International Migration and the Politics of Immigration

Professor: Dr. Alex Caviedes
Office hours: M: 12:05 – 12:35, 2:00 – 4:15*
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Lecture meets: M-W-F 1:00-1:50
Thompson Hall E363

International migration has been one of the signature phenomena of the 20th century. This course seeks to examine immigration from a comparative historical and political perspective, bringing together insights from a variety of social science disciplines including political science, sociology, economics and geography. The first portion of the course explores theories of the causes for migration and its interrelation with globalization. This requires us to explore the economic, humanitarian, cultural and security aspects of the phenomenon. The second portion of the course focuses more narrowly on the sociology of immigration and how race and identity impact the experience. While we will be exploring all these issues by drawing on European, American, African and East Asian examples, the final portion involves a more specific examination of immigration in the United States. After re-examining the reality and mythology of immigration in the US, we will explore more current issues such as immigrants in the US labor market, border control, and the current state of domestic immigration politics.

* This course is an approved upper level general education (CCC) course. Thus, there is an emphasis on reading primary texts and on expressing oneself through writing. Students will gain a historical perspective of migration and how it influences contemporary civilization. This will demand that students critically and methodically analyze arguments and evidence presented.

** This course satisfies the political science department’s student learning outcomes (SLOs) 1, 2, and 3. Students will acquire substantial political facts and history concerning international migration and immigration in both the US and globally. Students will learn about the major theories explaining why migration happens and how it impacts migrants and host societies. Through papers and written examinations, students will be asked to both communicate what they have learned and present some findings, or at least analysis, of their own.

Required readings: The text, (* in the weekly readings), is on order at the College Bookstore:


All other required readings are found online in ANGEL in pdf format. Those with three asterisks (***') are optional (I often draw from them in lecture) = no need to print them out.

* On Sept. 9, I will check to see whether you have printed out the online readings. Failure to have these printed out by then results in a 0 for your class participation grade until completed.
**Course requirements:** The requirements for this course are:

1. **Attendance and class participation** (10% of the final grade)
   - Each unexcused absence over four results in a one-point deduction
   - Tardiness, sleeping, newspaper reading, excessive talking with neighbors, preparing for other courses, or cell phone use in class results in a -0.3 deduction
   - You are responsible for printing out the online readings and bringing them to class. They must all be printed out and shown to the instructor by Sept. 9 (earlier is fine).

2. **Mock asylum hearing assignment**, on October 4 (15% of the final grade);

3. **First Exam**, to be taken in-class, October 11 (20% of grade);

4. **Second Exam**, either take-home exam or a short 6-page paper. Paper details will be made available if this option is chosen. Due by November 15 (20% of the grade);

5. **‘Letter to the editor’ assignment**, due by December 6 (10% of grade);

6. **Final Exam**, to be taken in-class, December 18, from 1:30 to 3:30 (25% of grade).

**E-mail:** E-mail is a useful tool if used judiciously. Check your e-mail regularly (I would suggest daily) as I often send out links to relevant newspaper stories. I make every effort to respond to emails within roughly 24 hours (not including weekends), but it would not be wise to rely on receiving a response within that time. I prefer e-mail communications to be limited to administrative questions or short factual questions. Office hours remain better suited for conceptual questions requiring explanation or discussion.

**Students with Special Needs:**
Reasonable accommodations are available to students with documented disabilities at SUNY Fredonia. Students who may require instructional and/or examination accommodations should contact the office of Disability Support Services for Students (DSS), located on the 4th Floor of the Reed Library (716-673-3270 or disability.services@fredonia.edu). The DSS coordinator will review documentation and determine accommodations on a case-by-case basis. DSS will notify me with an accommodation letter that verifies that you have registered with the DSS office and which describes any accommodations approved for you. After you have met with the DSS coordinator, please contact me so that we can discuss any needed accommodations.

**Stay in Communication with your Professor:**
If things such as illness, falling behind with your assignments or preparation, or general confusion arise, please keep me informed. I have the capacity to be flexible and help you only to the degree that you make me aware of such issues in a timely manner.
In this spirit, students who foresee scheduling conflicts (extracurricular or school-sponsored activities) should let me know as far in advance as possible.
Grade Scale:

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SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND TOPICS

SECTION I. INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

Week 1 – International migration: issues, trends and explanations

Aug. 26: Introduction to the Course

Aug. 28: * Castles and Miller, Ch. 1 and 2 (only up to p. 30)

SQ: Be able to distinguish between economic vs. world systems vs. migration systems theories.


Week 2 – Migration in History

Sept. 2: * Castles and Miller, Ch. 5 “Migration to Europe, North America, and Oceania since 1945”

SQ: Are similar migration trends in Europe and North America occurring at the same time?

Sept. 4: * Castles and Miller, Ch. 6 “Migration in the Asia-Pacific Region” (only skim 136-8)

SQ: What differentiates Asian migration in the first and second half of the 20th century?
Week 3 – Migration under the Sign of Globalization


* Castles and Miller, Ch. 3 “Globalization, Development and Migration”

SQ: In what ways has globalization affected development through migration?


SQ: Does less authority over migration always mean a loss of state control over migration?


SQ: Has the European Union – a classic example of globalization – been quick to embrace immigration?

Week 4 – The Nation-State and Migration

Sept. 16: * Castles and Miller, pp. 41-47 and Ch. 8 “The State and International Migration: The Quest for Control” (except 188-195 “Refugees and Asylum”)

SQ: Employer sanctions, legalization, and temporary worker admission programs: are these really the key policy measures for managing migration?


SQ: Are there trends in migration policy? Are governments still making policies? Of what type?


SQ: What are the root causes of migration from underdeveloped countries?

Week 5 - Immigration and the Labor Market

Sept. 23: * Castles and Miller, Ch. 10 “Migrants and Minorities in the Labour Force”
SQ: Is it easy to answer the question: “Does immigration economically help ‘society’?”


SQ: Where do Japan’s foreigners mainly come from, and in what sectors do they work?


SQ: What sectors welcome migration in Europe? Does that include everyone in that sector?


**Week 6 – Asylum and Refugee Regimes**

**Sept. 30:** * Castles and Miller, pp. 188-195 “Refugees and Asylum”

SQ: What are some of the root factors “pushing” refugees?


SQ: What is the institutional (which organization) and legal (what law and legal definitions) framework of the refugee regime?


**Oct. 4:** Asylum Hearing Exercise

*** FILM: Last Resort
Week 7 – The Securitization of Immigration


* Castles and Miller, Ch. 9 “Migration and Security”

SQ: What do the authors mean when they refer to a ‘nexus’ between migration and security?


SQ: When can conflict arise between diasporas and their host state/societies?


SECTION II. IMMIGRATION AND IDENTITY FORMATION

Week 8 – Integration and Assimilation

Oct. 14: * Castles and Miller, pp. 33-41 and Ch.11 (pp. 245-63) “New Ethnic Minorities in Societies”

SQ: Why does the book use the expression “incorporation” rather than “assimilation”? Are the three models of immigration (p. 250) related to how immigrants are incorporated into society?


SQ: Is acculturation (social/psychological distance) the primary factor in language acquisition?


**Week 9 – Transnationalism and Diaspora**

Oct. 21: * Castles and Miller, pp. 30-33.


SQ: What is transnationalism, and what realities might challenge the degree to which it exists?


SQ: What 5 tendencies of globalization tend to support the existence of diaspora groups?


**Week 10 – Race and Immigration**

Oct. 28: * Castles and Miller, pp. 263-68 (and re-read pp. 37-8)

Waters, Mary C., 1999: *Black Identities: West Immigrant Dreams and American Realities* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), Ch. 5, “Encountering American Race Relations,” 140-91. [It’s long, so skim – give it about ½ hour to get a sense of the problems/impressions]

SQ: What does the author mean when she claims the immigrants lack an ‘oppositional identity’?


SQ: What are the three theories of racism Husbands considers in his study?

Nov. 1: FILM: Mississippi Massala

**Week 11 – Gender and Immigration**

Nov. 4: FILM: Mississippi Massala (cont.)


SQ: Does international marriage offer Philippinas a way to rise socially?


SQ: How does female immigrants’ political activity differ from those of men, and why?


*** FILM: Bend it like Beckham

**SECTION III. IMMIGRATION IN THE US**

**Week 12 – History & Myth**


SQ: It is evident that immigrants have not always been welcomed with open arms. Did organized religion play a role in making the US more welcoming to immigrants?

SQ: Were the policies considered mainly an example of xenophobia? If not, what drove them?


**Week 13 – Border Issues**


SQ: Have border/immigration control policies in the last 20 years been successful?


SQ: What types of freedoms does Franz claim are being taken away?


SQ: What types of dangers do the migrants face in their journey, and where do they find help?

*** FILM: Sin Nombre

**Week 14 – Public Opinion and the Politics of Immigration**


SQ: What concrete policy suggestions does Martin offer as plausible and necessary?


SQ: What demographic characteristics seem to impact Americans’ acceptance of immigration?


SQ: Pick out at least two arguments from Huntington that you wish to contest, as well as two in which you think he brings up some important considerations.

**Week 15 – Political Economy of Immigration**


SQ: Generally speaking, how quick is the rise in immigrants’ economic fortunes?


SQ: What was the trade-off between the US and Mexico that NAFTA was intended to produce? Did it happen as planned?


SQ: What in particular has fueled the success of Koreans in Los Angeles?