

**POLITICAL SCIENCE 377 TOPICS IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS:
BORDERS, MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES**

Summer 2021, Online session
May 3-June 14, 2021

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Synchronous meetings: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2-4 p.m. (Eastern time) on Zoom.

Virtual office hours: Fridays 9:00-10:30 a.m. (Eastern time) or by appointment on Zoom.



US-Mexico border wall and border wall prototypes seen from Tijuana, Baja California.

December 20, 2017.

Photograph by Martha Balaguera.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Between 1990 and 2020, the [total number of international migrants almost doubled, reaching 280.6 million people](#) around the world; [more than 10% of them were refugees and asylum seekers](#), according to conservative figures. In the same period, even while mounting flows of capital, goods and people became the hallmark of globalization, there were unprecedented efforts at fortifying borders, constraining people's mobility, and detaining noncitizens, including those fleeing war, conflict and persecution.

This course exposes students to the tensions between the mobility of people across international borders, and the hardening regimes of governance facing migrants. Drawing on a variety of concepts and theories from different fields, we will pay especial attention to the intersections of class, race and gender at stake in the politics of migration. While we will engage with studies about different migration trajectories, we will emphasize the Americas.

Course content will address the following questions: Why do people migrate? How do policies and discourses constitute different categories of migrants (e.g., economic migrant v. refugee; legal v. illegal; deserving v. undeserving)? How are migration flows governed? What are some of the ways in which immigrants, refugees and their allies have responded to increasing restrictions to the right to migrate and the right to seek asylum?

Our main objectives in this course will be:

- To identify the causes of international migration in historical perspective.
- To acquire conceptual and analytical tools for the study of contemporary migrations and the regimes that govern them.
- To delve deeper into concrete empirical cases, with a focus on the Americas.
- To examine the structures of power that shape different categories of migrants and their attendant rights claims.
- To analyze the tension between increasing mobility and immobility.
- To underscore the agency and struggles of immigrants and refugees.

POL377 is also intended to increase awareness and sensitivity to issues pertaining to human rights and social justice.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Explain the causes of international migrations, with a focus on the Americas.
- Analyze contemporary trends in the governance of international migrations.
- Assess critically the categories of personhood ascribed to international migrants.
- Apply concepts and theories to discuss empirical evidence and support specific viewpoints and arguments.
- Evaluate the forms of oppression experienced by migrants and refugees and their efforts to resist violence and create change.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required

Article-length readings, films and podcasts can be accessed through permanent links provided in the Course Schedule below. Where hyperlinks are not provided, a PDF scanned copy will be made available. You can access all course materials via “Modules” and “Library Course Reserves” on Quercus.

Recommended

Recommended materials are included in the course schedule. Whenever possible, permanent links are provided.

Changes

There may be changes to the required course materials. An announcement will be provided at least a week in advance so that students can prepare accordingly. Any new materials will be made available digitally on Quercus.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Course requirements are intended to meet the learning objectives outlined above.

Type	Description	Due date	Weight
1. Test	<u>Four quizzes (5% each)</u> Quizzes will be due on Friday at 11:59 pm. In Weeks 1, 3, 4 and 6. Prompts will be posted twenty-four hours in advance.	May 7 May 21 May 28 June 11	20%
3. Assignment	<u>Blog posts</u> Two blog entries to be posted on Quercus.	May 14 June 4	20% 20%
4. Presentation	<u>Pre-recorded presentation</u> Short, pre-recorded presentations will be submitted twenty-four hours before our class meets. These presentations will be visible to the entire class. Students will sign up for a presentation date in the first week of classes. Presentations will be graded during the exam period.	See calendar below	15%
5. Assignment	<u>e-Portfolio</u> This is a scaffolded assignment that you will develop throughout the course. It involves, among others, a mandatory ungraded reflection due on May 4.	May 3 (ungraded reflection due) June 14 (e-portfolio due)	25%
Total			100%

Last day to drop an F course on ROSI with no academic penalty: June 1, 2020.

Schedule of presentations

Due date	Topic	Presenters
May 16	<i>Categories of personhood</i>	Students should sign up for one of these presentation dates during the first week of classes.
May 18	<i>Policing and deterring</i>	
May 25	<i>Exerting legal violence</i>	
May 30	<i>Undermining asylum</i>	
June 1	<i>Criminalizing, detaining, deporting and profiting</i>	Presentations are pre-recorded and submitted twenty-hours before our class meets.
June 6	<i>Walling</i>	
June 8	<i>Offshoring and externalizing</i>	
June 13	<i>Enduring and resisting boundary-making practices</i>	

IMPORTANT DATES

May 3. Classes start.

May 9. Last day to enroll in F courses.

May 21. President's Day. University closed. No office hours will be held.

May 24. Victoria Day. University closed.

June 1. Last day to drop F courses from academic record.

June 14. Classes end.

LATE AND MISSED WORK POLICY

Late assignments will be subject to a late penalty of 5% per day (including weekends) of the total mark. Assignments submitted five calendar days beyond the due date will be assigned a grade of zero.

Cases of emergency should be reported through the Absence Declaration on ACORN.

Presentation requirement

If you miss the submission date your pre-recorded presentation is due on Quercus, you will be assigned a grade of zero.

REMOTE LEARNING

POL377 will run online for the entire Summer 2021 term. We will hold synchronous and asynchronous activities on Quercus and Zoom. While we may not always meet synchronously, or for the entire 2-hour duration of our designated time, students should be available for synchronous activities to be held on Mondays and Wednesdays from 2 to 4 p.m., Eastern time.

Office hours will be held via Zoom on Fridays between 9:00 and 10:30 a.m. Eastern time.

Zoom

Students are strongly encouraged to share their webcam during our synchronous meetings.

COURSE COMMUNICATIONS

I will communicate with you via your _.@mail.utoronto.ca email address. It is your responsibility to check your institutional email frequently. When writing to me, please include “POL377” in the subject line, followed by a brief description that summarizes the purpose of your message. Please allow two working days to hear back from me, unless an automatic response instructs to proceed otherwise. In all electronic communications, use appropriate salutation and professional language.

EQUITY STATEMENT

The University of Toronto is committed to equity and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect. As a course instructor, I will neither condone nor tolerate behavior that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual in this course and wish to be alerted to any attempt to create an intimidating or hostile environment. It is our collective responsibility to create a space that is inclusive and welcomes discussion. Discrimination, harassment and hate speech will not be tolerated.

CODE OF CONDUCT

During the first week of classes, we will discuss and create agreements about the course code of conduct. It will then be posted on Quercus for everyone’s reference.

CONTENT WARNING

The content and discussion in this course will often deal with different forms of discrimination, oppression and violence. Much of this content will be emotionally and intellectually challenging to engage with. I will flag especially graphic or intense material and will do my best to make this class a space where we can engage bravely, empathetically and thoughtfully with difficult content.

ACCESSIBILITY

Students with diverse learning needs are welcome in this course. If you have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and Accessibility Services as soon as possible. The sooner you let us know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

The staff members of Accessibility Services are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals, and arrange appropriate accommodations. Their contact information is included below.

Accessibility Services
455 Spadina Avenue, 4th Floor, Suite 400
Phone: 416-978-8060
E-mail: accessibility.services@utoronto.ca

NOTICE OF COLLECTION

The University of Toronto respects your privacy. The information on medical certificates is collected pursuant to section 2(14) of the University of Toronto Act, 1971. It is collected for the purpose of administering accommodations for academic purposes based on medical grounds. The department will maintain a record of all medical certificates received. At all times, it will be protected in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

If you have questions, please refer to www.utoronto.ca/privacy or contact the University's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Office at 416-946-5835. Address: Room 201, McMurrich Bldg., 12 Queen's Park Crescent, Toronto, ON, M5S 1A1.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and will be dealt with accordingly. Advice on writing at the University of Toronto, and guidance on how to cite sources and how not to plagiarize can be found at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources> and <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>.

Academic integrity in an online environment

Students are expected to maintain the same academic honesty and integrity that they would in a classroom setting. Potential academic offences in a digital context include, but are not limited to:

- Accessing unauthorized resources (search engines, chat rooms, Reddit, etc.) for assessments.
- Using technological aids (e.g. software) beyond what is listed as permitted in an assessment.
- Posting test, essay, or exam questions to message boards or social media.
- Creating, accessing, and sharing assessment questions and answers in virtual "course groups."
- Working collaboratively, in-person or online, with others on assessments that are expected to be completed individually.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Student Conduct. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional sources at the University of Toronto.

TURNITIN

Students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

Turnitin opt-out option

Students may opt out of Turnitin for submitting their assignments. To do so, they should notify the instructor via email no later than May 7, 2021. Assignments should then be submitted via email.

PRIVACY AND USE OF COURSE MATERIALS

This course, including your participation, will be recorded on video and will be available to students in the course for viewing remotely and after each session. Course videos and materials belong to your instructor, the University, and/or other sources depending on the specific facts of each situation and are protected by copyright. Do not download, copy, or share any course or student materials or videos without the explicit permission of the instructor. For questions about recording and use of videos in which you appear please contact your instructor.

In a seminar setting, students are encouraged to learn from each other and not only from the instructor, which requires active listening and engagement in discussion. While all students benefit from being able to access seminar meetings asynchronously, it is especially helpful for those who are unable to join synchronously for a variety of reasons. Recordings will be available for streaming but not for download through links housed in the University of Toronto "mymedia" site and shared via Quercus. Links to these recordings will be removed on June 15, 2021.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: as stated on page 3, required materials may change. An announcement will be provided at least a week in advance so that students can prepare accordingly. Any new materials will be made available digitally on Quercus.

Week 1

May 3. Introduction

[\(Film\) *Harvest of Empire*. 2017. Story by Juan González. Onyx Media Group.](#)

Ungraded reflection due on Quercus.

May 5. Types and theories of migration

[De Haas, Hein, Stephen Castles, and Mark J. Miller. 2020. *The age of migration: international population movements in the modern world*. New York, NY: The Guildford Press. Chapters 2 and 3, pp. 21-74.](#)

May 7.

First quiz due on Quercus.

Week 2

May 10. *Empire, racism and labor migration*

[Ngai, Mae M. 2014. *Impossible subjects: Illegal aliens and the making of modern America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Chapter 4, pp. 127-166.](#)

[Ngai, Mae M. 2021. "Racism Has Always Been Part of the Asian American Experience." *The Atlantic*. April 21.](#)

Recommended readings:

[Ngai, Mae M. 2014. *Impossible subjects: Illegal aliens and the making of modern America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Chapter 3, pp. 96-126.](#)

Gonzalez, Gilbert G. 2011. "Mexican Labor Migration, 1876–1924." In: *Beyond la frontera: the history of Mexico-U.S. migration*, edited by Mark Overmyer-Velázquez. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

May 12. *Forced migrations during and after the Cold War*

[García, María Cristina. 2017. *The Refugee Challenge in Post-Cold War America*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. Chapter 1, pp. 15-65.](#)

Recommended materials:

[Abrego, Leisy J. 2017. "On Silences: Salvadoran Refugees Then and Now." *Latino Studies* 15 \(1\): 73-85.](#)

[García, María Cristina. 2006. *Seeking refuge: Central American migration to Mexico, the United States, and Canada*. Berkeley: University of California Press.](#)

[\(Film\) *Eternos Indocumentados: Central American Refugees in the U.S.* Directed by Jennifer A. Cárcamo. Human Rights Alliance for Child Refugees and Families | The Critical Refugee Studies](#)

May 14.

First blog post due.

Week 3

May 17. *Categories of personhood*

[Hamlin, Rebecca. 2021. *Crossing: How We Label and React to People on the Move*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. Chapter 1: “The Migrant/Refugee Binary,” pp. 1-24.](#)

[Yarris, K. and Castañeda, H. 2015. “Special Issue Discourses of Displacement and Deservingness: Interrogating Distinctions between “Economic” and “Forced” Migration.” *International Migration*. 53\(3\): 64-69.](#)

[Heller Charles, et al. 2016. “‘Migrant Crisis’/‘Refugee Crisis.’” In: “Europe / Crisis: New Keywords of ‘the Crisis’ in and of ‘Europe’,” edited by Nicholas de Genova and Martina Tazzioli. *Near Futures Online* \(1\) “Europe at a Crossroads,” pp. 16-22.](#)

Recommended readings:

[Luibhéid, Eithne. 2013. *Pregnant on arrival: making the illegal immigrant*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Introduction, pp. 10-40.](#)

[Ngai, Mae M. 2014. *Impossible subjects: Illegal aliens and the making of modern America*-updated edition. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Introduction, pp. 29-41.](#)

May 19. *Policing and deterring*

[Alvarez, C. J. 2017. “The United States–Mexico Border.” In: *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of American History*.](#)

[De León, Jason. 2015. *The land of open graves: living and dying on the migrant trail*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press. Chapter 1, pp. 23-37.](#)

Recommended reading:

[Hernández, Kelly Lytle. 2010. *Migral: a history of the U.S. Border Patrol*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.](#)

May 21. *President’s Day. University closed.*

No office hours.

Second quiz due.

Week 4

May 24. *Victoria Day. University Closed.*

No class.

May 26. *Exerting legal violence*

[Abrego, Leisy J. and Sarah M. Lakhani. 2015. "Incomplete inclusion: legal violence and immigrants in liminal legal statuses." *Law & Policy*. 37\(4\): 265-293.](#)

[Tschalaer, Mengia. 2019. "Between queer liberalisms and Muslim masculinities: LGBTQI+ Muslim asylum assessment in Germany." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. 43\(7\): 1265–1283.](#)

Recommended readings:

[Menjívar, Cecilia and Abrego, Leisy J. 2012. "Legal Violence: Immigration Law and the Lives of Central American Immigrants." *American Journal of Sociology*. 117\(5\): 1380-1421.](#)

[Coutin, Susan Bibler. 2011. "Falling Outside: Excavating the History of Central American Asylum Seekers." *Law & Social Inquiry*. 36\(3\): 569-596.](#)

[Llewellyn, Cheryl. 2021. "Captive While Waiting to Be Free: Legal Violence and LGBTQ Asylum Applicant Experiences in the USA." *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*. \(18\): 202–212.](#)

May 28.

Third quiz due.

Week 5

May 31. *Undermining asylum*

[Mountz, Alison. 2020. *The Death of Asylum: Hidden Geographies of the Enforcement Archipelago*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Introduction, pp. 1-26.](#)

[Gonzales, Alfonso. 2018. "Derechos en crisis: Central American asylum claims in the age of authoritarian neoliberalism." *Politics, Groups, and Identities*. 1-19.](#)

(Newsletter) Love, Allegra. 2021. "Yelling about Title 42." April 15.

Recommended readings:

[Washington, John. 2020. *The Dispossessed: A Story of Asylum at the US-Mexico Border and Beyond*. Verso.](#)

[Balaguera, Martha. 2020. "'Would you come with me to the line?': Lawfare and legal accompaniment at the US-Mexico Border." *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review*. September 15.](#)

June 2. *Criminalizing, detaining, deporting and profiting*

[Menjívar, Cecilia, Andrea Gómez Cervantes, and Daniel Alvord. 2018. "The expansion of 'crimmigration,' mass detention, and deportation." *Sociology Compass*. 12\(4\): 1-15.](#)

(Podcast) Young, Elliott. 2021. "Criminalizing Immigrants." *Against the Grain*. April 12.

[Silverman, Stephanie J. 2014. "In the Wake of Irregular Arrivals: Changes to the Canadian Immigration Detention System." *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees*. 30\(2\): 27-34.](#)

Recommended readings:

[Young, Elliott. 2021. *Forever Prisoners: How the United States Made the World's Largest Immigrant Detention System*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.](#)

[Golash-Boza, Tanya. 2016. "The Parallels between Mass Incarceration and Mass Deportation: An Intersectional Analysis of State Repression." *Journal of World-Systems Research*. 22\(2\):484–509.](#)

[Golash-Boza, Tanya. 2015. *Deported: immigrant policing, disposable labor, and global capitalism*. New York, NY: New York University Press.](#)

June 4.

Second blog post due.

Week 6

June 7. Walling

[Paik, A. Naomi. 2020. *Bans, Walls, Raids, Sanctuary: Understanding US Immigration in the Twenty-First Century*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapter 2, pp. 47-74.](#)

[Díaz-Barriga, Miguel, and Margaret E. 2020. *Dorsey. Fencing in Democracy: Border Walls, Necrocitizenship, and the Security State*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. Chapter 1, pp. 15-48.](#)

Recommended reading:

[Brown, Wendy. 2010. *Walled states, waning sovereignty*. New York, NY: Zone Books. Chapter 1, pp. 7-42.](#)

June 9. Offshoring and externalizing

[Mountz, Alison. 2020. *The Death of Asylum: Hidden Geographies of the Enforcement Archipelago*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Chapter 1, pp. 29-56.](#)

[\(Film\) *Border South*. 2019. Produced by Jason de León. Andar Films | Siendo Films.](#)

Recommended readings:

[Minian, Ana Raquel. 2020. "Offshoring Migration Control: Guatemalan Transmigrants and the Construction of Mexico as a Buffer Zone." *The American Historical Review*. 125\(1\): 89–111.](#)

[Jennifer Hyndman and Alison Mountz. 2008. "Another Brick in the Wall? Neo-Refoulement and the Externalization of Asylum by Australia and Europe." *Government and Opposition*. 43\(2\): 249-269.](#)

Miller, Todd. 2019. *Empire of borders: the expansion of the US border around the world*. New York, NY: Verso.

June 11.

Fourth quiz due.

Week 7

June 14. Enduring and resisting boundary-making practices

[Tazzioli, Martina. 2018. "Containment through mobility: migrants' spatial disobediences and the reshaping of control through the hotspot system." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. 44\(16\): 2764-2779.](#)

[Balaguera, Martha. 2020. "Trans-migrations: Agency and Confinement at the Limits of Sovereignty." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*. 43\(3\): 641-664.](#)

Portfolio due.