Back Bay Books, 2005.

SCHEDULE & THEMES

September 5

Course Overview (No reading assignment)

I. Migration, Borders, and the State: The US-Mexico Case

September 12

- Read: Urrea, *The Devil's Highway*, pp. 1-114

September 19

- Read: Urrea, *The Devil's Highway*, pp. 115-220
- Critical reflection essay due by 11am

II. Assimilation, Transnationalism, and Homeland Development

September 26

- Read: Smith, *Mexican New York*, pp. 1-146

October 3

- Read: Smith, *Mexican New York*, pp. 207-292
- Critical reflection essay due by 11am

III. The Politics of Asylum, Migration, and Anti-Immigrant Sentiment in Europe

October 10

- Read: Kingsley, *The New Odyssey*, pp. 1-170.

October 17

- Read: Kingsley, *The New Odyssey*, pp. 174-320.

October 24

- Read: Anthony Messina, "The Organized Nativist Backlash: The Surge of Anti-Immigrant Groups," pp. 54-96 from *The Logics and Politics of Post-WWII Migration to Western Europe* (PDF on NYU Classes)
- Read: Christopher Caldwell, *Reflections on the Revolution in Europe: Immigration, Islam, and the West*, Ch. 3 and Ch. 6. (PDF on NYU Classes)
- Critical reflection essay due by 11am. This critical reflection should discuss the Kingsley, Messina, and Caldwell readings.

IV. Midterm Examination Essays

October 31

- Midterm exam essay must be uploaded to NYU Classes by 2pm
- Come to class to discuss and debate your responses

V. Legality, Citizenship, and Deportation

November 7

- Read: Kenney Ngaruri and Schrag, *Asylum Denied*, pp. 1-171

November 14

- Read: Kenney Ngaruri and Schrag, *Asylum Denied*, pp. 172-327
- Critical reflection essay due by 11am

VI. Child Migration, Families, and Human Rights

November 21

- Read: Bhabha, *Child Migration and Human Rights in a Global Age*, pp. 1-95

November 28

- Read: Bhabha, *Child Migration and Human Rights in a Global Age*, pp. 137-174 and pp. 238-281
- Critical reflection essay due by 11am

VII. Conclusion and Final Examination Essays

December 5

- Review session/catch-up day

December 12

- No class. “Legislative Day – Classes will meet according to a Monday schedule”

December 19

- Final exam essay must be uploaded to NYU Classes by 2pm.