

## **POS 4931 – LATIN AMERICAN IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES**

Spring 2009

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### **Course Objectives**

The purpose of the course is to give the student a clearer understanding and appreciation of Latin American immigration to the United States. After a general introduction to some of the key theoretical concepts and the historical processes underlying immigration to the United States, we will then focus in depth on a number of selected themes. In Part II we will explore the special case of Mexican immigration to the US. Part III will focus on the concept of transnationalism and the specific case of transnationalism among Dominican immigrants. Part IV will focus on immigration in Miami and Part V will concentrate on new destinations of Latino immigration in Florida.

### **Examinations and Course Requirements**

Students are expected to complete all assigned readings on time and to attend class. Your grade will consist of regularly scheduled quizzes (20%), three take-home essay exams (15% each), a group presentation (15%), and a seven page research paper (20%) growing out of your group presentation. The paper will be due in class on Tuesday, April 14. Late papers will lose one full letter grade for each day they are late. There are no make-ups for missed quizzes. Students are expected to arrive to class on time and not to leave until class is over. Entering class 10-15 minutes late is disruptive and disrespectful of the instructor and other students. Immigration is a “hot” topic that can generate a lot of passion on all sides. Consequently, I expect students to engage in class discussion in a civil manner, demonstrating courtesy and respect for the opinions expressed by their classmates. If you cannot engage in civil discussion on this topic, you should not take this class. I expect all students to adhere to the university’s standards of academic honesty in their class work. In the event that a student is found cheating or knowingly plagiarizing, he/she will receive a grade penalty - automatic "E" in the course - and will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs.

Links to film festival: [Caribbean Migration to Florida](#)

### **Required Reading**

The following required books can be purchased at Goerings, 1717 NW 1st Ave (372-3975):

- Peggy Levitt, *The Transnational Villagers* (University of California Press, 2001).
- Douglas Massey and Jorge Durand, *Beyond Smoke and Mirrors* (Russell Sage, 2002).
- Alex Stepick, et. al. *This Land is Our Land* (University of California Press, 2003).

- Philip Williams, Tim Steigenga, and Manuel Vásquez (eds.) *A Place to Be: Brazilian, Guatemalan, and Mexican Immigrants in Florida's New Destinations* (Rutgers University Press, 2009).

## Schedule and Reading Assignments

### *Part I: Introduction to Immigration*

#### Week 1

January 6: Introduction and Course Overview

January 8: Explaining International Migration

Massey and Durand, *Smoke and Mirrors* (MD), Ch. 2.

Stephen Castles, "International Migration at the Beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Global Trends and Issues," *International Social Science Journal* 52:165 (December 2002).

<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/119004112/PDFSTART>

#### Week 2

January 13: History of Immigration to the US

[Alejandro Portes and Robert Bach, "Immigration to the United States, 1890-1979," in \*Latin Journey\*, Alejandro Portes and Robert Bach, eds. \(1985\).](#)

January 15: Impact of Immigration on American Society

Charles Hirschman, "Immigration and the American Century," *Demography*, Volume 42-Number 4 (November 2005):

<http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/demography/v042/42.4hirschman.pdf>

Film: Wetback

#### Week 3

January 20: Assimilation

Richard Alba and Victor Nee, "Rethinking Assimilation Theory for a New Era of Immigration," *International Migration Review* 31:4 (Winter 1997):

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/2547416.pdf>

January 22: Segmented Assimilation

Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou, "The New Second Generation: Segmented Assimilation and its Variants," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 530 (Nov. 1993), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/1047678.pdf>

### *Part II: Mexican Immigration*

#### Week 4

January 27: Historical Overview

Massey and Durand (MD), Ch. 1 and 3.

January 29: General Features of Mexican-US immigration

MD, Ch. 4-5.

#### Week 5

February 3: **Exam #1 Due**

IRCA and Post-1985 Immigration

MD, Ch. 6.

February 5: Thinking about Immigration Policy

MD, Ch. 7.

Samuel Huntington, "The Hispanic Challenge," *Foreign Policy* (March/April 2004):  
<http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/blogs/gems/culturalagency1/SamuelHuntingtonTheHispanicC.pdf>

#### Week 6

February 10: Guest Speaker: David Griffith

Alejandro Portes, A Fence to Nowhere, *The American Prospect* (October 2007):  
<http://borderbattles.ssrc.org/Fence%20to%20Nowhere.pdf>

February 12: **Group Presentation #1**

The Economic Effects of Immigration

George Borjas, "Increasing the Supply of Labor Through Immigration: Measuring the Impact on Native-Born Workers," <http://www.cis.org/articles/2004/back504.pdf>

Tim Bolin, "The Economic and Fiscal Impacts of Immigration,"

<http://repositories.cdlib.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1136&context=iir>

### ***Part III: Transnationalism***

#### Week 7

February 17: Theorizing about Transnationalism

Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch and Cristina Szanton Blanc, "From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration," *Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol. 68, No. 1 (Jan 1995). <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/3317464.pdf>

February 19: Film: My American Girls

Overview of Dominican Transnationalism and the Concept of Social Remittances  
Levitt, Ch. 1-2.

#### Week 8

February 24: Family, Gender and Work Life in a Transnational Community

Levitt, Ch. 3-4.

February 26: **Group Presentation #2**

Political and Religious Transnationalism

Levitt, Ch. 5-6 and conclusion.

### ***Part IV: Immigration in Miami***

#### Week 9

March 3: **Exam #2 Due**

Becoming American in Miami

Stepick, Ch.1.

March 5: **Group Presentation #3**

Cubans and Inter-ethnic relations

Stepick, Ch. 2.

#### Week 10

March 17: Interethnic relations in Miami

March 19: **Group Presentation #4**

Haitians and African-Americans

Stepick, Ch. 4-5

*Part V: New Destinations*

Week 11

March 24: New Destinations of Latino Immigration  
Williams, Steigenga, Vásquez (WSV), Ch. 1

March 26: **Group Presentation #5**  
Brazilian Immigrants in Florida  
WSV, Ch. 2

Week 12

March 31: Film: Maya Voices: American Lives

April 2: **Group Presentation #6**  
Guatemalan Mayan Immigrants  
WSV, Ch.3.

Week 13

April 7: Immigrant empowerment and mobilization  
WSV, Ch. 5-6

April 9: No class

Week 14

April 14: **Papers Due**  
Religion and Migration  
WSV, Ch 8.

April 16: Religion, Gender, and Migration  
Film: Immokalee, USA  
WSV, Ch. 9-10.

Week 15

April 21: **Exam #3 due**