

POLI 3420 - Special Topics Political Science
The International Politics of Mobility

Department of Political Science
Dalhousie University
Winter 2021

Instructor:

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Course Overview:

In 2015 the popular imagination became suddenly aware of the international politics of mobility. Like most popular political issues, many people have strong opinions with a relatively weak understanding of the core issues. This course is designed to give students an in-depth introduction to the history, laws, institutions, and changing political dynamics of international migration. The course places a special emphasis on forced migration, refugee flows, and irregular migration given the unique challenges these trends present for the international system. The overall goal is to help develop the substantive knowledge and analytical tools necessary for understanding the complexities of international mobility in a world of states. Each session will be centred on lectures to frame course discussion. Theoretically, the lectures will explore the tensions around globalization and the politics of mobility in a world that is politically and institutionally defined by states. However, a specific emphasis will be given to case studies and contemporary examples in order to better inform our theoretical discussions.

Course Learning Objectives and Outcomes:

1. Provide students with an introduction to, and understanding of, the following:
 - a. the emergence of refugee protection and asylum;
 - b. the role of the UNHCR in international politics;
 - c. the effects of forced migration flows on regional stability;
 - d. irregular migration & human smuggling in the Mediterranean and at the US border;
 - e. North / South disparities and the drivers of migration;
 - f. the gendered dynamics of human trafficking;
 - g. the emergence of fortified borders to stop the movement of people; and
 - h. debates, politics, and predictions around the issue of climate change refugees.
2. Assist students in grounding their arguments in the relevant empirical literature and expose them to the fundamental arguments of scholars working within the fields of migration and refugee studies.
3. Help students develop and practice the analytic skills necessary to conduct scholarly research and present evidence in a coherent manner.

Course Prerequisites and Requirements:

No previous study in issues of migration or refugee politics is necessary or assumed.

The Pre-req requirement of a 2nd year course in Political Science is mandatory. Some background in the International Relations discipline is necessary, with POLI 1550 and POLI 2520 serving as pre-requisites or permission from the instructor. Lectures and readings assume an understanding of the theoretical debates and concepts of International Relations, as well as a basic familiarity with world history and engagement with current events.

Some of the course sections are more reading intensive than others, with an average of around 50-70 pages of reading per meeting. The assignments and final exam will require familiarity with the course readings, as well as with the substantive material covered in the lectures. Students thinking of enrolling in the course should keep this in mind.

CLASS MATERIALS**Readings/Electronic Resources:**

Readings mentioned in the course outline will be either available for download from Dalhousie Libraries via Proxy links or posted online on the course website — see the ‘Course Readings’ module on Bright Space for details and links to journal articles.

EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS**Grading Scheme:**

<i>Evaluation Component:</i>		<i>Percent:</i>
Participation		15%
Critical Reflection/ Discussion Lead		20%
Mid-term Exam		15%
Term Paper		30%
Final Exam		20%
Total		100%

N.B. If you are a Dalhousie student, and would like to review the *full* syllabus for this course, please contact Dr. Kiran Banerjee directly (kr561466@dal.ca).