

American Studies Department

Mobility, Migration, Transculturation

Slot title	: BA Seminar
Year	: 3 (Bachelor)
Course title	: Mobility, Migration, Transculturation
Course Code	: LAX022B10
Academic year	: 2012-2013
Semester	: 2 (7 weeks)
Credits	: 10
Format	: semi-weekly seminar (4 hours per week)
Status	: Mandatory
Instructor	: Dr. M. E. Messmer

Seminars

Mondays	11.00 – 13.00	Aweg 30, room 018	(group 1)
Mondays	14.00 – 16.00	H.1312.0007	(group 2)
Wednesdays	12.00 – 14.00	H.1315.0049	(group 2)
Wednesdays	14.00 – 16.00	H.1312.0007	(group 1)

Office hours

My office is Room H15.312 Harmonie Bldg. (American Studies Department). My office hour is on Wednesdays, 16.00 – 17.00, or by appointment. Email address: M.E.Messmer@rug.nl.

Description

Whether it is students spending an exchange semester away from their home university, migrant workers crossing land or water in pursuit of the American Dream, or political refugees trying to escape life-threatening circumstances in their home countries: mobility and migration have always constituted fundamental experiences in many people's lives. Yet their causes and consequences have only recently started to receive an increasing amount of critical attention at a time shaped by international trade agreements as well as global financial crises and terrorist threats. While unskilled migrants have long since been perceived as an economic threat by many receiving nations, current changes in the geopolitical order have led to significant immigration policy revisions in the Americas and Europe that tend to blur the lines between (undocumented) economic migrants, political or environmental refugees, and potential terrorists.

This course offers an interdisciplinary approach to current forms, practical problems of, as well as theoretical debates on migration by exploring the social, cultural, psychological, geopolitical, legal, and economic implications of specific international migration movements in the Americas and, to a lesser extent, in Europe. The course will, in particular, concentrate on the following topics: globalization, international trade agreements, and the geo-politics of borders; current social, economic, political, and environmental push and pull factors; the migration of elites (brain-drain); developing nations and the Western welfare state; undocumented migrant workers, border violence, and human rights debates along the U.S.-Mexican border; migration and gender (sex-trafficking); changes in international refugee laws and immigration policy measures after 9/11; plurinational lives and transcultural identity formations; debates on citizenship, social cohesion, integration, and assimilation; the pros and cons of open borders; and the role of the media in the production of discourses on migration.

Aims of course

- To acquire a solid understanding of major contemporary economic, social, cultural, and political theories of migration

- To gain a deeper insight into contemporary international migration movements from a variety of disciplinary perspectives (cultural studies, media studies, sociology, economics, law, politics and international relations)
- To examine the complex interrelation between migration and political, economic, social, cultural, and legal push and pull factors in both sending and receiving countries
- To develop a critical perspective on the interplay between economic migration, global justice, and welfare-state design
- To foster a deeper understanding of the impact of recent geopolitical changes (in particular increasing national security concerns after 9/11) on regulating transnational mobility and refugee rights
- To understand the transformation of citizenship in the context of debates on integration, assimilation and social cohesion, plurinational identities, hybridization and transculturation
- To interrogate the link between migration and gender
- To analyze the ways in which cultural artefacts and the media produce and shape discourses on migration
- To evaluate the pros and cons of open borders (how legitimate are immigration controls and legal distinctions between citizens and foreign residents in a post-national age?; how idealistic are open border visions in the context of the war on terror and the war on drugs?)
- To apply the theoretical knowledge acquired in this class to the analysis of concrete case studies
- To further enhance students' academic research skills, writing skills, and oral presentation skills

Learning outcomes

At the end of this course, students will have acquired:

- (1) Advanced knowledge and in-depth understanding of
 - key concepts, major theories, as well as current trends and controversies in the field of migration studies
 - the diversity of causes and effects of international migration movements in the Americas
 - the social, political, legal, economic, cultural, and psychological push and pull factors in both sending and receiving countries
 - the impact of recent geopolitical changes, as well as economic and environmental crises on regulating transnational mobility
 - the extent to which migration raises questions of ethics, human rights, social justice, national cohesion, national security, identity, and citizenship
 - the ways in which the media and cultural artefacts shape discourses on migration
- (2) Transferable skills:
 - the ability to analyze the manifestations, problems, causes, and effects of migration from the perspective of different disciplines, as well as from the perspective of both migrants and receiving countries
 - to integrate the contribution of various disciplines in order to develop a deeper understanding of the complexity of the issue of migration
 - to evaluate critically and reflect theoretically upon legal and ethical dilemmas posed by the consequences of large-scale international migration movements
 - to engage critically with current socio-political issues at an abstract, theoretical level and use those theoretical frameworks in the analysis of concrete case studies
 - the refined ability to engage in partly independent research and identify and access appropriate primary and secondary research resources
 - the ability to develop evidence-based arguments and present them in an appropriate academic form at an advanced level
 - the ability to communicate and write in advanced-level academic English

Requirements

This course will be conducted in seminar format. Students are expected to attend every seminar session and to complete the reading assignments for each week. Attending 80% of all seminars is required for obtaining credits for this course; students should notify the instructor by email prior to any absences. Moreover, students are expected to contribute actively to each session; this may include

starting the weekly discussion on assigned texts. Although the primary responsibility for each seminar will rest with the teacher, all students share the responsibility for contributing to the discussion. Students who come to class unprepared will be marked as absent.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct in which an individual submits or presents the work of another person as his or her own. Scholarship quite properly rests upon examining and referring to thoughts and writings of others. However, doing so without proper acknowledgement is dishonest and a form of fraud. Therefore:

1. Whenever you use any idea derived substantially and directly from a published work, from a fellow student, or from any other source, you must explicitly acknowledge the nature and extent of your indebtedness.
2. Whenever you borrow three or more consecutive words, an original term, or a distinctive turn of phrase from a published work, from a fellow student, or from any other source, you must enclose the borrowed element in quotation marks and explicitly acknowledge your indebtedness.

Please remember that unauthorized collaboration—working together without permission—is a form of cheating. Unless a professor specifies that students can work together on an assignment and/or test, no collaboration is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an unauthorized study aid (such as a PDA), copying from another's exam, fabricating data, and giving unauthorized assistance.

Also note that research conducted and/or papers written for other classes cannot be used in whole or in part for any assignment in this class without obtaining prior permission from the professor.

Students are referred to the American Studies *OER* for further details about plagiarism and the department's Honor Code.

The American Studies Department uses plagiarism detection software and students will be asked to submit electronic copies of their written assignments for automatic screening. Plagiarism may have serious consequences for the student, including expulsion from the course or suspension from the University. All instances of plagiarism will be referred to the Exam Board. All written work must be uploaded to Ephorus prior to grading.

Credit value

The credit load of this course is 10 ECTS, which equals 280 hours of work (including class time, preparation, written assignments, and final term paper).

Assessment

Students will be assessed on the basis of the following:

- **Three position papers (1,000 words each, with an acceptable 10% deviation)** responding to three different texts from different seminars on our reading list. Each position paper should be argumentative (i.e. you need an explicitly formulated thesis statement) and should offer an informed critical commentary on the key issues and arguments presented by the text, supported by evidence. It is crucial that you engage critically with the text's theses and arguments, reflect on the potential problems and / or usefulness of the proposed suggestions, and show how it fits into (that is, supports, or challenges, or contradicts, or expands) the context of the other texts and topics that we've discussed in class so far. Please note: You will not receive any credits for merely summarizing the text's main arguments! **Your grade will be based on the written version of your paper in combination with the presentation of your paper's main points in class (in the form of a 3-5 minute oral presentation).** Deadline for submitting these position papers: Each paper has to be uploaded to Ephorus before the respective text will be discussed in class. **Position papers handed in after the respective seminar has already taken place will not be accepted.**
- **One 2,500 word essay (with an acceptable 10% deviation)**, in which students will use some of the theoretical materials discussed in class to conduct partly independent research on a concrete case study related to the issue of migration. The topic will be selected by the student in

consultation with the supervisor. Deadline for submitting the final version: Friday, April 12, 2013. Deadline for submitting the resit: Friday, May 17, 2013. Penalty for late submission: Late submission of the essay will be penalized at a rate of ten percent per day. Essays handed in more than two weeks late will not be accepted. Extensions will be granted only in case of grave physical, mental, or emotional infirmity confirmed by a doctor's or counsellor's certificate. Extensions will not be granted on the basis of excessive work in other courses.

Please note: The position papers and the essay should be typed (**double-spaced, 12 pts., Times New Roman, pages numbered, using one side of the sheet only**). They should have a title page, bearing the title of the seminar and the position paper's or essay's thesis statement, your name and student number, the course name and code, the number of credits, the teacher's name, the date of submission, and the number of words. Cite your primary and secondary sources according to MLA or CMOS guidelines for style and format (latest editions). Your papers will be returned unmarked if they do not comply with MLA or the CMOS guidelines.

Please upload all your papers and essays to Ephorus via the Nestor site of our course.

Grading procedure

Approximate weights of the assignments:

Position papers, including oral presentation in class: 15% each
Final Essay: 55%

Please note: The resit for this course consists of a resubmission of the final essay only. The in-class presentation of your position paper constitutes an integral part of the course and hence of your position-paper grade. Your position-paper grade will be lowered by 50% if you miss the in-class presentation.

Required texts

- All texts will be made available at the beginning of the semester.
- Additional texts may be added throughout the semester.

Week-by-week reading and other assignments

1. Week 1, Seminar 1: Monday Feb. 11: Introduction: Mobility, Migration, and the Geo-Politics of Borders

Topics:

- explaining course content, format, and assignments
- signing up for position papers
- the function of national/geographical borders in a globalizing world
- screening excerpts from the documentary *Mojados: Through the Night* to introduce course themes

2. Week 1, Seminar 2: Wednesday Feb. 13: Survey of International Migration Movements

Topics:

- definition of terms and concepts
- historical survey of immigration waves and migration movements in Europe and the Americas

Readings:

- Cornelius et al., eds., *Controlling Immigration*, ch. 1: "The Ambivalent Quest for Immigration Control"
- Messina and Lahav, eds., *Migration Reader*, ch. 2: "Concepts and Trends"
- Castles and Miller, *Age of Migration*, ch. 4: "International Migration before 1945," ch. 5: "Migration to Europe, North America, and Oceania since 1945"

3. Week 2, Seminar 1: Monday Feb. 18: Current Push and Pull Factors: Socio-Economic, Political, and Cultural Theories of Migration

Topics:

- a survey of migration theories: neoclassical economic theory, dual labor market theory, world systems theory, network theory, cumulative causation theory, legacy of colonialism, transnational theories, etc.
- discussion of these theories in the context of U.S.A. and Latin America

Readings:

- Messina and Lahav, eds., *Migration Reader*, ch. 3: "Approaches to the Study of International Migration" (all sections)
- Massey et al., *Worlds in Motion*, ch. 3: "Understanding the North American System"

4. Week 2, Seminar 2: Wednesday Feb. 20: U.S. Immigration Policy Measures Before and After 9/11

Topics:

- bracero programs, border control measures, amnesty initiatives during the 19th and 20th centuries
- North American political and economic integration (NAFTA) and transnational mobility vs. national security and border militarization after 9/11
- the US war on terror and its impact on current immigration policy measures
- *El Plan Sur*, the Security and Prosperity Partnership Agreement, Arizona's SB 1070

Readings:

- Massey et al., *Beyond Smoke*, ch. 3: "System Assembly: A History of Mexico-US Migration," ch. 5: "A Wrench in the Works: U.S. Immigration Policies after 1986," ch. 6: "Breakdown: Failure in the Post-1986 U.S. Immigration System"

5. Week 3, Seminar 1: Monday Feb. 25: "Dying trying to truly live": Migrant Experiences along the U.S.-Mexican Border

Topics:

- a range of individual experiences (documented and undocumented migrants; people who work along the border) – also in relation to policy measures discussed earlier (see 4. above)
- border security vs. human rights
- immigrant guides published by the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Relations

Readings:

- Martínez, *Border People*, ch. 6: "Migrants and Workers," ch. 8: "Mixers," and "Conclusion"
- Segura and Zavella, eds., *Women and Migration*, ch. "Rape as a Weapon of War"
- Jiménez, "The Militarization of the U.S.-Mexico Border"
- *Guía del Migrante Mexicano* (Mexican Immigrants Guide) at: <http://www.banderasnews.com/0506/nr-guia07.htm>

6. Week 3, Seminar 2: Wednesday Feb. 27: Media Representations of the U.S.-Mexican Border Dilemma: Who Gains? Who Loses? And What Should the Future of U.S. Immigration Policy Look Like?

Topics:

- perspective of residents, environmentalists, border officials
- economic considerations
- blurring the discourses between migration and terrorism
- can there be a solution?
- which role do media play in the shaping of discourses on migration?

Films:

- *Border War: The Battle over Illegal Immigration* (to be viewed individually before class; DVD is placed on Reserve in the Arts Library)
- *Cochise County, USA: Cries from the Border* (to be viewed individually before class; DVD is placed on Reserve in the Arts Library)

7. Week 4, Seminar 1: Monday, March 04: Maquiladoras and the Juárez Femicides**Topics:**

- transnational corporations and the maquiladora industry
- actual working conditions
- the Juárez femicides and their representation in film

Readings:

- Segura and Zavella, eds., *Women and Migration*, ch. "The Dialectics of Still Life: Murder, Woman, and Maquiladoras"
- Bacon, *Children of NAFTA*, ch. 3: "Tijuana's Maquiladora Workers"
- movie *Bordertown* (to be viewed individually before class)

8. Week 4, Seminar 2: Wednesday, March 06: Negotiating Cultural Identities in a Small New Mexican Border Town**Topics:**

- neither Mexican nor American yet both: contemporary lives between two cultures

Readings:

- selections from Ana Castillo, *The Guardians* (p. 1-151).

9. Week 5, Seminar 1: Monday, March 11: Long-Distance Parenting, Sex-Trafficking, and Modern-Day Slavery**Topics**

- the gendered face of migration
- exploitation of domestic workers
- vulnerability factors

Readings

- Ehrenreich and Hochschild, eds., *Global Woman*, ch. "Love and Gold" and ch. "America's Dirty Work: Migrant Maids and Modern-Day Slavery"
- Anderson, *Doing the Dirty Work*, ch. 8: "The Legacy of Slavery: The American South and Contemporary Domestic Workers"
- Freilich and Guerette, eds., *Migration*, ch. 9: "The United Nations Global Program against Trafficking in Human Beings," and ch. 13: "Providing a Helping Hand to Battered Immigrant Women: The Professionals' Perspectives"

10. Week 5, Seminar 2: Wednesday, March 13: Refugee Rights and International Refugee Law in the United States**Topics:**

- 19th and 20th century U.S. refugee rights and asylum policies
- environmentally displaced persons
- examples: refugees from Haiti, Latin America, Cuba (Mariel Boat Lift)

Readings:

- Juss, *International Migration*, ch. 6: “Conceptualizing Refugees” and section on “Environmentally Displaced Persons”
- Messina and Lahav, eds., *Migration Reader*, ch. 6: “The Evolution of an International Refugee Regime”
- Gibney, *Ethics*, ch. 5: “The United States: The Making and Breaking of a Refugee Consensus”
- Zucker and Flink Zucker, *Desperate Crossings*, ch. 3: “The Mariel Floodtide: Mass Escapes,” ch. 4: “Erecting Floodgates: Escape by Sea,” and ch. 5: “Erecting Fences: Escape over Land”

11. Week 6, Seminar 1: Monday, March 18: Death at Sea: Migrant and Refugee Experiences in Fortress Europe

Topics

- concrete migrant experiences
- migration and the European welfare system
- effects of migration on supplying and receiving countries
- EU-African bilateral agreements
- Morocco’s role as a regulator of migrant streams to Europe (drawing parallels to Mexico’s current role)

Readings:

- *Losing Hope at Sea*
- Sayad, *Suffering*, ch. 1: “The Original Sin and the Collective Life”
- Trémolières, ed., *Regional Challenges of West African Migration*, ch. 2: “The Co-Operation on Readmission and Enforced Return,” ch. 4: “Migration and Development in ECOWAS Countries: What Role for the Maghreb?,” ch. 6: “ECOWAS, an Area of Free Movement and First Border Post for the Schengen Area,” and ch. 8: “Migrants Criminalized While Making the Journey”
- Schierup, *Migration*, ch. 3: “Migration, Citizenship, and the European Social Model”

12. Week 6, Seminar 2: Wednesday, March 20: Brain Drain vs. Brain Gain

Topics:

- mobile professionals, knowledge workers, and the migration of elites (in the Americas and Europe)
- effects on sending and receiving countries
- the migration-development nexus
- remittances, skilled returnees, circular migrants, and diaspora connections

Readings:

- OECD, *Global Competition*, ch. 2: “Knowledge Diffusion and Impacts of International Mobility”
- Nyberg Sørensen and Fog Olwig, *Work and Migration*, ch. 7: “The Moving ‘Expert’: A Study of Mobile Professionals in the Cayman Islands and North America,” ch. 8: “*Irse pa’ fuera*: The Mobile Livelihoods of Circular Migrants Between Puerto Rico and the United States,” and ch. 9: “Transnational Livelihoods and Identities in Return Migration to the Caribbean: The Case of Skilled Returnees to Jamaica”
- Fouarge and Ester, *Highly Skilled*, ch. 6: “Migration Intentions of Higher Skilled Workers,” and ch. 7: “Conclusion and Policy Implications”

13. Week 7, Seminar 1: Monday, March 25: Identities Beyond Citizenship: Assimilation and Integration in an Age of Globalization and Transnationalism

Topics

- immigration, identity, and integration

- transnational identities and transculturation vs. assimilation and segmented assimilation policy measures
- citizenship theories and social cohesion

Readings:

- Scholte, *Globalization*, ch. 7: “Globalization and Identity: From Nationalism to Hybridization”
- Castles and Miller, *Age of Migration*, ch. 11: “New Ethnic Minorities and Society”
- Messina and Lahav, eds., *Migration Reader*, ch. 11.3: “The Reevaluation of American Citizenship”
- Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship*, ch. 8: “Toward a Postnational Model of Membership”
- Kofman and Youngs, eds., *Globalization*, ch. 14: “Citizenship, Migration, and Globalization: An Issue of Social Cohesion”

14. Week 7, Seminar 2: Wednesday, March 27: Alternative Visions: The Pros and Cons of Open Borders

Topics:

- should the free movement of people be regarded as a civil right?
- mobility vs. national security and social control
- immigration as a solution for an ageing Europe?
- toward a new global migration policy regime?

Readings:

- Gibney, *Ethics*, ch. 1: “Partiality: Community, Citizenship, and the Defence of Closure” and ch. 2: “Impartiality: Freedom, Equality, and Open Borders”
- Pécoud and de Guchteneire, eds., *Migration without Borders*, ch. 2: “The Economics and Politics of the Free Movement of People,” ch. 6: “Open Borders and the Welfare State,” ch. 7: “Europe Without Borders: Rhetoric, Reality, or Utopia?,” and ch. 11: “A World Without Borders? Mexican Immigration, New Boundaries, and Transnationalism in the United States”

References

- Agier, Michel. *On the Margins of the World: The Refugee Experience Today*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008.
- Anderson, Bridget. *Doing the Dirty Work: The Global Politics of Domestic Labor*. London: Zed Books, 2000.
- Bacon, David. *The Children of NAFTA: Labor Wars on the U.S.-Mexico Border*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.
- Bergmann, Sigurd, and Tore Sager, eds. *The Ethics of Mobilities: Rethinking Place, Exclusion, Freedom, and Environment*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008.
- Carpenter, Ted Galen. *Bad Neighbor Policy: Washington’s Futile War on Drugs in Latin America*. New York: Palgrave, 2003.
- Castillo, Ana. *The Guardians*. New York: Random House, 2007.
- Castles, Stephen, and Mark J. Miller. *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*. 4th ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- Cornelius, Wayne A., Philip L. Martin, and James F. Hollifield, eds. *Controlling Immigration: A Global Perspective*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994.
- Ehrenreich, Barbara, and Arlie Russell Hochschild, eds. *Global Woman: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy*. New York: Henry Holt, 2002.
- Fouarge, Didier, and Peter Ester. *Highly Skilled and on the Move: Migration Behavior and Intentions of the Higher Educated in the Netherlands and Europe*. University of Tilburg: OSA Publication, 2007.
- Freilich, Joshua D., and Rob T. Guerette, eds. *Migration, Culture Conflict, Crime, and Terrorism*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006.

- Gibney, Matthew J. *The Ethics and Politics of Asylum: Liberal Democracy and the Response to Refugees*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Goodwin-Gill, Guy S., and Jane McAdam. *The Refugee in International Law*. 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Grayson, George W. *Mexico: Narco-Violence and a Failed State?* New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2010.
- Guía del Migrante Mexicano*. Distributed by the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Relations. (<http://www.amren.com/features/mexguide/index.html>).
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- Jaramillo, Velia. "Mexicoc's Southern Plan: The Facts." *World Press Review* 48.9 (Sept. 2001). (<http://www.worldpress.org/0901feature22.htm>)
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- Juss, Satvinder Singh. *International Migration and Global Justice*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006.
- Khagram, Sanjeev, and Peggy Levitt, eds. *The Transnational Studies Reader: Intersections and Innovations*. New York and London: Routledge, 2008.
- Kofman, Eleonore, and Gillian Youngs, eds. *Globalization: Theory and Practice*. New York: Continuum, 2008.
- Lavenex, Sandra. *The Europeanisation of Refugee Policies: Between Human Rights and International Security*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2001.
- Losing Hope at Sea: The Tragedies of Irregular Migration*. Special Issue of *Migration* (December 2006).
- Martínez, Oscar J. *Border People: Life and Society in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands*. Tucson: U of Arizona P, 1994.
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- Scholte, Jan Aart. *Globalization: A Critical Introduction*. 2nd ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
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- Zucker, Norman L., and Naomi Flink Zucker. *Desperate Crossings: Seeking Refuge in America*. London: M.E. Sharpe, 1996.

Movies/Documentaries

- Bordertown*. Dir. Gregory Nava. DVD. Universum Film, 2007.
- Border War: The Battle Over Illegal Immigration*. Dir. Kevin Knoblock. DVD. Citizens United / Peace River Company LLC Production, 2006.
- Cochise County, U.S.A.: Cries from the Border*. Dir. Mercedes Maharis. DVD. Mercedes Maharis Productions LLC, 2005.
- Mojados: Through the Night*. Dir. Tommy Davis. DVD. Vanguard Cinema, 2005.