The Politics of Immigration: Race, Rights, & Activism

Class Time/Day: 3:00 - 4:15pm / TR
Instructor: Professor Chris Zepeda-Millán
Office Hours: TR 4:30-5:30pm
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Course Description:

This course is designed to provide students with a critical introduction to the “Politics of Immigration.” The class will begin with a review of some of the mainstream and alternative explanations experts have proposed as being the “root-causes” and initiating forces of international migration (from colonization to economic restructuring). We will subsequently turn our attention to the dynamics of immigration policymaking and examine how race, gender, sexuality, and class both impact and are impacted by immigration laws. The course will then shift focus and take a closer look at some of the most contentious topics related to immigration such as: its effects on the American economy and workers, cultural assimilation, undocumented immigration, border militarization, and racialized nativism. The class concludes by examining the various forms of political participation (from voting patterns to political activism) that immigrants themselves have traditionally and currently engage in.

Coursework Requirements:

1) Mandatory in-class presentation
2) Submission of weekly questions on readings for discussion
3) Midterm
4) Final
5) Research Paper

Required Texts:


Deepa Fernandez. Targeted: Homeland Security and the Business of Immigration

Kevin R. Johnson. The “Huddled Masses” Myth: Immigration and Civil Rights

Aviva Chomsky. “They Take Our Job!” and 20 Other Myths About Immigration

Leo Chavez. Covering Immigration: Popular Images and the Politics of the Nation
**Rules and Procedures**

**Attendance/Absences:**

Weekly class attendance is mandatory to pass this course. Each student is allowed one unexcused absence per semester without the loss of any points. Absences due to illness (documented by a note from the LMU Student Health Center or a private physician) or participation in a LMU Sports related game or match (with documentation from your coach), and the observation of religious holidays are excused absences. Absences over the one unexcused absences will lower your grade. On the fourth absence (including the 1 free absence), the student must speak to the professor regarding their likelihood of passing the course. If you become ill or have some other emergency and cannot turn in a paper on time or take an exam on the scheduled day, you must notify the professor ahead of time.

* *The use of laptops, cell phones, iPods, iPads, etc. will NOT be permitted during class.*

**Grading:**

Attendance- 10%, Participation- 10%, Midterm- 25%, Final- 25%, Research Paper- 30%

**Respect and Discussion Rules:**

Every student brings a different perspective to the classroom and the variety of viewpoints expressed must always be respected; we all reserve the right to respectfully disagree with one another. Discriminatory comments of any kind will not be tolerated.

**Citations/Footnotes:**

In your papers you must cite authors from whom you draw ideas/quotations. The typical style in political science is (Last Name, Year of Publication: Page) or (Winter, 1996: 118). Footnotes and endnotes are also acceptable ways of acknowledging work. In your exams it is a good idea to cite authors that we have read in the course; page numbers are obviously not required. You can use any citation style you prefer as long as it is an official style (i.e. MLA or Chicago).

**Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism is a serious offense at LMU. If we suspect that you have knowingly misrepresented someone else’s work as your own, this is grounds for dismissal from the university.

What constitutes misrepresentation? Obviously, purchasing a paper from the internet is one way. Failing to give credit where credit is due—appropriating quotes from authors as your own or representing authors’ ideas as your own—also constitutes plagiarism. For further information on academic integrity and plagiarism consult your university handbook.
In-Class Presentation, Extra Credit, & Final Paper

In-Class Presentations

Presenters
Every Thursday two students will give a 15 minute presentation on the week’s readings. The presentations are not simply summaries of the “main points” of the articles/chapters assigned. Presenters must critically assess what evidence is used to establish the claims the authors make, the strengths and weaknesses of their arguments, whether the presenters agree or disagree with them (and why), and how they relate to the other assigned readings. After their presentations, presenters are expected to lead class discussion for about 30 minutes. Every student must present at least once in the semester.

Rest of Class
Students not presenting must submit 3 questions related to the readings by 8pm on the Wednesday before discussion (unless otherwise specified, class discussions on the readings will take place every Thursday) and be ready for the professor to call on them to ask their questions and give their opinions about the various readings.

15 Page Research Paper Options (to be discussed in more detail in class)

Students are expected to write a 15 page research paper on any topic (with the professor’s approval) related to the politics of immigration. We will discuss what is expected from the research paper at the beginning and throughout the semester.
**General (Im)Migration Data Sources**


Migration Policy Institute (MPI)- [www.migrationpolicy.org](http://www.migrationpolicy.org)

Pew Hispanic Center- [http://pewhispanic.org/](http://pewhispanic.org/)

**National Anti-Immigration/Immigrant Organizations**

Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR)- [http://www.fairus.org/site/PageServer](http://www.fairus.org/site/PageServer)


Zero Population Growth (ZPG)- [http://www.populationconnection.org/site/PageServer](http://www.populationconnection.org/site/PageServer)

Americans for Legal Immigration (ALIPAC)- [http://www.alipac.us/](http://www.alipac.us/)


**National Pro-Immigration/Immigrant Organizations**


Essential Workers Immigration Coalition- [http://www.ewic.org/](http://www.ewic.org/)


Immigration Policy Center- [http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/](http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/)

We Are America Alliance- [http://www.weareamericalliance.org/](http://www.weareamericalliance.org/)


Detention Watch Network- [www.detentionwatchnetwork.org](http://www.detentionwatchnetwork.org)
INTRODUCTION

Week 1 (Tues Aug 31)- Introduction to the Course

*(NO Class on Thurs Sept 2. Political Science Faculty will be in Washington D.C. for the American Political Science Association’s National Conference)*

Week 2- (Tues Sept 7)- Pushed, Pulled, or Hooked? The Root-Causes of International Migration

Readings:

- Sassen- “America’s Immigration ‘Problem’” Globalization and Its Discontents: Essays on the New Mobility of People and Money.


- Gonzalez- “The Peaceful Conquest of Mexican Migration within Mexico and to the United States.” Culture of Empire: American Writers, Mexico, and Mexican Immigrants, 1880-1930.


- Grosfoguel- “Migration and Geopolitics in the Greater Antilles: From the Cold War to the Post-Cold War.” Colonial Subjects: Puerto Ricans in a Global Perspective.

Week 3- (Tues Sept 14) A Nation By Design: Immigration Policy as Social Engineering

Readings:

- Johnson- Chapter 1- “Immigration and Civil Rights in the United States.” The “Huddled Masses” Myth: Immigration and Civil Rights

- Johnson- Chapter 2- “Exclusion and Deportation of Racial Minorities.” The “Huddled Masses” Myth: Immigration and Civil Rights
• Johnson- Chapter 3- “Exclusion and Deportation of Political Undesirables.” The “Huddled Masses” Myth: Immigration and Civil Rights

• Johnson- Chapter 6- “The Marginalization of Women Under the Immigration and Nationality Laws” The “Huddled Masses” Myth: Immigration and Civil Rights

• Johnson-Chapter 7- “Exclusion and Deportation of Lesbians and Gay Men.” The “Huddled Masses” Myth: Immigration and Civil Rights

MAJOR ISSUES & POLICY DEBATES Part I

Week 4- (Tues Sept 21) From Deportation Nation to Border Militarization: Immigration Enforcement Measures

Readings:


• Brotherton- “Exiling New Yorkers.” Keeping Out the Other: A Critical Introduction to Immigration Enforcement Today.
Week 5 - (Tues Sept 28) Denaturalizing ‘Illegality’: How White Illegals Got Multiple Amnesties and Brown People Without Papers Became Criminal Aliens

Readings:

- Guskin and Wilson- Chapter 4- “Why Can’t They Just ‘Get Legal?’” *The Politics of Immigration: Questions and Answers.*
- Guskin and Wilson- Chapter 5- “Is It Easy To Be ‘Illegal?’” *The Politics of Immigration: Questions and Answers.*
- Nevins- Chapter 5- “The Ideological Roots of the ‘Illegal’: The ‘Other’ As Threat and the Rise of the Boundary as the Symbol of Protection.”

*Week 6- MIDTERM EXAM (In-Class Review on Tues Oct 5, Exam on Thurs Oct 7)*

Week 7- (Tues Oct 12) How the Politics of Immigration is Lived

Movie:

- “Farmingville: Welcome to the suburbs, home of the new border wars”

*MAJOR ISSUES & POLICY DEBATES Part II*

Week 8- (Tues Oct 19) American = White?: Assimilation and its Discontents

Readings:

- Chomsky- “Myth 10. The United States is a melting pot that has always welcomed immigrants from all over the world.”
• Chomsky- “Myth 11. Since we are all the descendents of immigrants here, we all start on equal footing.”


**Week 9- (Tues Oct 26) No Taxation Without Representation: Immigrants & the Economy (In-Class Debate Thurs Oct 28)**

*Readings (To Be Discussed on Tues Oct 26):*

• Guskin and Wilson- Chapter 6- “Are Immigrants Hurting Our Economy?

• Chomsky-Part One- “Immigrants and the Economy.”


**Week 10- (Tues Nov 2) Racialized Nativism & the Modern Anti-Immigrant Movement**

*Readings:*

• Sanchez- “Face the Nation: Race, Immigration, and the Rise of Nativism in Late Twentieth Century America”
• Chavez- Chapter 3- “Toward a Framework for Reading Magazine Covers”

• Chavez- Chapter 4- “A Lexicon of Images, Icons, and Metaphors for a Discourse on Immigration and the Nation”

• Chavez- Chapter 8- “Manufacturing Consensus on an Anti-Mexican Immigration Discourse.”


Week 11 (Tues Nov. 9) *Illegal Y Que?! Immigrant Activism and Political Participation*

**Readings:**


• Milkman and Wong- “Organizing Immigrant Workers: Case Studies from Southern California.” *Rekindling the Movement: Labor’s Quest for Relevance in the 21st Century.*


• Zepeda-Millán- “Today We March, Tomorrow We Vote: The Effects of the 2006 Immigrant Rights Protest-Wave.”

Week 12 (Tues Nov 16) Border Battles in Action

**Movie:**

• “Walking The Line”
Week 13- (Tues Nov 23) Other Issues for Future Research

(NO CLASS Thurs Nov 25 – Thanksgiving Break)

Readings:


- Andreas- Chapter 6- “Policing the External Borders of the New Europe”

- Paskeviciute & Anderson- “Immigrants, Citizenship, & Political Action in Europe”

Week 14 – (Tues Nov 30) Presentations Part I

Week 15 - (Tues Dec 7) Presentations Part II

*(Last Week of Classes Final Papers Due)*

Week 16 - (Tues Dec 14) FINAL EXAM