At the end of 2017 there were over 68.5 million forcibly displaced people around the world, the highest number ever recorded (UNHCR, 2019). The number of newly displaced people in 2017 alone was 16.2 million, which is the equivalent of 44,400 new displacements every single day. Over 25.4 million registered refugees were among those displaced, and of these just 102,800 were admitted to third countries for permanent resettlement. Historically the United States has been the largest resettlement country in the world: since 1975 the US has resettled more than 3 million refugees. Refugees in the U.S. are entitled to an array of federal, state, and local supports that other immigrants must do without. At the same time, refugees in the U.S. are arguably subject to greater scrutiny and systems of social control than most other un-incarcerated domestic populations. However, the terrain of U.S. refugee resettlement has shifted dramatically as a result of the Executive Orders introduced by the Trump Administration.

This course asks the central questions: How is refugee status constructed as a political process and experienced by individuals; what are the interrelationships between institutional actors and refugee policies and what are the implications of these interrelationships for service delivery to refugees in the U.S.; what does research tell us about the resettlement outcomes of refugees in the U.S. and what drives these outcomes; and finally, what are the points of intervention for social workers in the refugee resettlement process? We will address these questions by detangling the web of international and domestic policies that relate to the refugees’ political identity, and then we will focus in on the U.S. system of resettlement. We will analyze the structure of resettlement policy and explore its implications for social work practice with this population with special attention to issues such as integration, employment, mental health, and conditions for children and youth. As we move through the material of the course we will contend with the reframing of the refugee identity that is leveraged by the Trump Administration in support of ever more restrictive immigration policies. We will also work to hold the inherent tension that can result from a dual focus on macro level issues of scale and policy and micro level issues related to the lived experience of human beings.
COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Differentiate and analyze international and domestic policies pertaining to the definition, registration, placement, and provisions for refugees by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, Department of State, and the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Refugee Resettlement.

2. Describe a clear picture of the institutional structure of refugee resettlement in the United States including the federal, state, and local actors as well as the role of government, non-profit, secular, and faith-based organizations.

3. Evaluate the relevant policies and provisions in terms of their implications for the delivery of services to resettled refugees in the United States.

4. Define relevant knowledge and skills (specific to casework, advocacy, and policy work) for working with and for refugees in various organizational settings, including international organizations, DHS, advocacy organizations, and refugee resettlement agencies.

5. Recognize and assess key strengths and challenges relating to various contexts of the refugee experience such as entry to the labor market, mental and physical health, education, and child and youth development. Specifically, students will focus on moments of potential social work intervention and support and will design practice strategies for incorporating refugees into the service delivery process.

TEACHING METHODS AND EXPECTATIONS:

Learning can happen in multiple ways and this course is designed, in part, to expand the scope of how we learn. We will engage in classroom discussion with some lecture and lots of group work, we will take a field trip, hear from practitioners and use ourselves as sources and producers of knowledge. In an effort to accommodate different learning styles within our class, I incorporate a variety of teaching methods including formal presentations using PowerPoint, class discussion, small group exercises, and guest presentations. I also utilize different learning tools including case materials, assigned readings, audio and visual materials. Assignments will include short and long form papers that incorporate readings and class materials and a group project. The class is structured with the understanding that you will have critically engaged with the assigned materials, prepared for each class, and are willing to engage in the learning environment. Your contributions are critical to the success of the entire class.

It is of the utmost importance that our class be a space in which each student feels supported and valued. To this end, we will work as a group in our first session to identify our strategies and guidelines for engaging with each other. It is expected that all members of the class will conduct themselves in a way that reflects the values of the social work profession. We will respect differences of opinion, listen to the ideas and views of others, embrace diversity and the knowledge and skills we gain in doing so, and be able to understand and appreciate different points of view. I expect each of you to challenge yourselves, participate in class even when you are unsure of yourself, and ask questions of your classmates and of me.
APA Format and Academic Honesty

Please use APA style in preparing papers for this course, including: one inch margins, double spaced, 12 point Times New Roman or Garamond font, in-text citations and a reference list. For further information, please refer to the American Psychological Association Publication Manual (often called the APA Style Manual). The current edition is the sixth, but using an earlier edition is acceptable. You can find out more at: http://www.apastyle.org. It is critical to reference all sources of information or ideas you use in your writing, to do otherwise is academic dishonesty. In particular, direct quotes must be identified as such. Situations of apparent plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be reported and handled according to University of Chicago and SSA policies.

Accommodations for Students with Different Abilities

Any class member who is differently abled in such a way that might affect their participation or success in this course based on the access information that is provided here should let me know the first day of class. We can discuss possible modifications or accommodations that meet individual access needs.

Policy on Incompletes and Late Assignments

A grade of “Incomplete” will only be given in extenuating circumstances and in accordance with University of Chicago and SSA policy. Assignments are due at the times noted in the course syllabus. However, accommodation for late work is up to my discretion, you must seek and be granted specific approval for any late work. Assignments turned in late without prior arrangements will be reduced one letter grade for each day they are late.

University Title IX policy and “Responsible Employees”

According to the University's Title IX policy: "University employees not designated as Confidential Resources are considered Responsible Employees. Responsible Employees must report all incidents of sexual misconduct, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking to a Title IX Coordinator. Responsible Employees include faculty and other academic appointees, resident assistants, resident heads, resident deans, TAs, deans of students, athletic coaches, and UCPD staff. Responsible Employees are required to report all incidents of sexual misconduct, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking to a Title IX Coordinator even if the person making the report asks them to keep the information confidential."

REQUIRED READINGS & MEDIA


All other assigned readings are detailed by week in the course outline below. All readings are already posted on our Canvas site in the relevant week’s folder. Here you will also find links to any audio files.

Recommended readings and media: I have listed some suggested readings and other media within certain weeks of the syllabus and have also added many supplemental readings at the end of the syllabus. In addition I will be posting relevant readings, media and news articles as the quarter progresses. It is entirely up to you to determine your level of interest in and capacity for grappling with any of these materials, they are entirely supplemental.

Podcasts and news updates: For students who want to stay current on issues relevant to the field of refugee resettlement I recommend following the rcusa.org website and subscribing to the Displaced and Tempest Tossed podcasts.
**GRADING & ASSIGNMENTS**

Multiple methods will be utilized to assess your learning and progress toward the course objectives. The relative weight of each assignment will be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and participation</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesis paper</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy implementation assignment (group)</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate participation</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attendance and Participation (20%)**

You are expected to attend all classes, read all assigned readings prior to class and actively participate in class and small group discussions and activities. Anyone who misses more than two class sessions will not be able to receive an A grade in the course. Each student should email me with a paragraph explaining their own participation goals for the course prior to week 2 (I will explain further at our first meeting). Prior to Week 10 I will return these paragraphs to you and ask that you self-assess your participation based on your own goals and then assign yourself a participation score for the course.

**Synthesis Paper (20%)**

Due on Canvas October 18 by 10am:

Five page paper

This paper gives you an opportunity to synthesize themes from the first three weeks of the course before we move into a case study of post 1980 US resettlement policies and practices. Thus far we have considered the current global context of refugee movement and the international laws and standards that are designed to protect refugees, and we have located the US in the historical context of resettlement. In this paper you should consider the historical evolution of refugee resettlement and the place of the US in this evolution. A successful paper will focus on one or two specific aspects (or themes) of resettlement and will avoid a more generalized and broad overview of all that we have covered to date. You should bring your academic orientation to this work. For example, if you are a clinical student you might choose to draw on one of the narratives we have read and use this narrative as a basis for understanding the implications of the Refugee Act of 1980, if you are a public policy student you might focus on the way human rights are interpreted in US refugee policy and what this suggests. In short, the focus and unit of analysis in this paper is up to you, use your interest to guide you.
Policy implementation paper prospectus (5%)
Due on Canvas November 5:
One-page outline of final assignment, Group work

Your final assignment will consist of two parts, the prospectus and the final paper. Both assignments are to be completed in a group of three students. You will sign up for your groups during Week 4. The prospectus will be written as a group and each group will turn in one document. The prospectus is worth 5% of each student’s final grade. The prospectus should not answer the following bullet points, but it needs to show me that you have an idea of where you will look for answers.

(1) Background for your paper: what domestic refugee issue are you going to address in this paper? What sources will you use to explain what we know about the problem itself (from our reading list, our course lectures and discussions, or from any other reading you have done)?
(2) What policy is in place to address the issue you are covering in this paper?
(3) What issues are there with implementation of this policy at the local level (for the final project you will be gathering data to answer this question from local resettlement providers).
(4) Please explain in the prospectus who is going to be working on which parts of your paper. The group should work together to assign portions of the final paper product, but you are each responsible for the entire final product. See the next section for further explanation.

When I grade the prospectus I will be addressing the degree to which you have been thoughtful in your description of the problems and questions you will address in the final project and the extent to which your group has clearly articulated tasks for each member.

Debate Preparation and Participation (20%)
Due before class December 3:
2 pages

The final class session will consist of a debate pitting a restrictionist perspective against an expansionist one. Students will prepare for the debate by creating a two-page document, one page for each side of the debate, that they will use in class. This document will then get turned in as one of the components of the debate assessment. Students are expected to participate in the debate by bringing to bear evidence that supports these perspectives, drawing on class readings, lecture, and other materials we have engaged in our learning. Students will be assigned to a debate team at the start of the last class. Both groups will then have 40 minutes to prepare their debate strategy before we engage in the actual exercise. “Winning” the debate will not be included in the criteria for my assessment of debate preparation and engagement.
Policy implementation paper (35%)
Due via Canvas December 5 by 8pm
Not to exceed 15 pages, Group work

For your final assignment you will work in groups of three. Groups will be organized in class during Week 4. In your final paper prospectus you will have assigned specific tasks for the completion of the final project. The group will work as a team to construct an interview instrument for section (3) below. One student will write section (1) below, one student will write section (2) below, one student will write section (3) below and the group will work together to write section (4) and to edit your paper. Your final grade will be based on the portion you were assigned to accomplish, and on the cohesiveness and quality of the final paper. The grading rubric is outlined below.

Your final paper topic is to be decided by your group. You should choose one domestic refugee issue that you have learned about in class.

In your paper you should:

1. Describe the refugee issue you will address (examples: underemployment / poverty, mental health challenges, integration of refugee youth, antagonism from local community residents towards refugee resettlement). Your discussion of the issue should draw from class readings, supplemental readings, guest speakers, or class discussion and lectures to explain the scope, depth, or nature of the issue. A successful paper will cite these sources and draw out key issues and themes.
   - 15 points for the person assigned to this portion of the paper

2. Explain the policy in place to address the issue you outlined in the first section of the paper. In this section you should use the literature to critique the policy. What do we know about how this policy works, what do studies say about the policy outcomes or challenges in implementing the policy. Finally, this section of the paper should raise questions about potential issues with the implementation of this policy at the local level that are left unanswered in the literature (and that will be addressed in section 3 of the paper).
   - 15 points for the person assigned to this portion of the paper

3. To address the questions raised in section 2 you will be contacting local service providers. Your group will work together to come up with key questions for this provider, but only one group member is responsible for conducting the interview (via phone or in person). The interview will be 30-45 minutes. You will hand in your questions as an appendix for your paper and your grade will include an assessment of how thoughtful and well articulated your questions are.
   - 15 points for the person assigned to this portion of the paper
   - 5 points to each group member for well constructed questions

4. Concluding thoughts: How does your group think that implementation of this policy can be improved? What are two recommendations you would make to the local organization?
   - 10 points to every group member

5. Writing quality, APA format, editing
   - 5 points to every group member for the overall quality of the paper, the degree to which your paper hangs together.
WEEKLY TOPICS, ACTIVITIES, READINGS & REMINDERS

Week 1 – 10/1/19
Refugee Resettlement In Global Context

Topics & Activities
- Course and syllabus overview
- Setting our expectations
- The international context: UNHCR and the rights of refugees, durable solutions
- The global picture of resettlement as a durable solution

Assigned Readings for Week 1

Optional Reading

Week 2 – 10/8/19
Refugee Rights – Then and Now

Topics & Activities
- Historical overview of the development of refugee rights in the post-WWII age
- Briefly touching on the re-formation of refugee rights in today’s era
- Discussion of readings

Assigned Readings for Week 2
Week 3 – 10/15/19
A History of US Admissions and Resettlement Policy

Topics & Activities
- The history of U.S. federal refugee resettlement support
- The Refugee Act of 1980
- Synthesis paper due 10/18 by 10am

Assigned Readings for Week 3
- **NOTE:** This narrative includes graphic descriptions of traumatic experiences. Mehta, Suketu. (August 1, 2011). The asylum seeker. *The New Yorker.*

Week 4 – 10/22/19
USRAP

Topics & Activities
- The structure of U.S. refugee resettlement: programs and policies; Shifting terrain of USRAP
- In class exercise: *The Refugee Draft*
- Final groups assigned today

Assigned Readings and Media for Week 4
- Podcast: Aleinikoff, Alex. (August 2, 2018). “Contrary to popular belief, the Supreme Court did not hold that the travel ban is lawful” – a conversation with Professor Marty Lederman. *Tempest Tossed,* Season 1.
- Podcast: Gordon, Grant, and Gurumurthy, Ravi. (Feb 19, 2019). “Refugee Resettlement: Using data to improve the system.” *Displaced Podcast* – you might want to listen to all of it but I am assigning specifically 28:50 – 45:00 or so where they talk about the algorithm for placement

Optional Reading
- RCUSA. (2019). State and Local Support for Refugee Resettlement – Interactive Map http://www.rcusa.org/blog/byceli31a8eru7st7zifz7fl1o2w4j
Week 5 – 10/29/19
Understanding Integration

Topics & Activities
- Integration of refugees – theory, measurement and practice
- Policy implementation prospectus due next week

Assigned Readings and Media for Week 5

Optional reading:

Week 6 – 11/5/19
Refugee Health and Mental Health

Topics & Activities
- Trauma and post conflict resilience
- Refugee health and mental health
- Guest speaker: Leora Hudak (SSA ‘12) – Former psychotherapist at the Center for Victims of Torture
- Policy implementation prospectus due today

Assigned Readings for Week 6
Week 7 – 11/12/19
Telling the Story: Narratives and Big Data
Location: Keller Center, Harris School of Public Policy “Sky room”

Topics & Activities
- We will meet with artist Mohamad Hafez to discuss his approach to documenting the lived experience of displacement and discuss the use of different kinds of data (narrative, quantitative data, etc) to share a story.

Assigned Readings and Media for Week 7
- Please visit the two installations of Mohamad’s work on campus prior to our meeting on 11/12. They can be found at the foot of the stairway on the first floor in the Keller center and to the left of the door in the gallery space at the Oriental Institute.
- Tour Mohamad’s website: www.criticalrefuge.com Including the artist bio under the tab: Towards Sketching a Life.

Optional Session: 12:30 – 3:00 pm
- Those interested in being involved will meet as a group to learn about Mohamad’s art installation project and brainstorm paths forward.

Week 8 – 11/19/19
Employment for Refugees in the US

Topics & Activities
- Employment for resettled refugees: In pursuit of economic self-sufficiency
- In-class exercise: Ali and Joseph

Assigned Readings for Week 8
- NOTE: This narrative includes graphic descriptions of traumatic experiences. Please be advised and engage accordingly. Please contact me if you have concerns. Grabell, Michael. (May 8, 2017). Cut to the bone: How a poultry company exploits immigration laws. The New Yorker.

Optional reading:
Week 9 – 11/26/19
Displaced Youth

Topics & Activities
- Life course development and migration: Youth, unaccompanied minors
- Guest speakers: TBD
- Prepare for both sides of the debate for next week

Assigned Readings for Week 8
- Radio show: Laura Morrell. (March 2, 2019). “A Desperate Bargain” Reveal. The Center for Investigative Reporting and PRX. (Start at 33:00) https://www.revealnews.org/episodes/a-desperate-bargain/
- Samuels, Jenny. (February 26, 2018). A mother and child fled the Congo, only to be cruelly separated by the US government. ACLU. https://www.aclu.org/blog/immigrants-rights/deportation-and-due-process/mother-and-child-fled-congo-only-be-cruelly
- Podcast: Alex Aleinikoff. (July 23, 2018). Separated children, zero tolerance and the border, with Denise Gilman. Tempest Tossed. Season 1, episode 1. You might want to listen to all of it but I am assigning specifically the portion between 8:30 and 22:11.

Week 10 – 12/3/19
Restrict or Expand?

Topics & Activities
- Toward a more inclusive resettlement policy: including refugees in the service delivery process and the policy feedback loop
- The role of the social worker
- Potluck celebration
- In class exercise: Debate: Restrictionist vs. Expansionist

Assigned Readings for Week 10

Optional Reading
Supplemental Reading List

The International Context:


The History of U.S. Federal Refugee Resettlement Support


Impact of Executive Orders Relating to Refugee Admissions

Integration of Refugees


Employment For Resettled Refugees:


Refugee Health And Mental Health:

Life Course Development And Refugees:

- Choi, Sam, Cindy Davis, Sherry Cummings, Christina Van Regenmorter, and Molly Barnett. (2013). "Understanding service needs and service utilization among older Kurdish refugees and immigrants in the USA." *International Social Work* (0) 0: 1-16.

Comparing The U.S. Resettlement System With That Of Other Resettling Nations:

The private sponsorship model and alternative conceptions of resettlement


Problematizing Resettlement Objectives:


Refugee Narratives: