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Spring 2023

Forced Migration

Syllabus

The UN High Commission on Refugees reports that 89.3 million people are displaced worldwide, among whom 21 million have crossed a border into another country, one that is usually close to their home country; another 4.6 million people are seeking asylum somewhere else. This course seeks to understand the refugee phenomenon, focusing on the causes of flight and the conditions that allow or constrain refugees from finding safety and asylum in the wealthy democracies of the west. We will ask how refugees differ, if at all, from other migrants; how the institution of refugee protection arose and how its history affects refugee protection today; how governments, and especially that of the United States, implement asylum policy; and why despite their commitments to protect asylum seekers and refugees, so many governments do so little.

The human tragedies associated with forced migration have generated a rapidly growing literature. The course will mainly focus on recently published works in sociology, anthropology, and political science. As noted below, we will also engage in remote discussion with some of the authors whose works we will be reading.

Course requirements

This course coincides with the on-campus convening of an International Conference on Forced Migration, to be held at UCLA on April 14-15. The complete conference program can be found here: [the website](#) and you can [Register here](#). In lieu of class on April 14, students are required to attend in-person the morning session, devoted to a discussion of a new book, *The Refugee System*, authored by Rawan Arar and David FitzGerald; a copy of the book is available on the course website. While we read selected chapters from the book at various points in the course, an initial encounter with the book, prior to the April 14 conference, will enhance your appreciation of the discussion.

Students are strongly encouraged to attend the remaining sessions of the conference. It will provide an excellent orientation to the field. In addition, an all-day graduate workshop, led by selected speakers participating at the conference, will be held on April 13; I strongly recommend that you apply to attend the workshop. To do so, please upload a one-page letter describing your research interests and the reasons why you wish to participate in the workshop, along with a one-page C.V.: [Link to submit](#)

Class meetings

The basic requirement is to do the readings. There are plenty of them, and you need to stay on top of the material at all times. Most of our class time will consist of structured

discussion, possibly interwoven with an occasional brief overview lecture. This means that everyone should anticipate participating in class discussions. I will begin each session by going around the room and asking each person to make a substantive comment, ideally critical, on some aspect of the readings. Please be prepared to be called on, *in every class*.

Note that on April 7 we will meet remotely for a two hour session from 9-11 AM, using this link: <https://ucla.zoom.us/j/9203419843>. Furthermore, there will be no class on May 5.

Dialogue with authors:

As a unique feature of this course, we will engage in remote dialogue with a number of the authors whose work we will be reading. I have scheduled four remote sessions:

Rawan Arar, April 21, 11-12 noon

Chiara Galli: April 28, 11-12 noon

Blair Sackett: May 12, 11-12 noon

Milena Belloni: May 26, 9-10 AM

Kelsey Norma, June 2, 11-12 noon

Prior to these meetings, we will spend part of the class discussion reviewing the questions that we will want to pose to the authors.

Readings

Readings are available either via the course website or via the links indicated on the syllabus below.

Reaction papers

Students will be required to write three, 1-2 page single-spaced “reaction papers” for the readings in the selected weeks. These should be posted to the discussion section of our course website noon Thursday. The paper should assume that all participants have already read the materials, so summary is unnecessary. Instead, the paper should raise questions and/or develop a critique of a conceptual, substantive, or methodological concern raised by *at least two of the required readings for the week*. Students should try to get the readings to speak to one another and to address issues of similarity and difference across the ideas and arguments raised in the readings. I encourage students to make no more than two central claims in the reaction paper in order to develop an economical argument given the page limitations. Students should come to each seminar having read other students’ discussion papers in addition to the weekly readings. While the response papers are not graded, I will read them and use them to motivate discussion. Authors of response papers for any given week will then make a very brief oral presentation, done without reading from a text. Those students who are not writing response papers for any week’s session will be expected to comment on the response papers, which you can find on the course forum.

Final paper or exam:

Students have the option of writing a paper, as described below, or submitting a comprehensive, take-home final exam. If you choose to write a paper, please consult with me by no later than April 21. Regardless of the option you choose, the date for submission is Monday, June 19; submission will be via the course web page

Paper: The paper will be in the form of a research proposal. The paper should clearly define the research question and why it is important; discuss the relevant literature; outline the argument; provide preliminary evidence and discuss a research plan for testing or assessing the argument.

Office hours:

While I will have office hours by appointment only, I am very flexible and am happy to meet with you and am likely to be able to do so at your convenience. Please do feel free to contact me to set up an appointment. My preference is for a remote meeting: <https://ucla.zoom.us/j/9203419843>. However, I will also be able to meet in-person, ideally on Friday afternoons.

Unit 1: Friday, April 7: remote session: Who is a refugee?

Arar and FitzGerald, *The Refugee System*, chapter 2

Hamlin, Rebecca, 2021. *Crossing*. Stanford University Press. Ch. 1

Ludwig, Bernadette. "'Wiping the refugee dust from my feet': advantages and burdens of refugee status and the refugee label." *International Migration* 54, no. 1 (2016): 5-18: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/imig.12111>

Pearlman, W., 2018. Becoming a Refugee: Reflections on Self-Understandings of Displacement from the Syrian Case. *Review of Middle East Studies*, 52(2), pp.299-309. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/review-of-middle-east-studies/article/becoming-a-refugee-reflections-on-selfunderstandings-of-displacement-from-the-syrian-case/76F616214C63E784CC0E2D1DDEFADBDB>

Scalettaris, Giulia. "Refugee studies and the international refugee regime: a reflection on a desirable separation." *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 26, no. 3 (2007): 36-50: <https://academic.oup.com/rsq/article-abstract/26/3/36/1590847>

Zolberg, Aristide, et al. *Escape from Violence*, Oxford University Press, 1989, chapter 1

Unit 2: April 14. No class: attend International Conference on Forced migration

9-11:30: Book panel on Arar, R. and FitzGerald, D. S., forthcoming. *The Refugee System: A Sociological Approach*. Polity Press. (read pages.); Bunche 10383

1-5 pm: Plenary addresses; Luskin conference center

April 13: All-day graduate workshop on forced migration strongly recommended

Unit 3: April 21. The Refugee Regime

Discussion with Rawan Arar: 11-12 noon

Arar and FitzGerald, chapter 3

Betts, Alexander. 2010. "The Refugee Regime Complex." *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 29 (1):12-37.

<https://academic.oup.com/rsg/article/29/1/12/1545224>

Hamlin, Rebecca, 2021. *Crossing*. Stanford University Press. Ch 4.

Loescher, Gil, *The UNHCR and World Politics: A Perilous Path*, Oxford: 2003, chapter 1

Wolman, Andrew 'Japan and international refugee protection norms: Explaining non-compliance', *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 24 (2015), 409-431.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0117196815606852>

Unit 4: April 28: Asylum and its barriers

Galli, Chiara *Precarious Protections: Unaccompanied Minors Seeking Asylum in the United States*, UC Press, 2023, chapters 1, 3, 5, 6: available via UCLA library:

<https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1525/9780520391925/html>

Discussion with Chiara Galli, 11 Am – 12 noon

Ramji-Nogales, J., Schoenholtz, A. I. and Schrag, P. G. 2007. Refugee roulette: Disparities in asylum adjudication. *Stan. L. Rev.*, 60, 295.

https://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals/stflr60&div=19&g_sent=1&casa_token=

May 5: No class

Unit 5: May 12: Resettlement.

Arar and FitzGerald, chapter 7

Donato, K. M. and Ferris, E. 2020. Refugee integration in Canada, Europe, and the United States: Perspectives from research. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 690(1), 7-35.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0002716220943169>

Sackett, Blair and Annette Lareau, *Seeking Refuge, Finding Inequality: Refugees Navigating Institutional Barriers*, UC Press, 2023, Introduction; chapters 2, 5, conclusion

Discussion with Blair Sackett, 11 am – 12 noon

Recommended:

Horst, Cindy. *Transnational nomads: How Somalis cope with refugee life in the Dadaab camps of Kenya*. Vol. 19. Berghahn Books, 2007, Chapter 5

Gowayed, Heba *Refuge: How the state shapes human potential*, Princeton University Press, chapters 3-5 (available online via UCLA library)

Unit 6: Refugee Decision-making, May 19

Arar and FitzGerald, chapter 4

Belloni, Milena. 2019. *The Big Gamble: The Migration of Eritreans to Europe*: University of California Press, Chapters 1, 3:

<https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/9780520970755/html#contents>

Galli, Chaira, *Precarious Protections: Unaccompanied Minors Seeking Asylum in the United States*, UC Press, 2023, chapter 2

Sackett, Blair and Annette Lareau, *Seeking Refuge, Finding Inequality: Refugees Navigating Institutional Barriers*, UC Press, 2023, chapter 1

Recommended:

Bohra-Mishra, Pratikshya, and Douglas S Massey. 2011. "Individual decisions to migrate during civil conflict." *Demography* 48 (2):401-424.

<https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2Fs13524-011-0016-5.pdf>

Gowayed, Heba *Refuge: How the state shapes human potential*, Princeton University Press, chapter 2 (available online via UCLA library)

Kvittingen, Anna, Marko Valenta, Hanan Tabbara, Dina Baslan, and Berit Berg. 2018. "The Conditions and Migratory Aspirations of Syrian and Iraqi Refugees in Jordan." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 32 (1):106-124.

<https://academic.oup.com/jrs/article-pdf/32/1/106/28049140/fey015.pdf>

Hiskey, J. T., et al. 2018. Leaving the devil you know: Crime victimization, US deterrence policy, and the emigration decision in Central America. *Latin American Research Review*, 53(3), 429-447.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/19349637.2019.1620668>

Unit 7: May 26. Host State Logics

Discussion with Milena Belloni, 9 am -10 am

Norman, Kelsey P., 2020. *Reluctant Reception: Refugees, Migration and Governance in the Middle East and North Africa*. Cambridge University Press. (available via Cambridge Core: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/reluctant-reception/558E2A93FF99B8F295347A8FA2053698>)

Greenhill, Kelly M. 2002. "Engineered Migration and the Use of Refugees as Political Weapons: A Case Study of the 1994 Cuban Balseros Crisis." *International Migration* 40 (4):39-74. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/1468-2435.00205>

Micinski, N. R. 2018. Refugee policy as foreign policy: Iraqi and Afghan refugee resettlements to the United States. *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 37(3), 253-278. <https://academic.oup.com/rsg/article-pdf/37/3/253/25590929/hdy007.pdf>

Unit 8: June 2: Broader Perspectives on Forced Migration

Discussion with Kelsey Norman, 11-12 noon

Kraly, Ellen Percy; Holly E. Reed, Malay K. Majmundar, Susan McGrath, Pia Orrenius, Romesh Silva, and Sarah Staveteig Ford, [The Role of Migration Research in Promoting Refugee Well-Being in a Post-Pandemic Era](#) *Journal on Migration and Human Security* 2021 9:3, 197-205

Orchard, P. 2016. The contested origins of internal displacement. *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 28(2), 210-233. <https://academic.oup.com/ijrl/article-pdf/28/2/210/6868947/eew031.pdf>

Hunter, L. M., Luna, J. K. and Norton, R. M. 2015. Environmental dimensions of migration. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 41, 377-397. <https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/full/10.1146/annurev-soc-073014-112223>

Tan, Y. 2020. Development-induced displacement and resettlement. *Routledge Handbook of Migration and Development*, 373-381. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315276908-34/development-induced-displacement-resettlement-yan-tan>

Weitzer, R. 2015. Human trafficking and contemporary slavery. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 41, 223-242. <https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/full/10.1146/annurev-soc-073014-112506>

Unit 9: June 9. Humanitarianism and Rights

Arar and FitzGerald, chapter 9

Barnett, M. 2001. Humanitarianism with a sovereign face: UNHCR in the global undertow. *International Migration Review*, 35(1), 244-277.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2001.tb00013.x>

Chimni, B. S. 2000. "Globalization, Humanitarianism and the Erosion of Refugee Protection." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 13 (3):243-263.

<https://academic.oup.com/jrs/article/13/3/243/1520931>

Thielemann, E. and Hobolth, M. 2016. Trading numbers vs. rights? Accounting for liberal and restrictive dynamics in the evolution of asylum and refugee policies. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 42(4), 643-664.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/1369183X.2015.1102042>

Slovic, Paul, Daniel Västfjäll, Arvid Erlandsson, and Robin Gregory. 2017. "Iconic photographs and the ebb and flow of empathic response to humanitarian disasters." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 114 (4):640-644.

<https://www.pnas.org/content/pnas/114/4/640.full.pdf>

Blitz, Brad. 2017. "Another story: what public opinion data tell us about refugee and humanitarian policy." *Journal on Migration and Human Security* 5 (2):379-400.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/233150241700500208>

Adler-Nissen, Rebecca, Katrine Emilie Andersen, and Lene Hansen. "Images, emotions, and international politics: The death of Alan Kurdi." *Review of International Studies* 46, no. 1 (2020): 75-95.