

Political Science 3365.01: Immigration Politics Spring 2008

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Classroom: SBS 203
Office Hours: MW 2 PM- 5 PM
and by appt

Course Description & Objectives: One in ten residents of the United States was born outside the country. In Texas, about 16% of residents are foreign-born. These people include international students, temporary workers, refugees, asylees, permanent residents, naturalized U.S. citizens and undocumented migrants (those entering the United States without proper documents or overstaying temporary visas). The arrival of these newcomers affects the cultural, economic, political and social dynamics of the country. Since immigration shows no signs of slowing down—in the United States or in many other nations of the world—the causes, consequences and repercussions of immigration will be one of the most important topics of the 21-century. Therefore this class will examine the history and contemporary role of immigration in the U.S. political system. The class will focus on two aspects of immigration: First, a historical examination of immigration policy from the founding of the country all the way forward to the current debate over immigration reform. Second, we will evaluate and assess the political incorporation and political participation of immigrant groups in the U.S. and determine whether immigrants are being incorporated, and if not, why? We will reflect on many important questions including the costs and benefits of immigration, issues related to civil rights and civil liberties, and finally propose our own ideas and solutions to the current immigration reform debate. Course URL: <https://onlinelearning.utpa.edu/webct/logon/34614767021>

Studying politics should be fun. We will definitely have fun, but this course is also challenging. I have four basic expectations of my students that will allow us all to learn and dialogue about our ideas and opinions in an enjoyable and productive way:

- Come to class prepared, and attend class ON TIME and regularly;
- Complete assignments on time,
- Be respectful of one another
- I expect that you are all here because you want to learn, but I do not expect that you will understand everything you hear or read the first time it is presented. I do not expect you to agree with everything you read or hear. I expect that you will participate in a way that is grounded in the assigned readings and that you will conduct yourself during those class discussions with integrity and with respect for others.

Statement on Usage of Electronic Devices: Out of courtesy for all those participating in the learning experience, all cell phones, pagers, iPods, lap top computers, and all other electronic devices must be turned off before entering any classroom. I reserve the right to have a pop quiz each time this policy is violated if it becomes a problem during the semester.

Academic Integrity: Any form of academic dishonesty will result in the student being referred to the Dean of Students Office with a recommendation of the grade of F for the course. Academic integrity is maintained through the Judicial System. For more details, please consult the Student Guide on the web: <http://www.utpa.edu/dept/dos/slts/EZ/academicIntegrity.htm>.

Required Readings

Each week there will be required readings from one or more of these books. Readings should be done for the day they are assigned. For some weeks, the required readings are posted online. The complete, week-by-week reading list is posted on the Blackboard website (see URL above).

- Roger Daniels. 2002. *Coming to America*. 2nd Ed. Harper
- Roger Daniels. 2004. *Guarding the Golden Door*. Hill and Wang Publishers.
- Rogers Smith. 1999. *Civic Ideals*. Yale University Press (Only Chapters Introduction-2)
- Rubén G. Rumbaut & Alejandro Portes. 2001. *Ethnicities*. University of California Press.
- Janelle Wong. 2006. *Democracy's Promise*. University of Michigan Press.
- Online items (**Download and print all the articles immediately.**)

Grading:

The final grade will be calculated using the following formula:

- Statistical profile (15%)
- Interview project (15%)
- USCIS Application Presentation (15%)
- Midterm exam (25%)
- Final exam (30%)

A =	90-100
B =	80-89
C =	70-79
D =	60-79
F =	0-59

Statistical Profile (15%). DUE at the start of class, 02/07/08

Students will write a short statistical profile (3-4 pages) of an immigrant group in the United States. I will provide some suggestions for statistical data sources. Your report should include information on the number of the group in the United States, where they live and the main way(s) of entry into the U.S. Beyond these core data, you may investigate three other items you find of interest (e.g., gender or age composition, educational attainment, poverty status, racial diversity, family structure, occupation and income distribution, citizenship status, etc.). Your report will largely be factual information, but I encourage you to relate the numbers to the class readings. For example, can you see the effect of a particular immigration policy on the number or type of immigrants who come to the U.S.? If your group has noteworthy characteristics—for example, a gender imbalance, or high levels of poverty—does the sociological literature help you explain this? I also encourage you to think about the limits of statistical data—what can it NOT tell us? I expect you to consult, at a minimum, the following sources of statistical data. You must provide proper referencing for the source of all your statistical data. You may consult other sources if you find them helpful and reliable.

- Department of Homeland Security (and before, INS) statistical publications on immigrant, refugee and illegal entries. Available in hardcopy in the library or on-line at: <http://uscis.gov/graphics/shared/aboutus/statistics/ybpage.htm> (scroll to bottom).
- U.S. Census Bureau reports and tables on the “Foreign-born”: <http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/foreign.html>
- Migration Policy Institute (a non-partisan think tank in Washington, DC) data center: <http://www.migrationinformation.org/DataTools/>

Use these resources to answer the following questions. Summarizing your data in tables. When using tables or figures, highlight key points in your written discussion.

1. What is the total number of foreign-born of your immigrant group in the United States? What is their percentage of the total foreign born? How do they compare to other groups?

2. What are the predominant means of entry for your group, i.e., migration to the United States as family sponsored immigrants, employment immigrants, temporary workers, refugees & asylees and/or illegal immigrants? When did your group first begin arriving in significant numbers?
3. What are the top three states of residence of your group as a percentage of the total group? Speculate on why those states are particularly attractive.
4. Investigate three other items of interest such as gender or age composition, educational attainment, poverty status, racial diversity, family structure, occupation and income distribution, citizenship status, etc. Speculate on why you see the patterns you do.

Evaluation: I will evaluate you on how well you use statistical data to profile your group. Be aware of proper referencing and clear presentation. I also hope to see some thoughtful speculation on the reasons for the numbers.

Interview Project (15%): Each student will conduct an oral history of someone who migrated to the United States before 2000. This person may be a distant relative, although you are encouraged to interview someone you do not know well. Based on the readings you have done, you need to construct a well-thought interview guide (i.e. survey). This assignment has a number of goals. First and foremost, I want you to reflect on the concepts and theories that we have studied by considering them in the life of a real person. Second, I want you to try your hand at collecting data through an interview format. Finally, one of the final exam questions will ask you to apply course material to your interview data. Your interview will be *semi-structured*, that is, it is guided by a questionnaire, but carried out like a conversation through “prompting”. You should encourage your respondent to tell you about his or her experiences with examples and anecdotes.

Decide on one or two major themes that you want to explore in each interview section.

1. *Migration* – the actual process of migration (who helped pay for it, how was it done, etc.); the “push” factors that led to migration; the “pull” factors that made the U.S. the respondent’s destination; the help or hindrance of social ties, etc.
2. *Integration* -- experiences with economic integration (getting a job, learning about American work norms, etc.), experience with racial prejudice (self-perceptions of minority status, others’ perceptions, markers of being different – phenotype, accent, dress, etc.); experiences learning English; experiences with political incorporation (going to vote for the first time; reasons not to vote), etc.
3. *Membership* – attitudes to U.S. citizenship (did the person naturalize? Why? Why not?); ties to the home country (frequency of trips back, contact with back home); attitudes to dual citizenship; feelings of membership in American society; feelings of being a “citizen of the world”, etc.

The draft interview instrument will be worth 5% of your grade, and must be cleared by the instructor. It is due at the start of class, 03/06/08. Once accepted, you will use your questionnaire to interview one person for 30-90 minutes. Request permission to tape the interview. Explain that the interview is confidential – no one other than you will know their name. Type up the *entire* interview. At the end of the interview, on an extra page, reflect on some of the most interesting parts of the interview, given the class readings. The interview transcript, with reflections, is due at the start of class, 04/01/08.

Evaluation: You will be evaluated on how well you thought out your questionnaire, how well you gathered information from the respondent (that is, providing them with a pleasant interview experience that also provides lots of data), and the thoughtfulness of your reflections.

USCIS Application Presentation (15%): Working in a group or pair, students will complete the USCIS application process as if they were applying for legal entry into the U.S. Each group will be assigned a set of circumstances that will shape the experiences of the group given their particular case (i.e. student visa, refugee, family reunification, etc), and will then investigate (given the facts of their case) what USCIS paperwork needs to be completed to enter or remain in the U.S. legally. Then students will actually go through the application process. Students will present what they have learned to the class and will also provide an analysis of their experience. *I expect partners to contribute equally to group assignments. You are adults; I will not entertain complaints about workload sharing. Both partners will receive the same grade.* Presentations will take place April 17 & 22, 2008.

Midterm and Final Examinations (25% and 30% each, respectively): These will be either essay-style exams or oral exams that draw on the semester's readings and the assignments.

Extra Credit: It is my policy not to curve or round grades. Students will receive the grade they have earned. Therefore in order to give students an additional opportunity to improve their grades, each class they will have an opportunity to bring in an immigration-related current event from a news source to share with the class. Extra credit points will be added to the Exam portion of student grades. Also, student participation will be evaluated and calculated as extra credit.

Other Important Guidelines

1. If you miss more than 3 classes, FOR ANY REASON, you will be dropped from this course. If you are passing the course with a grade of 60% or above at that time you will receive a DP; if not you will receive a DF.
2. If you have a physical or other disability that interferes with access to the classroom, use of classroom facilities, or the completion of assignments as specified in the syllabus, please contact the Office of Services for Persons with Disabilities at extension 7005 to make special arrangements.
3. Always make a duplicate of your class paper and put it away in a safe place. Occasionally papers are misplaced and this protects you. Always keep any papers, quizzes, exams, etc. that are returned to you. This protects you in case your grade is recorded incorrectly.
4. If an emergency (sickness, accident, death in the family or some other crisis) occurs during the semester that may affect your performance in this course, please inform me promptly. Do not wait until the end of the semester.
5. Makeup exams will be given only in cases of unavoidable conflict or health problems. Students must contact me before the regularly scheduled test in order to qualify for an oral makeup exam.
6. Papers should be submitted at the beginning of class on the day they are due. Points will be deducted for late submissions (usually 10 points per day). Cover and references pages do not count as actual pages of an assignment but they are necessary. All papers and assignments completed outside the classroom must be typewritten, double-spaced, fully and properly cited, and grammatically competent. The format of the typed, one-sided paper should include 1" margins and be in a reasonable font (such as Times New Roman, size 12). Again, formatting, and grammar and spelling will be graded on all assignments. A ten-point per page deduction will be applied to each paper that fails to meet the minimum length requirement for this assignment.
7. Each student is required to type a draft of their major assignments and take it to the writing center for assessment. After sitting with someone at the writing center, each student should edit their paper and make improvements. All students are required to turn in a copy of their

draft (stamped by someone at the WC) with comments from the Writing Center along with their final paper. Please note that assignments will not be accepted without turning in the draft with comments on the due date. Also, please be sure to sign in AND WRITE YOUR PROFESSOR'S NAME when you go to the writing center so that you can receive credit for your attendance.

8. The reading assignment for each day is fixed without regard to our progress through the topics, unless I announce otherwise. PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus serves as a guideline for your reading and preparation for exams. HOWEVER, as your professor, I reserve the right to deviate from the syllabus when necessary. I will make every effort to announce changes at least 2 classes prior to the adjustment, but, ultimately, students are responsible for keeping in touch with me regarding changes.
9. DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT ME IF YOU ARE HAVING A PROBLEM WITH THE COURSE. I MAY BE ABLE TO HELP YOU STUDY MORE EFFECTIVELY OR RECOMMEND ASSISTANCE ELSEWHERE ON CAMPUS. REMEMBER...I WANT YOU TO DO WELL IN THIS CLASS.

Important Dates: (subject to change)

January 15, 2008 (TODAY)	First Day of Class
January 21, 2008	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, campus closed
February 7, 2008	Statistical Profile due
February 12, 2008	Last day to have a "DR" or "W" recorded
February 28, 2008	Midterm Examination (in class)
March 6, 2008	Survey questions due
March 10-15, 2008	Spring break
March 21-22, 2008	Easter holiday, campus closed
April 1, 2008	Interview project due
April 11, 2008	Last day to drop courses or withdraw
April 22 & 24, 2008	USCIS Application Presentations
April 29, 2008	Final Exam (during regular class hours)