

Professor Roger Waldinger

Department of Sociology

Spring 2022

Forced Migration

Syllabus

The UN High Commission on Refugees reports that 68.5 million people are displaced worldwide, among whom almost 20 million have crossed a border into another country, one that is usually close to their home country; another 3.1 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.

Class organization and expectations

This course is a reading-intensive, seminar. Although I will deliver lectures in order to synthesize the readings and provide background, the core of the course depends on your active engagement with the readings and with one another. I anticipate that everyone will come to class having fully read the material and being prepared for informed discussion and participation. In evaluating your participation, I will assess both the frequency and the quality of your comments. As you will see, the assignments have been structured in such a way as to help you prepare for each class meeting.

Disagreement is inherent to research and scholarship; the issue on which this course focus is also a source of great controversy. Consequently, we are likely to disagree with some of the authors whom we read; you may also disagree with the analyses that I present; you may also disagree with one another. While disagreement is entirely appropriate, I nonetheless expect that we will be respectful of one another and of the viewpoints that get expressed in class.

To stimulate interest and engagement, I will break each class into several segments:

- We will begin with a 20 minute segment, focusing on the readings. Student presentations will take place then. After student presentations, I will go around the room, asking everyone to comment on some aspect of the reading, ideally making a critical comment that will help spur discussion. Based on the presentations and on your comments, I will then structure the discussion.

- The last portion of the class will be reserved for lecture or further discussion. Student led discussions will take place then.

Office hours:

Office hours will be held remotely on Thursdays, from 3-4 pm. Please use the following link: <https://ucla.zoom.us/j/95766546509?pwd=NIJydy9NVWR3ajNOeXIRMDRjblQ3Zz09> . If this time does not work for you, please contact me to set up a mutually convenient zoom meeting. I will do my best to make myself available.

I may also be available for brief in-person meetings following class; in-person meetings by appointment may be possible on Wednesday afternoons.

Assignments and Requirements

- *Attendance:* Attendance at all meetings is mandatory and punctuality is expected. Absence is accepted only upon documentation; prior instructor approval is required.
- *Biography:* Please post a brief biography (at least one paragraph) describing yourself, your intellectual interests, and the reasons for enrolling in this course. The biography should be directed at both me and your fellow students.
- *Weekly reflection, sessions 2-10:*
 - *Two paragraph reflection on the readings*, in response to a question that I will pose the prior week. Your reflection should be posted on the course website (in the forum).
 - students with last names beginning in A-N will submit by midnight on Tuesdays
 - Students with last names beginning in O-Z will submit by midnight on Thursdays
- *Opening Class Discussion:* You will sign up once in the quarter to work to open class discussion by presenting the main arguments of one reading and then providing a critical assessment of the selection by way of critique or further questions it raises for you. The presentation should take no more than five minutes; I will cut you off after five minutes, so please be succinct and to the point. The first such assignment will begin on April 6. While you may use a powerpoint, you should not read from slides or from a text, but rather present orally, relying on brief notes, if necessary. You should select the reading that you will present by no later than April 2; a sign-up form will be posted on the course website.
- *Research paper:*
 - Write a 15 page paper focusing on a population involved in forced migration. The paper should be based on at least 10 scholarly sources (e.g., books; journal articles; reports by governmental or non-governmental organizations, such as UNHCR or Human Rights Watch) that you have read have specifically for the purpose of this assignment. As appropriate, these sources can be supplemented by references from newspapers and other media (including blogs or podcasts).

Wikipedia can only be used as a supplement to these sources. In addition to your 10 sources, you should also cite course readings, lectures, and discussions as appropriate. This will be both a group and an individual effort. Groups of 3 should together select among the populations listed below to study; presentations based on your research will be made during the late May/early June sessions. The final paper, including an annotated bibliography, will be due by 5 pm, Monday June 14, via email.

- Groups may select among the following populations, with the selection to be made by no later than April 12. Other populations can be selected, upon my approval:
 - Armenian refugees, from the Genocide through World War 2
 - Jewish refugees: 1930s and World War 2 period
 - Jewish refugees, 1940s
 - Palestinian refugees, 1948 to present
 - Chinese refugees, 1949 to 1970s
 - Vietnamese refugees, 1970s to 1990s
 - Central American refugees, 1970-90s
 - Central American asylum seekers, 2000-present
 - Afghan refugees, 1979 to present
 - Refugees of the Yugoslav wars, 1990s
 - Syrian Refugees
 - Venezuelan Refugees
 - Child asylum seekers
 - Haitian asylum seekers
 - Somali refugees
 - Sudanese refugees
- *Paper structure and process*: The paper will be written in stages, involving 4 interim deliverables, followed by submission of the final paper. Each deliverable should integrate material from class discussion and readings with new material that you have gathered from your research:
 - *Background and basic information*: In this section, provide some basic features about the population in question: origins; destinations; timing of migration; international response. Also explain the reasons for your interest in this population and what questions you hope to answer with your research. 2-3 pages; due April 15
 - *The causes of migration*, highlighting the key features that led people to leave. In this discussion, you should be attentive to the variety of motivations, assessing the role of political, social, and economic factors, and how those motivations may have evolved over the course of the migration's history: 3-4 pages: due May 4
 - *The routes of migration*: Trace the patterns by which people found haven elsewhere, discussing issues related to border crossing, smuggling, documentation, passage from first to third countries of asylum, as

appropriate. This section should also discuss any obstacles that potential countries of immigration may have put in the way. 3-4 pages: due May 18

- *Asylum and resettlement*: Discuss policies, such as residence rights, access to education, social services, and employment, that affected refugees in the countries where they sought asylum. This section can also discuss policies of resettlement in a third country of asylum (e.g., The United States or Canada), as appropriate. This section may discuss the role of policies concerning the recognition of refugee/asylee status and how questions of whether persons seeking asylum were “real” refugees or not affected settlement and options made available to refugees. As appropriate, this section can also discuss the role of the international community. 3-4 pages: due June 1
 - *Final paper*: The final paper should weave these different components into a single narrative; it should include an annotated bibliography. Deadline: Monday, June 14
 - *Presentations*: Each group should plan a presentation, lasting roughly 20 minutes in total, and covering the issues mentioned above. Two weeks prior to the session, each group should send me a relevant text (chapter from book or scholarly article) that will be read by the entire class (and that I will post to the class website).
- *Extra credit papers*:
 - *Refoulement*: As we will discuss in week 4, the Geneva convention includes a prohibition on "refoulement" : "No Contracting State shall expel or return ("refouler") a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion."
Although the United States is a signatory to the convention, this past October, it violated the prohibition on non-refoulement, returning more than 50 Cameroonian asylum seekers back to Cameroon, where they will almost surely face death and/or torture.
For 2 points extra credit, please write a 4-500 word reflection, based on your reading of Chapter 2 in Ther, especially the profile of the Dublon family; viewing of one of the three short documentaries listed below, and the following article on the Cameroonians:
<https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/immigration/story/2020-10-15/cameroon-congolese-deported> ;
Additional information on the situation faced by the Cameroonians can be found here:
[Cameroonian American Council](#), [Black Alliance for Just Immigration](#), and the [UndocuBlack Network](#)
Assignment due on May 4. Please post essays to the forum. Films below:
<https://ucla.kanopy.com/video/nobody-wants-us>

<https://exhibitions.ushmm.org/americans-and-the-holocaust/main/refugee-ships-quanza-st-louis>
<https://youtu.be/MZvh31XXd2U> ;

- *Refugees v migrants?* International law gives refugees certain rights and entitlements not shared by other migrants. However, scholars assert that providing refugees with protection requires distinguishing refugees from other migrants. Can this distinction be made? Your answer should draw on class readings and discussion as well as consideration of this article: Feller E. 2005. Refugees are not Migrants. *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 24: 27-35. . Suggested length: 750 words. Due any time, but no later than June 4.

Grading:

Your grades will be based on the following criteria:

Grading criteria	
Assignment	Points
Bio	1
Opening class discussion	5
Weekly reflections (9)	18
Paper	
Component 1	5
Component 2	7
Component 3	9
Component 4	9
Final paper	25
Group presentation	6
Individual contribution	5
Participation (.5 per session)	10
Total	100
Extra credit assignment 1	5
Extra credit assignment 2	2

Grade conversion formula

A+	105%
A	100%
A-	92%
B+	88%
B	85%
B-	82%
C+	78%
C	75%
C-	72%
D+	68%
D	65%
D-	62%

Readings: All readings are available on the course web page. In addition to analytical readings, drawn from the scholarly literature, each week we will read a personal essay written by a refugee writing; all are from a book edited by Pulitzer Prize winning author Viet Thanh Nguyen, *The Displaced: Refugee Writers on Refugee Lives*, New York: Abrams Press, 2018. So as to further bring in the human dimension of the phenomenon, each week I will ask you to watch a short documentary (maximum length, 15 minutes); the links are on the syllabus.

Paper formatting:

All written assignments submitted for evaluation should be typed, with 1-inch margins, in Times New Roman (or equivalent standard typeface), with pages numbered and appropriate parenthetical citations (Author, Year) include. If using direct quotes, please include page numbers as well (for example: Author, Year: Page number of range).

Disabilities

I will make every effort to accommodate students with disabilities; please contact me at your nearest convenience. However, please also follow university procedure if you need an academic accommodation based on a disability: contact the Center for Accessible Education (CAE) at (310)825-1501 or in person at Murphy Hall A255. In order to ensure accommodations, you need to contact the CAE within the first two weeks of the term. For more information, please visit www.osd.ucla.edu

Plagiarism:

Learning is an interactive process, involving discussions with me, with your section leader, and with your peers. But in the end, you have to work out your ideas on your own; I expect that *all* of your work will be original. *Plagiarism is strictly prohibited.* Should I find that you have plagiarized *any* piece of work submitted for a grade, *I will give you an F for the course, and will pursue any other punishment or penalty available.*

Title IX and Psychological Health, Well-being, and Resilience

- UCLA prohibits gender discrimination, including sexual harassment and violence. Many resources are available to you should you have been affected. I am also available to discuss these issues with you. However, I do want to note that I am a mandatory reporter.
- **Case Management Services** works to support currently enrolled undergraduate and graduate students who are experiencing personal difficulties. Both on-going and unexpected situations can impact students' academic experiences. The Case Managers work to help students make a plan to move through these challenges by presenting them with resources and options. Please note, this service is not confidential and abides

by FERPA. You can learn more about the office and may refer yourself or your peer by visiting www.studentincrisis.ucla.edu.

- **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)** is here to support your mental health needs as you pursue your academic goals. Our services are designed to foster the development of healthy well-being necessary for success in a complex global environment. All registered UCLA students are eligible for same-day clinical consultation and help with referrals, linkage, treatment recommendations, and coordination of mental health care and support regardless of insurance plan or current residence. Due to state law and [California Board of Psychology](#) and [Board of Behavioral Sciences](#) restrictions, students who are not currently in CAPS care, and are out of the state or the country, are eligible only for clinical coordination and referral to a provider in their local area based on student insurance plans. CAPS is open during regular business hours, providing all services through telehealth. For more information, visit our website: <https://www.counseling.ucla.edu> 24/7 crisis support is always available by phone at 310-825-0768
- If you are already registered with the **Center for Accessible Education (CAE)**, please request your Letter of Accommodation in the Student Portal. If you are seeking registration with the CAE, please submit your request for accommodations via the CAE website. Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations should submit their request for accommodations as soon as possible, as it may take up to two weeks to review the request. For more information, please visit the [CAE website](#), visit the CAE at A255 Murphy Hall, or contact us by phone at (310) 825-1501.

SCHEDULE

Week 1: Refugees and asylum seekers around the world today

March 30:

UN High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR), *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2017*, trends at a glance; chapter 1 (on course website)

Philipp Ther, *The Outsiders: Refugees in Europe since 1492*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019: 1-16

Personal essay: Viet Thanh Nguyen, *The Displaced: Refugee Writers on Refugee Lives*, New York: Abrams Press, 2018; Nguyen, "Introduction"

[Documentary: *The New Yorker: The Journey from Syria, Episode 1*](#)

April 1:

Kukathas, Chandran. (2016). "Are Refugees Special?" In *Migration in Political Theory: The Ethics of Movement and Membership*, (pgs 249-268). Sarah Fine and Leah Ypi, Eds. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. (CW)

Gibney, Matthew (2018), "The Ethics of Refugees," *Philosophy Compass*, 1-9

Migration Policy Institute, *Dismantling and Reconstructing the U.S. Immigration System*, Washington, DC: MPI, 2020: 1-7; 63-68

April 2: Deadline for selecting reading that you will present; select from readings for sessions 2-8

Week 2: Who/What is a refugee?

Presentation of readings begins; deadline for selection of paper/presentation topic

April 6:

Pearlman, Wendy. 2019. "Becoming a Refugee: Reflection on Self-Understandings of Displacement from the Syrian Case." *Review of Middle East Studies* 52 (2): 299 –309.

Katherine Jensen, "The Meanings of Refugee Status", *Contexts*, 10-15

Personal essay: Nguyen, *The Displaced*, Joseph Azam, "Last, First, Middle"

[Documentary: *The New Yorker: The Journey from Syria, Episode 2*](#)

April 8:

Crawley, H., & Skleparis, D. (2018). Refugees, migrants, neither, both: categorical fetishism and the politics of bounding in Europe's 'migration crisis'. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44(1), 48-64.

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.

Week 3: Refugee movements and policies in historical perspective

April 13:

Ther, pp. 22-37; (skip 30-31); 43-47 (profile of Kemal Pasha optional) 47-54;

Personal essay: Nguyen, *The Displaced*, David Bezmogis, "Common Story"

[Documentary: *The New Yorker: The Journey from Syria, Episode 3*](#)

April 15:

Ther, pp. 54-112; skip all profiles except for Dublon family (73 to top 74); also skip: 58-to top 61; 63-bottom para of 67; 84-85; 95-6; 105

Submission of first deliverable

Week 4: The making of the refugee regime: The Geneva Convention and UNHCR

April 20: Ther, pp. 139-43; 158-62; 169-190; 202-middle 206; 223-30

[Documentary: *The New Yorker: The Journey from Syria, Episode 4*](#)

April 22: Supplementary lecture

April 27:

Alexander Betts, et al. *UNHCR: The Politics and Practice of Refugee Protection*. London: Routledge, 2008, pp. 1-17

"Convention and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees",
<https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/3b66c2aa10> , pp. 13-30

Personal essay: Nguyen, *The Displaced*, Vu Tran, "A Refugee Again"

Session 5: The causes of flight

April 29:

Zolberg, Aristide R., Astri Suhrke, and Sergio Aguayo. "International factors in the formation of refugee movements." *International migration review* 20, no. 2 (1986): 151-169.

Alexander Betts and Paul Collier: *Refuge: Transforming a Broken Refugee System*, Chapter 1

Davenport, C., Moore, W. and Poe, S., 2003. Sometimes you just have to leave: Domestic threats and forced migration, 1964-1989. *International Interactions*, 29(1), pp.27-35.

[Documentary: *The New Yorker: The Journey from Syria, Episode 5*](#)

May 4

Submission of second deliverable

Clemens, M., 2017. The Root Causes of Child Migration from Central America: Safety vs. Opportunity. <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/root-causes-child-migration-central-america-safety-vs-opportunity> ; and Hannah Postel, "Foreign Policy is Migration Policy: Lessons from the Drivers of Central American Child Migration," <https://www.cgdev.org/publication/foreign-policy-migration-policy-lessons-drivers-central-american-child-migration>

Belloni, Milena. "Family project or individual choice? Exploring agency in young Eritreans' migration." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 46, no. 2 (2020): 336-353.

Personal essay: Nguyen, *The Displaced*, Meron Hadero, "To Walk in Their Shoes"

Session 6: The non-entrée regime

May 6:

FitzGerald, David Scott. "Remote control of migration: theorising territoriality, shared coercion, and deterrence." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 46, no. 1 (2020): 4-22.

Personal essay: Nguyen, *The Displaced*, Lev Golinkin, "Guests of the Holy Roman Empress Maria Theresa"

[Documentary: *The New Yorker: The Journey from Syria, Episode 6*](#)

May 11:

Gammeltoft-Hansen, Thomas, and Nikolas F. Tan. "The end of the deterrence paradigm? Future directions for global refugee policy." *Journal on Migration and Human Security* 5, no. 1 (2017): 28-56.

Gibney, Matthew J. "A thousand little Guantanos: Western states and measures to prevent the arrival of refugees." *Displacement, Asylum, Migration: The Oxford Amnesty Lectures 2004* (2006): 139-169.

Session 7: Asylum

May 13:

Submission of Third Deliverable

Galli, Chiara. "Humanitarian capital: how lawyers help immigrants use suffering to claim membership in the nation-state." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* (2019): 1-18

Personal essay: Nguyen, *The Displaced*, Joseph Kertez, "Second Country"

May 18:

Carol Bohmer and Amy Shuman, Chapter 5, "New Forms of Evidence: Membership in a Particular Social Group" in *Political Asylum Deceptions*, Palgrave, 2018;

Ordóñez, J. Thomas. "The state of confusion: Reflections on Central American asylum seekers in the Bay Area." *Ethnography* 9, no. 1 (2008): 35-60

[Documentary: Surviving One of the Deadliest Routes to Europe: Refugees at Sea](#)

minutes 1-15

Session 8: Integration & Resettlement

Submission of third deliverable

May 20:

Palmgren, Pei. "Survival and integration: Kachin social networks and refugee management regimes in Kuala Lumpur and Los Angeles." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 43, no. 13 (2017): 2247-2264.

Personal essay: Nguyen, *The Displaced*, Dina Nayeri, "The Ungrateful Refugee"

[Documentary: Surviving One of the Deadliest Routes to Europe: Refugees at Sea](#)

minutes 15-30

May 25:

Gowayed, Heba. "Resettled and unsettled: Syrian refugees and the intersection of race and legal status in the United States." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 43, no. 2 (2020): 275-293.

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

Group presentations May 27

Readings to be assigned by the group

Personal essay: Nguyen, *The Displaced*, Dina Nayeri, "The ungrateful refugee"

Group presentations: June 1-3

Submission of fourth deliverable: June 1

Personal essay: Nguyen, *The Displaced*, Meron Hadaro, "To walk in their shoes"

Readings to be assigned by the group

Final paper: Monday, June 14