Sociology of Immigration
Sociology 322
Winter 2016

Professor: Elizabeth Onasch
Teaching Assistant: Yixue Shao
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Office Hours: (Onasch) Tuesdays 3-5 pm, Thursdays 10am-12pm, or by appointment
(Shao) Mondays 2-4pm
Class Meeting: Mondays and Wednesdays, 5-6:20pm
Location: University Hall 102

Course Description

This course examines immigration to the United States and Europe through a sociological lens, with
attention to the social, political, and historical contexts of immigration and the relationships between
migrants and existing institutions and identities. The course will first outline the factors shaping
migration patterns and compare immigration policies across time and space. Next, we will explore
debates around assimilation and other models of immigrant incorporation, and consider how gender,
race, and ethnicity affect the reception and integration of migrants. Finally, we will examine the
consequences of immigration and transnationalism on nation-states and diasporic communities.

Students will also gain experience in conducting qualitative research and learn how individual immigrant
narratives relate to the social patterns and theories discussed in the course.

Textbook and Materials

We will be reading articles and book chapters throughout the quarter, which will be available on Canvas
and, when applicable, through the course reserve at the library.

Course Goals

The goal of this course is to provide students with an understanding of the different political, social, and
economic influences on and consequences of immigration. At the end of the course, students will be
equipped to:

• Describe different factors that lead to migration as well as the types of migration
• Demonstrate and understanding of how immigration and immigration policy relate to
  national identities and sovereignty, as well as racial formations
• Explain and evaluate different theories of immigrant incorporation
• Critically analyze the role of race and gender in immigrant reception and incorporation
• Conduct qualitative interview research
• Relate individual biographies to broader social patterns
Course Format

Most class sessions will include a short lecture and discussion, some sessions will also include reading group work. The course will incorporate multi-media materials, such as film and news clips.

We will be covering topics that may be socially sensitive; therefore, it is crucial that we remain respectful of one another’s points of view during the course.

Course Requirements and Grading

Class Attendance and Participation (15%)

Class discussions are an important part of the course and these discussions will be much more productive if students are present and prepared to share their thoughts and questions on the readings. The participation grade will be based on the quality of your comments and questions in class.

Students may miss one class with no penalty. If you need to miss class more than once, please let me know ahead of time. After the first absence, each additional class that you miss without an excuse that I have approved ahead of time will cost 3% of your total course grade. A student who misses four or more classes will fail.

If you miss class, please consult your fellow classmates for notes on what we covered in that session. You may also come to office hours (or make an appointment) to discuss what you missed.

Discussion Questions (10%)

In order to facilitate discussion and engagement with the readings, students will submit one question through Canvas by 7 pm the day before each class (Sunday and Tuesday). You must turn in a total of 10 questions, which means you can choose five days during the quarter during which you will not turn in a question.

Your questions must relate to the readings. Questions could, for example, address concepts from one of the readings, parallels or contrasts between the readings, or connections between one or more of the readings and current events.

Questions that are submitted on time and demonstrate an engagement with the readings will get full credit, and late, non-submission, or submission of questions that do not reflect any of the readings will result in zero points.

Current Event Essay (15%)
Students will sign up for a class date during the quarter when they will write a short (3-4 pages, double-spaced, size 12 font) essay, **due on Canvas by the beginning of the chosen class.** These essays should explore a current event related to immigration. If you have an idea of a current event on which you would like to write, but you're not sure if it is appropriate, you may discuss your idea with me before completing the assignment.

In your essay, you should:

- Provide a thorough description of the event and its backstory (political and social context).
- Discuss how the course shapes the way you understand or think about this event. For example, does your chosen event pose a challenge to the readings, does it might provide an example of a concept from the readings? Please be specific when referring to course readings or lectures.
- Argue for why this event is significant for our understanding of race.

Be prepared to discuss your essay with the class.

**Mid-term Exam (20%)**

The mid-term exam will be an in-class written exam, consisting of short essay questions. The exam will test comprehension of concepts that we have explored up to this point.

**Interview Project (20%)**

The interview project is designed to demonstrate the connections between individual experiences and the broader social patterns and histories discussed in the class. The project will also provide students with the opportunity to gain experience in conducting qualitative research. As a class, we will design a questionnaire based on the topics we have covered. Students will then conduct a semi-structured interview with an individual who has immigrated to the United States.

**Final Paper (20%)**

Students will write a final paper relating their interview data to concepts and theories from the course. The final papers should be between 7-10 pages in length and will be evaluated according to how well they engage with the course materials, in addition to organization, clarity of the argument, and grammar.

**Grading**

(15%) Class Attendance and Participation  
(10%) Discussion Questions  
(15%) Current Event Essay  
(20%) Midterm Exam  
(20%) Interview Project  
(20%) Final Paper  

100%
Grading scale:

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**Late work**

Please speak to me in advance of a deadline if you believe you will not be able to turn in an assignment on time. All assignments that are turned in late without any an approved excuse will automatically lose half a grade for each of the first three days they are late (e.g., an A paper that is one day late will become an A- paper), and then a full grade for each day after that.

**Academic Integrity**

Students are required to abide by Northwestern University's academic integrity policy. Student work in this class may be analyzed electronically for violations of this policy and may also be included in a database for the purpose of testing for plagiarized content. We will discuss the Northwestern policy, as well as rules for citation during the course. You may also find more information at:

- [http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/policies/academicintegrity](http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/policies/academicintegrity)
- [http://www.weinberg.northwestern.edu/handbook/integrity/](http://www.weinberg.northwestern.edu/handbook/integrity/)

**Student Accommodations**

Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with AccessibleNU ([accessibleunu@northwestern.edu](mailto:accessibleunu@northwestern.edu); 847-467-5530) and provide the professor with an accommodation notification from AccessibleNU, preferably within the first two weeks of class. All information will remain confidential.

**Laptop and Cellphone Policy**

Students may use laptops in class to take notes and refer to course readings. Students may not surf the web, chat, skype, or use the computer for other non-class related activities during the class session. Students should also refrain from using their cellphones during the course; please have your phone on silent and do not read or send text messages. Using a computer for non-class related activity or using cell phones in class disrupts everyone’s engagement will negatively affect your participation grade.

**Course Schedule and Readings**

Please read all assigned readings. Any changes to the reading list, which may be made if we need to move more quickly or spend more time on any topic, will be announced ahead of time in class and on Canvas.
Week One

January 4: Introduction to the Course
January 6: Why do people migrate?

Reading:

- Students’ chosen news articles on current refugee crises

Week Two: Overview of Immigration Policy and Citizenship

January 11: Civic and Ethnic Nations in Europe

Reading:


January 13: Immigration and Citizenship Policy in the US an Beyond

Reading:

- Handouts on STEM Act

Week Three: The Construction of Undocumented Migration

January 18: Martin Luther King Jr. Day- NO CLASS

January 20: The Construction of Undocumented Migration

Readings:


**Week Four: Multiculturalism and Immigrant Integration Policy**

**January 25: Multiculturalism**

**Reading:**


**January 27: Immigrant Integration Policy in Europe**

**Reading:**


**Week Five: Debates over Assimilation and Segmented Assimilation**

**February 1: Debates over Assimilation and Segmented Assimilation**

**Reading:**


**February 3- MIDTERM**

**Week Six: Incorporation and Religion**

February 8: Measuring the Political, Economic, and Linguistic Incorporation of Immigrants

**Reading:**


February 10: Religion and Immigration

**Reading:**


**Week Seven: Focusing on the Role of Race and Ethnicity in Immigration and Integration**

February 15: Symbolic Ethnicity and Ethnic Projects

**Reading:**


February 17: Race and Immigration

**Readings:**


**Week Eight: Perspectives on Transnationalism**

February 22: Citizenship, Care, and Activism

**Reading:**


February 24: Transnational Communities

**Reading:**


**Week Nine: Immigration: A Challenge to the Racialized Nation-State?**

February 29: Europe

**Reading:**
• Soysal, Yasemin Nuhoglu. (1994). Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe. Chapter 1

March 2: The United States

Reading:

• TBA

Week Ten READING WEEK

March 7: Conclusions (no reading)

March 14th: Final papers due by 7pm