What is this capstone seminar about?

This capstone seminar focuses on the meaning of membership and citizenship in a world of migration. On what bases do migrants move from being “outsiders” in their country of residence to being seen as – and feeling like – “insiders” or members of the society?

After a brief survey of theories of migration and the major shifts in immigration policy in North America and Europe, we will delve into the question of membership and citizenship from the perspective of three distinct legal statuses that migrants can hold: (1) officially recognized refugees and asylees; (2) legal permanent residents who apply for U.S. citizenship through naturalization; and (3) undocumented migrants who do not have status as legal residents. We will consider how important a particular legal status is for membership and belonging, particularly compared to other identities or social positions that might be relevant, such as national origin, race, or socio-economic status. Do immigrants of color or poorer migrants share more in common with each other, regardless of legal status, or does a migrant’s legal status create distinct experiences of membership and belonging?

In addition to extensive analyses of academic writing on these topics, student will engage in a series of hands-on projects. The main project will involve in-depth interviews with immigrants centered on questions of membership.

What is a “capstone seminar”? [Course Expectations]

This course is a capstone seminar, restricted to advanced undergraduate students majoring in Sociology. Unlike lecture courses, where the instructor speaks for most of the class, a seminar requires extensive discussion and debate by all participants in the class. The instructor facilitates and helps elaborate these discussions, but the success of the seminar rests on the engagement of every person in the class.

It is also a “capstone” experience that draws on the skills you have learned over your college years and uses this knowledge to present data and conduct research. Rather than just read about other people’s studies, you will generate knowledge through data collection and analysis, and you will practice putting together effective presentations of information.
This means that I expect, for each class:

- **You read and reflect on the assigned reading before class.** This is not skimming or reading in a mechanical fashion. Rather, you need a conceptual and analytical understanding of the material. This requires, at a minimum, good highlighting of the text. Better yet, write up summaries or diagram the reading. (See pp. 13-18 in the 2nd edition of “Writing in Sociology.”) For each week, I provide guiding questions. I expect you to think about these carefully.

- **You must be prepared to contribute to class discussion.** Research shows that people learn and retain much more when they are active learners rather than listening passively to a lecture. I expect everyone to participate, even those who are shy. The quality of your comments is more important than the quantity.

- **You must devote sufficient time and effort to class assignments.** Many students are forced, at some point, to complete an assignment at the last minute; balancing all your class work and outside obligations is not easy! Be forewarned, however, that you cannot do these assignments at the last minute. They will take substantial amounts of time, and you should plan accordingly. The assignments are part of the learning process – something you cannot do the night before an assignment is due.

**Evaluation:**

If you meet the expectations above, you will do well in this class. Your grade will be based on:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation in class discussion</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Entire semester!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written statistical profile - individual assignment</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>October 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft interview questionnaire</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>October 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcript of one in-depth interview</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>November 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral presentation of imm. grps – team assignment</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>November 22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emerging themes and coding memo</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>November 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final seminar paper</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>December 13</td>
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*Seminar participation:* You are expected to attend class, be familiar with the readings and contribute to class discussion. Participation also includes pulling your weight in group work.

*Statistical profile & presentation:* First, working individually, you will write a statistical profile of an immigrant group in the United States or another country of about 5-8 pages, including figures. You will use existing, publicly available data and work to present the information in a clear, accessible manner for a general audience. Afterwards, you will be assigned to a team and asked to create a short oral presentation comparing your groups on a few key characteristics. You will present this information to the class and an audience of visiting high school students. For further details, see the end of the syllabus. I’ll also go over this in class.
Interview questionnaire: You will hand in a draft of a questionnaire that you plan to use to guide your in-depth interviews with immigrants. You will carefully craft appropriate questions, consider the best order for the questions and put in prompts to yourself for further probing. You will justify your questions in the context of the main research question. For further details, see the end of the syllabus. I’ll also go over this in class.

Transcript assignment: You will hand in a transcript from one interview. This will be a complete written record of the whole interview. For further details, see the end of the syllabus.

Emerging themes and coding memo: You will hand in a short 2-4 page memo that identifies themes across three or more interviews and draws possible connections with class readings. This memo will be an unpolished “think-piece” that will help you work toward your final seminar paper. I’ll provide further instructions later in the semester.

Final seminar paper: This paper is a culmination of all your work over the semester. It will integrate class readings, some brief statistical information and, most importantly, your analysis of the in-depth interviews. I expect the paper to be 10-20 pages, double-spaced. Your paper should follow the standard format of an academic article: statement of purpose, literature review, discussion of case selection & methodology, data analysis & discussion, conclusion. We will talk more about the paper in class and I’ll provide further instructions later in the semester.

Ethical Considerations in Social Science Research:

All social scientists must be aware of their ethical and professional obligations. We will discuss research ethics throughout the semester. Students should become familiar with the American Sociological Association’s Code of Ethics (http://www.asanet.org/ecoderev.htm) and the rules of Berkeley’s Committee for Protection of Human Subjects (http://cphs.berkeley.edu/).

Course Materials:

Readings – Articles or individual chapters are available as electronic copies on bSpace. You also need to purchase the following book:


Audio recorder – You will need an audio recorder to conduct interviews. This can be a digital one or an old-fashion tape recorder. If this presents a problem, please see me in the first two weeks of class so we can make arrangements.
Readings and Seminar Schedule:

August 30

Week 1: Introduction – A World of Migration


September 6

Week 2: Why do People Move and Seek Membership Elsewhere? Economic Considerations and Social Networks


Read the UN report first. Based on this report, what are the causes of migration – why do people leave their countries for other nations? Next, read Sassen. How does she explain international migration? In what ways is her perspective the same as the UN report, and in what ways does it differ? Now read Massey’s synthesis of migration theory. Draw up a table or a diagram of the different theories he presents and identify how they differ or resemble each other. Finally, take a step back and consider all three readings. What seems the most persuasive argument to account for migration? Are there arguments missing from this debate?

September 13

Week 3: Can People Migrate and Become Members? The Role of Government Policy


Bloemraad, Becoming a Citizen, Introduction & Chapter 1.
Zolberg’s article is a direct critique of Massey. Why does Zolberg find Massey’s account inadequate? What is Zolberg’s argument about the mechanisms that drive migration? Now consider the work by Menjívar and Bloemraad, who discuss the implications of government policy on beyond border-crossing for integration experiences. In what ways are these two authors’ arguments similar to Zolberg? In what ways do they differ or expand on Zolberg’s approach?

In-class tutorial: finding, reading and presenting immigration statistics
- Please bring a laptop or arrange to share one with a friend. I will do an in-class tutorial to help you with the statistical profile assignment.
- Also consult the resources on bSpace.

September 20
Week 4: Refugees and Asylees – Who Gets In, and Why?


Read the UNHCR publication first. According to UNHCR who is as a refugee or someone of concern — that is, on what basis does someone count as a refugee? Now take a second look at the pamphlet. What is the implicit portrayal of refugees, in the text and pictures, beyond humanitarian concerns or legal status? Next, read the official OIS report. What is the implicit or explicit explanation of who counts as a legitimate refugee or asylee in the US? Now read Zucker and Zucker. According to them, what are the factors that influence who gets into the United States as a refugee or asylee? Read the article by Rottman, et al. last. What explanations do they consider for ‘who gets in and why'? Based on their evidence, which explanations receive the most support? Finally, take a step back. The Zucker & Zucker piece is more than twenty years old; many things have changed in the world, including the end of the Cold War. Given the other three readings, is their analysis a historical artifact of another time, or still relevant today? Why do you think this? Consider the Menjívar reading from last week: what are the implications of being accepted as a refugee, or not?


In international and domestic law, “refugee” is a legal status. Why does Zetter talk about this as “labeling” and a “bureaucratic identity”? What does he mean when he uses these terms? From the cases he discusses, why and how is being labeled a refugee both a benefit and a problem for these migrants? Zetter also discusses people’s agency in adopting or contesting the refugee label, as well as the structural and organizational constraints that impose this label on migrants. Compare and contrast the Brown and Bloemraad readings: in their discussions, how does legal status as a refugee constrain and/or offer agency to the migrants they study? Through what pathways or mechanisms does the abstract legal category of refugee influence these people’s lives?

October 4
**Week 6: In-depth Interviewing as a Tool to Understand Membership & Belonging**

Bloemraad, *Becoming a Citizen*, Chapter 4.

Hand-outs on quantitative and qualitative interviewing, doing in-depth interviewing.


**In-class tutorial:** what is in-depth interviewing, and how do we do it?

- Also consult the resources on bSpace.

⇒ **Statistical Profiles DUE**

October 11
**Week 7: Immigrant Citizenship and Naturalization: Constructing the Nation**

USCIS web page on citizenship and naturalization:

[http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.eb1d4c2a3e5b9ac89243c6a7543f6d1a/?vgnextfmt=default](http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.eb1d4c2a3e5b9ac89243c6a7543f6d1a/?vgnextfmt=default)


Skim the two short reports on who naturalizes in the United States and visit the USCIS web page on citizenship. What impression do you get about who can be a citizen and why they should become one? What role does the immigrant play in naturalization, and what role does the government play? Next, read Aptekar’s article on naturalization ceremonies. How does her account support or challenge the official presentation of naturalization? Why is immigrant citizenship important for the state? What message, according to Aptekar, does the US government communicate to new citizens? Now read Michalowski’s analysis of citizenship tests in five countries. Pay attention to both what she proposes that these tests represent, and how she analyzes the data. What other explanations for the tests might she have considered? What are the strengths and weaknesses of her data analysis? Finally, take a step back and consider the idea of 'labeling' in the context of citizenship. Speculate about what the label of “citizen” means for the lives of people with this status in the United States.

October 18

Week 8: Citizenship and Belonging - Real Americans or Forever Foreigners?


earliest and strongest examples of a civic nation. How does Smith respond to this image? What kind of evidence does he bring to bear to support his claims? What other evidence might you give to support or challenge Smith? Read Schildkraut’s article next. Smith’s argument is rooted in U.S. history; Schildkraut uses contemporary survey evidence. How does her research speak to Smith’s argument? How convincing do you find her evidence? Next, consider the articles by Tuan and Bloemraad. Both use a third type of evidence: in-depth interviewing. In what ways does Tuan’s argument complement or challenge the first two readings? Now compare Tuan and Bloemraad. On what points do they agree and where do they disagree? Evaluate points of disagreement: why might they exist? Consider the data they use and their analysis.

October 25
Week 9: Student Interview Projects – Recruitment, Ethics and Analysis


Hand-outs on transcription and conducting qualitative interviews.


In-class tutorial: Doing the interviews – recruitment, ethics and analysis
• We will discuss your interview guides and the research process.

November 1
Week 10: Undocumented Migrants in the United States


Abrego, Leisy Janet. 2006. “I can’t go to college because I don’t have papers: Incorporation Patterns of Latino Undocumented Youth.” Latino Studies 4(3): 212-231.

Skim the two government reports to get a sense of the unauthorized population in the United States and deportation activities in recent years. Next, read Abrego and Gonzales and consider how legal status affects their subjects’ lives. In particular, consider the issues of labeling, legitimacy and identity we have discussed thus far. For example, what does being American mean in this context? What are the processes or institutions that change undocumented young people’s sense of belonging as they grow older? How does legal status become a form of differentiation separate from distinctions based on gender, race, ethnicity, national origin and class?

November 8

**Week 11: Legality, Race and Ethnicity: Status by Association**


Legal status is held by individuals, but there is growing evidence that its effects – positive or negative – can be felt by people who hold a different legal status but are perceived to be in the same group. How do these dynamics play out in the articles by Horton and Jiménez? Are perceptions of illegality “by association” a new form of racial stereo-typing or is it something different? Why do you think this? How do those studied by Horton and Jiménez challenge status by association? What do these challenges and the form that they take say about the contours of membership in the United States?

⇒ We will also discuss your interview experiences for part of the class and the team-based oral presentations.

November 15

**Week 12: Membership for the Undocumented: Marginalization and Mobilization**


Membership is not just about personal identity, but also about standing vis-à-vis other people and about the claims individuals can make as members. Gleeson considers undocumented individuals’ membership as workers, and whether this allows them to make claims on others – both the people they work for and the
Based on her research, how does legal status affect agency and claims-making? Pallares and Flores-González focus on those who mobilized during the immigrant rights rallies of 2006. What sort of claims-making do they document? Why might these frames be powerful? Now take a step back and consider the frames used in the debate over unauthorized residents: as illegal law-breakers, as hard workers, as family members, as humans with inherent rights. What are the advantages and limitations of these frames for promoting membership in US society?

We will also discuss your interview experiences for part of the class and the team-based oral presentations.

** Interview Transcript DUE

November 22

Week 13: Making Effective Presentations using Immigration Data

- No reading this week; students will do oral presentations and interact with a visiting high school class from San Francisco. You should also be working on your interview project this week.

** Oral presentations DUE

November 29

Week 14: Interview experiences and emerging themes

- No reading for this week; students will present emerging themes from their research for discussion and feedback.

** Emergent Themes and Coding Memo DUE

FINAL SEMINAR PAPER: Due Tuesday, December 13
Hand in a hardcopy of the paper to my mailbox in 410 Barrows Hall by 3:30pm.
Statistical Profile of an Immigrant Group

The purpose of this assignment is to familiarize you with some of the statistical resources available to researchers of immigration and to practice presenting numerical data.

Write a statistical profile of about 5-8 pages, including figures, of one immigrant group in the United States or in another country. Your profile should integrate graphical displays of numerical data (tables or graphs) with a narrative explaining the most important points from the figures. Answer the following questions in your profile:

1. Describe, in broad terms, the migration history of your group. When did your group first begin arriving in significant numbers? Have there been peaks and dips in the group’s migration? Speculate about the reasons for changes over time.

2. What is the total number of foreign-born of your immigrant group today? What is their percentage of all foreign born residents? What is their size relative to other groups?

3. What are the predominant means of immigrant entry for your group today, i.e., migration as family sponsored immigrants, employment immigrants, temporary workers, refugees & asylees and/or illegal migrants?

4. Investigate two or three demographic or socio-economic characteristics of the group, e.g., their residential patterns, gender or age composition, educational attainment, poverty, racial diversity, family structure, citizenship status, etc. Speculate on why you see these patterns. In speculating about the numbers, draw on the course readings and seminar discussion. You do not have to do further reading, but you may if you wish.

In putting together your report, you must use at least two different, reliable sources of statistical data. You can use more. You must also provide proper referencing for your statistical data. Give some thought as to how credible the numbers are and include any concerns you might have in your narrative.

Evaluation: I will evaluate you on how well you use statistical data to profile your group and your ability to integrate the numerical presentation of data with a narrative account. The profile should be neat and easy-to-read. I will also be looking for thoughtful speculation about the reasons for the numbers you document.

Later in the semester I will place you in teams and you will develop a short 5-8 minute oral presentation (with PowerPoint slides or hand-outs) comparing and contrasting your groups. You will present this to a visiting group of high school students, so you will need to think hard about effective and clear presentation of statistical material.
Draft Interview Questionnaire

The purpose of this assignment is to write a solid first draft of an interview guide that you will use for your in-depth interviews. Your interview will be semi-structured: guided by a questionnaire, but carried out like a conversation through “prompting”. I will offer feedback for improving this guide before you do your first interview.

Two general questions frame our class and all interviews:

- How does immigrant status affect membership in U.S. society?
- How important is immigrant status compared to other criteria that could be used to distinguish “insiders” from “outsiders”?

In putting together your interview questionnaire, you need to narrow these research questions to better direct your recruitment and in-depth interviewing. Consider what sort of people you might interview (of different legal statuses, different racial groups, different socio-economic situations, etc.) and what type of life experiences you want to investigate (e.g., treatment in school, experiences getting a job, engagement with U.S. politics, etc.).

For this assignment:

1. Specify a targeted research question you want to answer. What particular aspect of membership and inclusion do you wish to address?

2. Identify a few broad topic areas that will help you answer your research question. Within each topic area, draft a series of questions you plan to ask your respondent. (Review class readings and resources on creating a strong interview guide.)

3. Consult other studies on your topic and/or try out some of these questions to see if they work; brainstorm other ways to get at the data you need. Refine your interview guide.

4. Write up your interview questionnaire in the form you would use it during your research. Include probes that you might ask during the interview.

Hand-in the following:

- A one-page cover sheet with your name, your targeted research questions, and 1-2 single-spaced paragraphs explaining why the topic areas you identified and questions that you ask will help answer your research question. Convince me that your questions will elicit data useful in answering your research questions.
- Your draft interview guide, as you plan to use it for your first interview.
Interview Transcript Assignment

Once accepted, you will use your questionnaire to interview people for your final seminar paper. Request permission to tape the interviews, explaining that the interview is confidential. Ensure that you meet the standards of human subject protection. At a minimum, this requires informed consent and protection from harm. I will provide a consent paragraph.

The purpose of this assignment is to provide a chance for both of us to see how the interview guide works and how you are doing with in-depth interviewing. The transcription will also allow you to start thinking about themes and topics to follow up in future interviews.

For this assignment, you will take one interview (ideally, an early one), which should last for 30-90 minutes. Fully transcribe the entire interview.

WARNING: It usually takes three to five hours to transcribe one hour of audio.

Hand-in the following:

- **Short summary**: At the top of the first page write a short summary of the interview – whether it went well, where it took place, whether the respondent was nervous, and additional information relevant to understanding the transcript (e.g. had to turn off the recording at some places; there was an interruption in the middle of the interview, etc.).

- **Write up the interview**: Include everything that is said. This means writing up partial sentences, small digressions, grammatical mistakes, etc. Also include non-verbal things (e.g. respondent pounds the table or shrugs his shoulder). Single space the dialogue of one speaker and separate speakers’ words with a single space. Use “I” to designate the “interviewer” followed by a colon and several spaces or a tab. Use the letter “R” followed by a colon to designate what the “respondent” said.

- **Emerging themes**: At the end of the interview, on an extra page, jot down 2-3 short theoretical or methodological memos to yourself. What themes does the interview raise that might you want to pursue? Should you ask different questions in the next interview? Did something unexpected come up? How does the interview confirm or challenge other research on this topic?

I will provide further instructions on the transcript later in the semester.