



SCHOOL of EDUCATION and APPLIED PROFESSIONS

BUFFALO STATE • The State University of New York



President Lyndon B. Johnson signing the *Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965*, the last major reform of US immigration policy. US Senator Robert F. Kennedy (Dem-NY) is in the front row. President John F. Kennedy proposed an overhaul of US immigration law in an essay [A Nation of Immigrants](#) he wrote in 1959 for the Anti-Defamation League when serving as a US Senator (D-MA), which was expanded and published posthumously as a book in 1964. JFK's ideas (such as abolition of national quotas, family unification, and skill level as determining factors) formed the basis of the 1965 legislation and, indeed, contemporary American immigration policy.

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Number: PAD 700

Course Name: Immigration & Refugee Policy

Semester: Spring 2026

CRN: 3313

Department: Business, Economics & Public Administration

Schedule (class time/day): available 24/7 through Brightspace

Mode of Instruction (Traditional, Hybrid, Hybrid Plus, Online): Online asynchronous

Instructor: Laurie A. Buonanno, PhD

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Office Hours: Mondays: 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. in person and virtually through MS Teams (day or evenings are both available).

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Course Description:

Domestic and international challenges of migration; historical context; dilemmas faced by governments, IGOs, and INGOs in addressing population movement; and regional challenges. Special emphasis on U.S. migration policy with a module devoted to migration policy in the European Union.

Prerequisite Courses: Graduate standing.

Enrollment Restrictions: n/a

Introduction to this Course:

We are beginning our studies just two days after masked U.S. federal agents operating under the auspices of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) fatally shot U.S. citizen and Minneapolis resident Alex Jeffrey Pretti. Just three weeks earlier, a U.S. federal agent fatally shot Renée Good, also a Minneapolis resident and U.S. citizen. Given recent events, I am updating this introduction to our course on Saturday and Sunday, January 24-25. I am writing from the comfort of my home but reminded in updates by *The New York Times* of people braving subzero temperatures to

participate in candlelit vigils to mark the death of Alex Pretti and protests that are taking place throughout the country.



Image by [Shay Scanlan](#)

People gathered at Whittier Park in South Minneapolis following the shooting of Alex Pretti on Jan. 24, 2026. (*The Minnesota Daily*)

The conflict between the federal government and blue states over immigration has reached a crisis point, but some of us who have been studying and commenting on immigration policy for many years will tell you that we have been experiencing a creeping crisis for many years, not just in the U.S., but also in Europe. The creeping migration crisis has been punctuated by traditional crises such as the 2015-16 European Union (EU) massive influx of refugees precipitated by civil war in Syria and the 2022-2023 migration crisis at the U.S. southern border (precipitated by Venezuelans fleeing the Maduro regime). A crisis suggests a temporary situation, but the migratory pressure on Europe and the U.S. has become a permanent feature. These refugee crises are emblematic of the West's inability to close borders to people on the move, mainly from war-torn countries, oppressive political regimes, and developing countries with growing populations but limited economic opportunities.

Australia, Canada, the U.S., and European states, and increasingly Japan, are all migration “receiving” countries. Migration has become an incendiary topic in Western elections, with popular opinion generally opposed to increases in legal migration. Irregular migration (unauthorized migration) causes even more consternation. Migration confounds both parties of the left and the right. Some people think that anti-immigration stances wins elections with Donald Trump’s anti-immigration stance and slogan (“Build the Wall”), thought to have won him both the Republican Party nomination and the 2016 presidential election. Trump relitigated border control in his 2024 campaign.

Migration refers to two aspects of the (permanent) movement of people across borders: asylum seekers/refugees and immigration. Countries grant *asylum* and admit refugees based on international standards agreed through treaties (mainly the Geneva Convention), but treaty signatories are sovereign countries and therefore can limit the number of refugees whom they will admit and whether they will honor asylum requests made by irregular migrants entering the host country’s territory. In the U.S., the Congress granted asylum and refugee policymaking almost wholly to the executive branch, that is, the president and the executive-branch agencies whose public servants are tasked with making asylum determinations and admitting refugees—particularly the U.S. State Department and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS). *Immigration* refers to those individuals seeking to permanently relocate for any number of reasons—economic, family, social—with immigration policy governed by a body of congressionally-passed legislation administered (mainly) by agencies and bureaus located in DHS.

“Migration studies” is a multidisciplinary area in which scholars in the fields of anthropology, criminal justice, economics, geography, history, political science, public administration, and sociologists work – often asking different questions but also profiting from each other’s research. Sociologists, for example, chart demographic trends (the West is aging and the population is not growing at the pace needed to finance the social safety net), explore ethnic identity, and the multifaceted process of assimilation-acculturation-multiculturalism-integration. These disparate societal integration processes (and those who favor one process over another) are crucially important to understanding the politics of migration in the advanced industrialized democracies. These factors also explain the difficulty governments experience when attempting to adapt immigration policies to reflect contemporary global migration patterns.

Political scientists and public administration scholars focus on the highly contested politics of immigration. One area of study concerns competing interest groups (nativist vs. ethnic-based organizations; business vs. labor; moral cosmopolitans vs. nationalists). Political scientists also study identity, political myths, and citizenship with respect to the politics of immigration. Public administration scholars tend to focus on various aspects of the policymaking cycle: agenda setting, enactment, implementation, and enforcement. Political scientists and public administration scholars also explore the role of federalism in migration policy – for example, on one hand, state and local governments with significant anti-immigration sentiment have passed illegal immigration reform ordinances [IIROs] and, on the other, pro-immigration municipalities that

have declared themselves “sanctuary cities.” Federalism is an important feature of US migration policy—even an act as simple as obtaining a driver’s license is a vastly different experience in pro-immigrant states compared to those states where state residents tend to be less favorable toward immigration. Even between states migration has been weaponized. Friction among states and between the federal government and states over immigration numbers and enforcement is not a new phenomenon; indeed, states had exclusive responsibility for immigration policy until the late 19th century, and many states opposed congressional assertion of authority over immigration. New York State always has been a central actor in immigration policy and, interrelatedly, a desired destination for immigrants.

The EU has experienced similar intergovernmental friction, especially with respect to its Common European Asylum System (CEAS). Disagreements among member states (particularly between Western and Eastern European countries) stalled reforms for many years until the impasse was broken in small steps over the past few years. Border control in the EU lies with the EU’s member states (rather than in Brussels, or in the U.S. case, Washington). There are open borders between EU member states, which is called the Schengen Area of passport free/visa free travel to which most EU member states as well the non-EU countries of Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, and Norway belong. The EU’s border security is only as strong as each member state’s border control. Nevertheless, in the past several years, securing the EU’s borders has become a significant challenge for the EU, and there has been an increase in European-led interdiction at sea and at land borders, particularly since the establishment in 2016 of the European Border and Coast Guard. The already blurred line between “asylum” and “immigration” had become a significant challenge for the EU (as it has become in the U.S.) because the majority of the EU’s neighbors struggle with poverty, unstable political regimes, and war. Many of the British voters polled as to why they voted to leave the EU cited immigration. They blamed the EU for migration, but they were wrong about being an EU member being the cause. Irregular migration is as high as ever in the UK because there are job opportunities, immigrants seek to reunite with family members, and migrants are more likely to speak English.

Added to the challenge of border control and limits to legal immigration in all postindustrial countries has been the question of where deportees will go? Increasingly, wealthy countries seek to “offshore” irregular migrants whose home countries will not accept their return. The U.S. pays several countries to take returns. The EU has an offshoring agreement with Turkey and is seeking authorization to expand such programs to other third countries. Italy offshores asylum seekers to Albania. The UK ‘s former Tory-led government attempted to pay Rwanda for the job, but the UK supreme court unanimously ruled the policy illegal. Offshoring is not going away any time soon, regardless of objections to the practice from human rights groups.

Unlike the U.S, the EU does not have an immigration policy. Immigration policy is determined by each member state, although there is some “harmonization.” The EU’s asylum policy, on the other hand, has become Europeanized (federalized). The granting of asylum and relocating of refugees has become a particularly fraught issue since 9/11 and is now inextricably tied to

homeland security (U.S.) and in the EU the “Area of Freedom, Security and Justice” (AFSJ). Increasingly, it makes little sense to study immigration just from one country’s perspective because, for example, the EU and the U.S. have been learning from each other as they seek to control their borders and decide who is a “legitimate” asylum seeker and who is an “economic migrant.” Therefore, we devote one module to the migration crisis with which the EU continues to struggle, the CEAS, and ongoing attempts to build an EU immigration policy.

Immigration policy is a highly contested political battlefield which all government policymakers and non-governmental service providers need to understand. President Trump elevated migration policy to the top of the government’s agenda in 2017: from the camera-rolling “love fest” in which he urged Democrats and Republicans to pursue the art of compromise and send him a bipartisan immigration reform package, to referring to Haiti and African countries, as “s***hole countries” and wondered why the US can’t encourage more emigres from Norway (an invitation many Norwegians took to Twitter to decline!), to mobilizing the US army to the Mexican border as they awaited “caravans” of would-be asylum seekers from Central American countries. President Biden reversed many of Donald Trump’s policies and was able to do so because most of what Trump 1.0 had attempted was through executive (rather than congressional) action. In 2024, Congressional Republicans rejected a bipartisan border control bill (despite Democrats dropping their years’ long insistence that border control be coupled with a path to citizenship for irregular migrants meeting certain conditions) because presidential candidate Donald Trump urged them to vote against it. Immigration, a legal path to citizenship (especially for the Dreamers), deportation, and border control remain flashpoints, especially since 2016 when Donald Trump found it to be a highly effective campaign issue in his run against Hillary Clinton.

Because migration issues are so hotly contested, we need to stay abreast of this rapidly changing issue. To do this, we devote time in each learning module to current events concerning migration in the EU and the U.S.

The work being done by immigration historians is particularly helpful for understanding the making and implementation of immigration policy and we will read some of their work throughout this course. In *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*, Mae Ngai charts the historical origins of the illegal alien in American society and law. *City of Dreams: The 400-Year Epic History of Immigrant New York* by Tyler Anbinder (published 2016 by Houghton Mifflin), is an excellent example of the uncovering of recurring patterns (remittances to the host country, first/second generation divide, folkloric traditions, role of the family, economic deprivations, hard and sometimes dangerous work, chain/network migration). In his concluding chapter, Anbinder writes:

Many believe that immigrants sap our economic vitality. Even worse, as one well-known New Yorker famously said in 2015, ‘they’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists.’ But perhaps worst of all, we are told, they don’t share our values and therefore can’t ever become ‘real Americans.’

Yet today's immigrants at their core are no different from previous generations of newcomers. From the colonial period to the present, *every* generation of Americans has viewed the newest group to arrive as completely unlike previous immigrants" (p. 564).

We will also chart immigration policies through the lens of politics (Daniel Tichenor's *Dividing Lines*) and consider arguments about who can stay and who must leave from the perspective of a political philosopher (David Miller – *Strangers in Our Midst*).

And, of course, given the fast pace of events surrounding immigration policy, we will need to listen to podcasts, watch videos, read current periodicals, reports, and journal articles to be able to understand the policy challenges we face as citizens of not only the U.S., but as global citizens.

We will pose and attempt to answer several questions in this course, but the key questions in a course in immigration and refugee policy must be, What factors shape migration policy in host countries? What do we need to know about the history of U.S. immigration policy to understand the "current state of play"? What is the current legislative basis of U.S. immigration policy? Is the US immigration system "broken"? If so, should the 1965 legislation that serves as the basis for current immigration policy be replaced? Is there the political will in Washington to overhaul the U.S. immigration system? What compromises must be made, and are such compromises possible in the current political climate? What is the federal government's obligation to assist refugees and asylum seekers under international law? Can the EU broker an agreement among its 27 member states to deal with the persistent irregular migration crisis on its southern borders? Can the US learn from the European experience? To answer these questions, we will need to draw on a wide range of works—from think tank reports, podcasts, videos, to book-length treatments. And because this is a course offered in an MPA program at an American university, we need to leave this course informed of the major factors shaping US immigration policy to be able to predict whether immigration reform is likely in the near future, and if so, what is achievable?

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Attribute the ways in which various groups describe migration to their point of view/bias/goals & objectives.
2. Examine migration challenges & policies from a transatlantic perspective (EU and US).
3. Evaluate the theoretical foundation of migration policy.
4. Summarize U.S. immigration policy (to the present).
5. Explain EU asylum & refugee policy/immigration policy.
6. Analyze Homeland Security/Criminalization of Migration, including from an intergovernmental perspective.
7. Explore assimilation, acculturation, integration, and multiculturalism in the EU and the US.
8. Evaluate & critique US immigration reform in the 21st century.

COURSE FORMAT

Required Course Texts & NY Times Subscription

The New York Times (daily reading required)

The NYT offers the most thorough and up-to-date coverage of immigration issues of any U.S.-based daily newspaper.

Electronic access is **free** to all members of the Buffalo State community. Please visit this link now to sign up: <https://library.buffalostate.edu/home>. Scroll in the middle of the page to *The New York Times*. Search under Buffalo State. You need to use your Buffalo State email address to register. Keep yourself informed of migration news, in the US and in the world.

Books

U.S. immigration policy is a fast-moving topic. Therefore, I have selected three course textbooks to provide a baseline for policy and theory, which I supplement with cyberlectures I write, articles from current periodicals and magazines, podcasts, videos, book chapters, and journal articles.

You need not purchase any of these books. I have linked access to each in Brightspace.

1. Ngai, Mae. (2014, revised edition with a new forward by the author). *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*. Princeton University Press. Available through Butler Library, e-book.
2. Miller, D. (2016). *Strangers in our Midst: The Political Philosophy of Immigration*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. We will be reading the entire book. I have provided a pdf copy of the book on Brightspace.
3. Tichenor, D. J. (2002). *Dividing Lines: The Politics of Immigration Control in America*: Princeton University Press. Butler Library has a digital copy on Ebook Central.

Other Readings:

Each learning module consists of readings from the required texts and additional readings, podcasts, and videos to supplement our course texts – the number is dependent upon the difficulty and length of the other readings as well as the subjects covered in the required texts. Each learning module contains a folder with a list of the required readings.

I do not list **assigned readings on our course syllabus** because I aim for maximum flexibility in to include **new publications, audiovisual material, and events**.

I have also placed several books about migration on a bookshelf I created in Ebook Central, which may be useful as you conduct research for the required research paper. (The URL is posted to our Brightspace course site.)

Please note: When I open our last learning module, I cut and paste a list of all assigned readings into an end of the semester syllabus and upload to Brightspace. This will enable you to have a complete list of the course readings for your records.

COURSE COMPONENTS

COURSE REQUIREMENTS*	POINTS
Module Quizzes (50 points in two-week modules, See calendar for weighting.)	350
Discussion Board (8 @ 50 points each) – extra credit for Module 9)	400
Policy Paper on any aspect of migration policy (must be pre-approved by instructor by March 20, 2026) (See Discussion Board<Policy Paper.)	250
TOTAL	1000

Use this chart to compare accumulated points on Brightspace gradebook with your letter grade.

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	E
≥930	900	870	830	800	770	730	700	670	630	≤590

Attendance Policy

Log on (minimum) three days per week.

Suggested Routine:

1. Check Announcements & Activity Feed
2. Check Brightspace email
3. If quiz is available, access and read and/or print out.
4. Proceed to the current module and/or discussion board

Assessments

Quizzes

The module quizzes are a combination of objective and subjective questions. They are housed on Brightspace.

Policy Paper

Complete details, including grading rubric, are posted to Brightspace.

Please discuss your paper idea on the discussion board I have created for this purpose so everyone can benefit from my replies.

Conferencing/Discussions

Required Number of Posts per Module - **THREE** (1 commentary and 2 responses)

There is a conference (discussion board) for each course/content module. (See discussion rubric, below, for detailed conferencing guidance.) Conferences are primarily in the hands of the students. **Always cite sources and include URLs when obtaining material from the internet or Butler's electronic sources.** I want the web discussion to occur naturally rather than to be overly managed by me, the instructor. Get on the discussion board three times per week. See what your classmates have written. *Post as early as possible, but no later than the dates listed on the course calendar.* Posting earlier than the deadline gives your classmates a chance to respond to your posts.

I read and grade **all** posts. I assign points as the discussion progresses. You will see your accumulated grade in your gradebook – click the grade to read my feedback on your posts. Check back regularly, because I usually log on at least once a day to read and assess posts. Point structure: 30 points for commentary, 10 points each for responses = 50 points each module.

If you are new to online conferencing, follow the lead of students who have conferenced in the past and keep in mind that conferencing is meant to simulate in-class discussion in f2f classes. THEREFORE, be sure to read ALL commentaries before you post yours. (You wouldn't repeat what a classmate said in class as if no one heard the comment the first time it was made.) If you write a commentary on the same subject of a posted commentary, yours needs to be posted as a response to the pre-existing commentary. Engage. (And not to worry - I will grade your post as a commentary if uploaded as a response to a classmate's commentary within the course calendar deadline.)

Commentary:

You are responsible for posting **ONE** commentary (about 250 words) to the conference (discussion board). You must cite (including page number) from at least one assigned reading. You may draw from outside readings and personal experience in addition (not in place of) assigned readings. Always cite your sources, even for assigned readings.

Checklist for Commentaries:

- a. Must relate to the current module.

- b. Must have a central thesis/question that is subject to argumentation.
- c. Must cite a required reading.
- d. Compose commentary in Word or other word processing program (two reasons - in case internet or Brightspace go down and to use Word's advanced editing features).
- e. Approximately 250 words, properly proofread. Use Word's proofreading feature.
- f. Cut and paste (CtrlC-CtrlV) into the discussion board.
- g. Subject Line for Post: Should be descriptive

Responses:

TWO response posts are required in each module. The discussion grading rubric applies to response posts (MUST be substantive and sourced). The two responses should be posted as follows:

1. Response post must be made to a student who has responded to your commentary.
2. Other response posts in any other thread.
(If there were no responses to your commentary, just post your two responses to two different threads.)

Netiquette:

As discussion is of a public nature, please observe proper "netiquette"—courteous and appropriate forms of communication and interaction over the Internet (in online discussions). This means no personal attacks, obscene language, or intolerant expression. All viewpoints should be respected.

Conference Grading:

The grade is based on two factors: post quality (which could partially seem like word count inasmuch as use of significant detail would be a part of that, but really has more to do with complexity of the content) and workload (this can only be gauged as the course progresses and entails my assessment of how much each student is putting into the discussion vis-à-vis each other: how carefully you read other students' posts, how well you respond to the topics in the course texts, online materials, and other posts). A high-quality commentary/observation contains information from the course readings and applies a concept from the text or course in a meaningful way **and** facilitates understanding of the course material or topic. (See discussion rubric, below.) I am reading your comments carefully for evidence of having read and comprehended assigned readings.

Late policy for Assessments

Conferencing/ Discussion: I do **NOT** grade commentaries and responses posted after the due date. Discussion boards simulate f2f classroom discussion - and it's also just a confusing mess if students don't keep up with the discussion. Timing is so crucial with respect to commentary followed by responses. There's no margin for late posts. And, when a module closes, we need to move on to the next.

Quizzes: Only ONE late quiz is accepted per semester for each student without penalty. This late quiz can be submitted up to 48 hours after the due date and time. Subsequent late quizzes –

10 points deducted for each day the quiz is late. You can request that I re-open a quiz for you by emailing me through Brightspace.

Policy Paper: ½ letter grade deduction for each day late.

CAMPUS POLICIES

Code of Conduct

<https://studentconduct.buffalostate.edu/sites/studentconduct.buffalostate.edu/files/uploads/2023%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20with%20changes.pdf>

Technology and Acceptable Use Policy

https://adminpolicylibrary.buffalostate.edu/sites/adminpolicylibrary.buffalostate.edu/files/uploads/Documents/Electronic%20Resources%20%28Policy%20on%20the%20Use%20of%29%20CIO%20VP%20_FINALIZED%202-3-20.pdf

Procedures for Resolving Academic Grievances/Appeals

<https://academicstandards.buffalostate.edu/petitions>

Withdrawal and Drop Date Policy

<https://registrar.buffalostate.edu/withdrawal-course>

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

<https://academicstandards.buffalostate.edu/misconduct>

Copyright Policy

<https://it.buffalostate.edu/copyright-infringement>

Reasonable Accommodations

Students who need accommodations to complete the requirements and expectations of this course because of a disability are invited to make their needs known to the Student Accessibility Services (SAS) Office, E. H. Butler Library 160, (716) 878-4500, email sas@buffalostate.edu or complete their request by filling out the Initial Accommodation Request form.

Students registered with SAS should use the Accommodate Portal to submit their "Semester Request" (Letter of Accommodation) every semester. This letter informs faculty of the student's academic accommodations. (<https://sas.buffalostate.edu/accommodations>)

COURSE READINGS

Module 1

Introduction to Migration Policy

Current Events

- Read coverage in *The New York Times* of ICE/CBP in Minneapolis.
- To be brought up to speed, you could listen to Monday's (1/26) *NY Times* Daily podcast. [Click here](#). (28 min, 45 sec)

Be sure you are familiar with the issues being raised. If you have questions, include in your commentary.

- Governor Kathy Hochul calls on DHS Secretary Kristin Noem to resign. ([YouTube Video](#)) (5 minutes)

Module 1 Readings

1) Video: [US Immigrants Bust Myths About Immigration/Truth or Myth](#)

2) Podcast: **The Ezra Klein Show** - January 23, 2026 (1 hr 6 min)

"Minneapolis Reveals Where Trump's Deportation Agenda Is Going" - interview with a Pulitzer prize winning expert on immigration enforcement, Caitlin Dickerson., who writes for *The Atlantic*. Aired just one day before federal agents fatally shot Alex Pretti.

HOW TO LISTEN: On [NY Times website](#) or anywhere you listen to podcasts (e.g., Apple, Amazon Music, Spotify)

3) Hiltner, Stephen (2017, March 10). "[The Terms of Immigration Reporting](#)." *The New York Times*.

4) The Language of Migration (mini-lecture)

5) Chapters 1 & 2 *Dividing Lines* by Tichenor (textbook). (This is a link to copy available online through Ebook Central.) BUT be sure you are able to download chapters. If you are experiencing difficulty, you will want to go to Butler Library's reference desk (not circulation) for assistance. ([linked to "Books" in Course Overview module](#))

Module 2

Theoretical Foundations of Migration Policy

I have selected a wide range of recent migration issues as covered by *The New York Times*. These are subjects that we will examine in-depth as the semester proceeds. As in Module

1, you will be able to see the intersection with theory and current policy dilemmas in this module. (posted February 2, 2026).

- Jordan, M. and Barret, D. (2026, February 1). [Federal Courts Undercut Trump's Mass Deportation Campaign](#). *The New York Times*.
- Cameron, C. (2026, January 30). [Trump Officials Move to Double Number of H-2B Guest Visas This Year](#). *The New York Times*.
- Bubola, E. and Aleaziz, H. (2026, January 30). [Argentina in Advanced Talks to Become Destination for U.S. Deportation](#). *The New York Times*.
- Streeter, K. (2026, February 1). [How Alex Pretti's Death Became a National Tipping Point](#). *The New York Times*.
- Coleman, M. and Ashford, G. (2026, January 30). [Hochul Seeks to Ban N.Y. Police From Helping ICE in Non-Criminal Issues](#). *The New York Times*.

Updated 2/7/26:

We will be tracking this issue. This is important news because New York (in a departure from other blue states such as CA and IL), has resisted prohibiting 287 (g) MOAs for political reasons (moderate Democrats Upstate and on Long Island), over concerns Republicans would hijack/exploit Democrats on crime. In a June 2025 hearing before the US House of Representatives Oversight Committee Governor Hochul, responding to a question by Rep. Mike Lawler(R)*, declared she had no confidence the [NY For All](#) legislation would pass. Minneapolis changed her stance about cooperation of local law enforcement with ICE re enforcing civil federal immigration law (that is, non-criminal law). She has introduced her own bill in the 2026 NYS legislative session-- *The Local Cops, Local Crimes Act*-- which would prohibit local law enforcement agencies from agreeing 287 (g) MOAs with ICE.

*At the time of the hearing in June 2025, Mike Lawler was expected to run for NYS governor. [He ended his bid in July](#), making way for Elise Stefanik, [who withdrew from the race](#) in December 2025 when Bruce Blake (Nassau County Executive) declared his intention to run and President Trump declined to endorse either candidate. Stefanik also declared her intention to leave Congress.

Suggested Order for Readings (Two-week module)

Week 1

- Cyberlecture - Facts & Data about International Migration
- Massey, D. S., Arango, J., Hugo, G., Kaouaouci, A., Pellegrino, A., & Taylor, J. E. (1993). Theories of international migration: A review and appraisal. *Population and Development Review*, 19(3), 431-466. (continues as the most important article reviewing the major migration theories and the empirical evidence needed to support their explanatory value - cited over 11,000 times)
- Miller, Chapter 1 *Strangers in Our Midst* by Miller (linked to "Books" in Course Overview module)
- Ngai: (linked to "Books" in Course Overview module)
 - Note on Language and Terminology (pp. xix-xx)
 - Foreword to the New Paperback Edition (pp. xxi-xxxii)
 - Introduction *Illegal Aliens: A Problem of Law and History* (pp. 1-14)

- Cyberlecture - Migration Theories

Week 2

- de Haas, H. (2021, Feb 2021). A theory of migration: The aspirations-capabilities framework. *Comparative Migration Studies*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-020-00210-4> (cited 800 times)
- Quiu, Linda (2018, January 26), "[The Facts Behind the Weaponized Phrase 'Chain Migration'](#)", *The New York Times*
- Chapter 3, Tichenor
- Chapter 2, Miller (linked to "Books" in Course Overview module)

Module 3

Immigration Policy in the US – prior to 1965/ Immigration Policy in the US - 1965-1996

Current Events

Epstein, R. J. and Balk, Tim. (2026, February 13) [News Analysis: Trump's Minnesota Retreat Points to the Power of Public Anger](#). *The New York Times*.

Bromwich, Jonah E. (2026, February 13). [ICE Agents Menaced Minnesota Protesters at Their Homes](#), Filings Say. *The New York Times*.

Thomas, K., Silver-Greenberg, J. and Ryzik, M. (2026, February 14). [Sick Detainees Describe Poor Care at Facilities Run by ICE Contractor](#). *The New York Times*.

Griffin, A. and Elliott, L. (2026, February 9). [A Raid in a Small Town Brings Trump's Deportations to Deep-Red Idaho](#). *The New York Times*.

Module 3 Week 1 Readings

1. Cyberlecture - Lowi's Policy Typology
2. Tichenor, Chapters 4-5
3. Cyberlecture - The Nativists
4. Anbinder, Chapter 15, Ellis Island

Buffalo State's Butler Library has the 42-volume Dillingham Commission report in its collection.

Module 3 Week 3 Readings

1. Tichenor, Chapters 6-8.

2. Ngai, Part I, pp. 15-90

Recommended

Schuck, P. H. (1984). The Transformation of Immigration Law. *Columbia Law Review*, 84(1), 1-90. doi:10.2307/1122369

Because Peter Schuck's article is considered a foundational work in explaining the evolution of US immigration law, I have included it as "recommended." You may be interested in reading this article if you would like a history of how federal courts have dealt with immigration issues. (Not covered on module quiz.)

Module 4

Migration, Mobility, and Homeland Security (& the Wall)

Current Events

Feur et al. (2026, February 5). [Surge in Immigration Cases in Minnesota Pushes Prosecutors and Judges to the Brink](#). *The New York Times*.

Schwartz, M. (2006, February 19). [Judge Condemns ‘Terror Against Noncitizens’ and Orders Hearings for Detainees](#). *The New York Times*.

Ngo et al. (2026, February 18). [As ICE Buys Up Warehouses, Even Some Trump Voters Say No](#). *The New York Times*.

MODULE READINGS (pace yourself - spread over two weeks)

Recommended order

1. How many irregular migrants live in the U.S.?

[Unauthorized Immigration Population Profiles](#) (MPI Data Hub)

2. Cyberlecture - Enforcement & Pathway to Citizenship

This cyberlecture has **embedded links to two documentaries** that look at the shift to immigration enforcement in the post-9/11 era.

The cyberlecture ends with a table comparing immigration actions under the Obama, Trump, and Biden administrations. There is a link to this article, which you will want to read after you have finished reading this cyberlecture. [Unleashing Power in New Ways: Immigration in the First Year of Trump 2.0](#) (MPI, January 13, 2026)

3. Thinking about Borders

Let's now move on to a theoretical perspective by contextualizing borders with Miller (our political philosopher). Miller can help us to think more broadly about the topic and to think deeply about borders.

Ngai, our historical guide to the the problem of "illegal aliens" provides concrete examples of how the law has produced "impossible subjects."

- Miller, Chapter 3 (open borders)
- Miller Chapter 4 (closed borders)
- Ngai, Part II: Migrants at the Margins of Law & Nation (pp. 91-126)

4. Enforcement & Adjudication

a. Cyberlecture Department of Homeland Security & DOJ

This cyberlecture explains U.S. federal infrastructure for immigration enforcement and adjudication.

There are linked readings and videos in this cyberlecture.

Module 5 **Refugee and Asylum Policy**

Current Events

BTM Staff. (2026, March 2). [Hochul says those involved in Alam's death need to be held accountable](#). Buffalo Toronto Public Media.

Ulloa and Robertson. (2026, January 11). [Somalis Fled Civil War and Built a Community. Now They Are a Target](#).

Ulloa and McCann. (2025, October 4). [Who Still Has Temporary Protected Status?](#)

Hesson and Peyton/ (2026, February 26). [Exclusive: US aims to bring in 4,500 white South Africans per month as refugees, document says](#). Reuters.

Center for Migration Studies (2024, October 30). [The US Refugee Admissions Program: What's at Stake in the Election](#)

Bustillo, Ximena. (2026, February 19). [Refugees in the U.S. could be arrested under a new immigration memo](#) NPR.

Veazey, L. (2026, 18 March). [ICE Is Trying to Send Hundreds of New York's African Asylum Seekers to a Country They're Not From](#). *NY Focus*.

Required Readings & Multimedia

Podcast [Seeking Asylum in the United States](#) (34 minutes)

- Cyberlecture - Asylum, Parole, TPS & Refugees
 - Miller, Chapter 5
 - Tichenor, Chapter 9 - "The Refugee Act of 1980 and the Mariel Boatlift" (pp. 246-249).
 - Batalova, J. (2026, January 6). [Refugees and Asylees in the United States](#). Migration Policy Institute
 - Congressional Research Service (2024, September 25). Credible Fear and Defensive Asylum Processes: FAQ (updated September 25, 2024) (SKIM - there are a lot of details)
 - Hamlin, R. (2015). [Article](#) "Ideology, International Law, and the INS: The Development of American Asylum Politics." *Polity* 47(3): 320-336.
 - Wasem, R. E. (2020). "More than a Wall: The Rise and Fall of US Asylum and Refugee Policy." *Journal on Migration and Human Security* 8(3): 246-265.
 - Amicus Brief filed by former DHS/INS Officials (2026). In KRISTI NOEM, SECRETARY OF HOMELAND SECURITY, ET AL., Petitioners, v. AL OTRO LADO, ET AL., Respondents.
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[Well-Founded Fear](#) a film by Shari Robertson and Michael Camerini. Approx 120 minutes.

Please Note: This documentary film was made prior to the 9/11 justice and home affairs administrative reorganization into the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) was absorbed in the new USCIS, which is the unit within DHS responsible for asylum determinations (covered in Module 4).

Recommended:

PBS Frontline. (aired 2018, July 31). [Separated: Children at the Border](#) (documentary - 53 minutes)

Soboroff, Jacob (2020). [Separated: Inside an American Tragedy](#). (Mariner Books)

Separated (directed by Errol Morris) - A film based on the Soboroff book had a limited release on October 2024. [Official Trailer](#)

[NYT review](#) of *Separated* (October 10, 2024)

[List of Resettlement Agency Partners in the US](#)

Module 6

Undocumented Migrants - Criminalization of Immigration Law; Access to Government Services and Benefits; Local and State Responses to Undocumented Immigration

Current Events

Campbell, J. (2026, March 6). [Trump's border czar says he won't launch immigration blitz in NY, according to Gov. Hochul](#). *Gothamist*.

Oreskes, B & J. Root (2026, February 17). [For an Immigration Trap on a Bridge to Canada, an Encouraging Sign](#)

McGaughy, L. (2026, March 24). [Stephen Miller Asks Why Texas Pays to Teach Undocumented Children](#). *The New York Times*.

Marimow, A (2026, March 24). [Supreme Court Seems Open to Trump Request to Block Asylum Seekers at Border](#). *The New York Times*.

WEEK 1 READINGS - CRIME, LPC, EMPLOYER SANCTIONS

1. Cyberlecture - Crime, Social Policies, Employers
2. Tichenor, Chapter 9 (this chapter also covers Refugee Act of 1980 - you read that section in the previous module)
3. Miller, Chapters 6 & 7
4. Read "Do Immigrants Threaten Public Safety??" by Orrenius, P. & Zavodyn, M. (2019). *Journal of Migration and Human Security* 7 (3): 52-61.

WEEK 2 READINGS - INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION AND RELATIONS

1. Module 5 Cyberlecture Intergovernmental Relations
There are videos and readings linked in this cyberlecture.
2. Newton, L. (2012). Policy Innovation or Vertical Integration? A View of Immigration Federalism from the States. *Law & Policy*, 34(2), 113-137. This article discusses some of the major issues involving state and local governments.
3. Buonanno, L., O'Bryan, T. & Parshall, L. (2026). Chapter 13 NYS & Migration. SUNY Press. Chapter 13 begins on p. 283.

Module 7

The EU's Migration Crisis/Common European Asylum System/Immigration

Current Events

Fox, B. (2026, March 23). EU offers cash and defence deal as it inks migrant returns pact with Nigeria. *eu observer* (there is a pay wall for this publication - I have linked to a pdf of this article).

Bautista, J. (2026, January 27). [Bucking a Global Trend, Spain Offers Undocumented Migrants a Legal Way to Stay](#). *The New York Times*.

Mastrosanti, G. (2026, April 14). [Italy and Europe Need Migrants - but won't say so](#). *EUobserver*.

Required Readings

1. Film Documentary first aired on PBS Frontline. [Exodus](#) (2016) This documentary is about the EU's refugee crisis of 2015-2016.
2. Cyberlecture 1: Introduction
3. Cyberlecture 2: Border Control, Asylum Policy, Immigration Policy
4. Paasche, Erlend (2022, December 20). "['Recalcitrant' and 'Uncooperative': Why Some Countries Refuse to Accept Return of Their Deportees](#)" Migration Policy Institute.
5. [Asylum: new rules for safe third countries and EU safe countries of origin list](#). European Parliament News, February 2, 2026 **AND** [Council gives final greenlight to measures to make the EU's asylum system more efficient and robust](#) 23 February 2026

The EP and the Council of the European Union are the co-legislators. Therefore, a list of safe country of origin and safe third countries is now EU law.

Recommended

- 1) If you found Exodus informative, you might be interested in watching the "sequel"- [Exodus: The Journey Continues](#) (2018)
- 2) *Fire at Sea*. (documentary film about the 2015-16 migrant crisis from the Italian perspective) [The NY Times, Review](#).

[Trailer](#).

This documentary is available to rent on [Amazon Prime](#) (\$2.99). You can also buy or rent on [YouTube](#) or Apple TV.

Module 8

Assimilation, Acculturation, Integration, Multiculturalism & Becoming a Citizen in the US and the EU

Current Events

- Liptak, A. (2025, December 22). [A Conspicuous Gap May Undermine Trump's Birthright Citizenship Plan](#). *The New York Times*.
- [Opinion Carlos Lozada You Can't Denaturalize Me Jan. 21, 2026](#) *The New York Times*.
- Aleaziz, H. (2025, December 23) News Analysis: [Stephen Miller Cites Children of Immigrants as a Problem](#).*The New York Times*.
- Williamson, E. (2026, March 23). [Born Abroad and Fearful of ICE, Adoptees Try to Prove They Belong](#). *The New York Times*.

Required Readings

1. Cyberlecture: Identity, Assimilation, etc.
2. Ngai, Part III (pp. 169-224)
3. [Hyphen-Nation](#) (February 17, 2017) - This *New York Times* piece asks what makes someone American? How do you define American identity?
4. The NY Times (News Analysis by Ann E. Marimow, 30 March 2026). [Trump's Birthright Citizenship Order at Supreme Court Splits Conservative Scholars](#)
5. Miller, Chapter 8, "Integrating Immigrants"
6. Connor, P., Hall, M., and Ortega, F. (2026). Multi-Trillion Dollar and Multi-Million Worker Contributions: An Economic Accounting of Birthright Citizenship *Journal on Migration and Human Security* [Read the Executive Summary HERE](#)

Optional/Recommended

You can listen to the oral arguments and justice questions in SCOTUS - Birthright Citizenship (constitutionality of EO 14160).

[Oral Argument - Audio](#)

Trump, President of U.S. v. Barbara
Docket Number: 25-365
Date Argued: 04/01/26
Play Audio:

For students interested in sociological theories of acculturation:

Here are some readings with which you might start if you are studying acculturation/integration policy:

Gans (more recent article on his seminal theory about symbolic ethnicity) (Gans 1979 seminal writing on this subject)

Check out the *Routledge Handbook of International Migration Studies*. There are chapters focusing on integration issues, etc. Available on Ebook Central.

US Citizenship Test

The USCIS, under EO 14161, [revised the Naturalization Civics Test](#) (for immigrants filing after October 20, 2025). The newest version is an oral test consisting of 20 questions from the list of 128 civics test questions. It is not a multiple choice exam, but many of the questions allow multiple answers.

See [Trump Administration Reinstates More Difficult Citizenship Test](#), The New York Times (18 September 2025).

The test taker must answer 12 questions correctly to pass the test (and will fail if they answer 9 of the 20 questions incorrectly). About 75% of the questions are from the 2008 version. (The 2025 test was used briefly during Trump 1.0 having been used from December 1, 2020 until April 30, 2021 when the Biden admin returned to the 2008 version.)

[Here are the 128 Civics Questions and Answers](#) (2025 version)

[Here's the USCIC 2025 Civics Test Study Guide](#)

Here's an [interactive quiz](#) housed on the website of a law practice focusing on immigration. Here's an [interactive version on the USCIS website](#) (but it's the 2008 version - 100 question test bank). There is also a free app USCIS Test Study tool, but it's also for the 2008 version.

A Fun Video

[Citizen U.S.A.: A 50-State Roadtrip](#) (Alexandra Pelosi - yes, Nancy's daughter)

You can stream this documentary from the link (above) or if you subscribe to HBO, you can find in *HBO Go* under "Documentary."

Module 9

Immigration Reform in the 21st century - Comprehensive or Piecemeal Immigration Policy Reform?

Current Events

Sullivan, E. et al. (2026, April 4). [Trump Wants to Make Deportation Deals. Autocrats Are Ready to Listen.](#) *The New York Times*.

Required Readings

(suggested order)

- [How the Immigration System Works](#) (American Immigration Council)
This article provides a good overview of the many moving parts of our current US immigration policy. (I provide a summary in the cyberlecture.)
- The context for current debates: (2024, December 11). [Recent Immigration Surge Has Been Largest in U.S. History.](#) *The New York Times*.
- [Cyberlecture: The Future of US Immigration Policy](#)
- *Shear, M. D., & Aleaziz, H. (2024, November 3). [Biden Wanted to Fix Immigration, but Leaves Behind a System That Is Still Broken.](#) *The New York Times*.*
- Paasche, E. (2022, December 20). ['Recalcitrant' and 'Uncooperative': Why Some Countries Refuse to Accept Return of Their Deportees](#) (see April 4 article, Sullivan et al. in Current Events about deportations - related to this topic of the return problem)

[Immigration Battle](#) (2 hours) FRONTLINE (2015)

Why did Congress's last attempt (during the Obama Administration) at comprehensive immigration reform fail? FRONTLINE documentary that chronicles "the political realities" of comprehensive immigration reform efforts.

- Anbinder, Chapter 22, "Today"
- Tichenor, Chapter 10 (Concluding Chapter)
- Miller, Chapter 9 (Concluding Chapter)
- Ngai, Part IV Pluralism and Nationalism in Post-World War II Immigration Reform (Chapter 7 & Epilogue), pp. 227-270.

LEARNING MODULES & DUE DATES <i>All assignments are due by 11:59 PM</i>	Dates	Commentary Due Date (1 required) (30 points)	Responses Due Date (2 required) (10 points for each=20 points)	Quiz Due Date
<i>Module 1</i> Introduction to Migration Policy	1/26-2/01 One week module	1/29	2/01	2/01 (50 points)
<i>Module 2</i> Theoretical Foundations of Migration Policy	2/02-2/15	2/08	2/15	2/15 (50 points)
<i>Module 3</i> Immigration Policy in the US – prior to 1965/ Immigration Policy in the US - 1965-1996	2/16-3/01	2/22	3/01	3/01 (50 points)
<i>Module 4</i> Migration, Mobility, and Homeland Security (& the Wall)	3/02-3/15	3/08	3/15	3/15 (50 points)
<i>Module 5</i> Refugee and Asylum Policy	3/16-3/22 One week module	3/19	3/22	3/22 (25 points)
<i>Spring Break 3/23-3-29</i>				
<i>Module 6</i> Undocumented Migrants - Criminalization of Immigration Law; Access to Government Services and Benefits; Local and State Responses to Undocumented Immigration	3/29-4/12	4/05	04/12	04/12 (50 points)
<i>Module 7</i> The EU’s Migration Crisis/Common European Asylum System/Immigration	4/13-4/19 One week module	4/16	4/19	4/19 (25 points)
<i>Module 8</i> Assimilation, Acculturation, Integration, Multiculturalism & Becoming a Citizen in the US and the EU	4/20-4/26 One week module	4/23	4/26	4/26 (25 points)
<i>Module 9</i> Immigration Reform in the 21 st century - Comprehensive or Piecemeal Immigration Policy Reform? (Two weeks)	4/27-05/10 Two week module	5/03	5/10	5/10 (25 points)
<i>Research Paper</i>	Research Paper Due Friday, May 15			

Discussion Board Rubric

The quality of every conference post is evaluated according to this rubric.

Interpretation	Grading criteria
Excellent (A)	The comment and response are accurate, original, and relevant, teach us something new , and are well written. An excellent commentary or response is a substantial teaching presence to the course and stimulate additional thought about the issue under discussion. Documentation for factual information is provided. Factual information should be drawn from required readings—textbook, cyber-lectures (posted to Brightspace), and/or outside readings (as supplemental – not a substitute for demonstrating knowledge and comprehension of course readings). The post does not repeat what another student has already posted. When this is not the first post to the discussion thread, it should be clear that the author has read other posts to the thread.
Above Average (B)	The comment/response lacks at least one of the above qualities but is above average in quality. A “B” comment/response makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the issue being discussed.
Average (C)	The comment/response lacks two or three of the required qualities. Comments/responses which are (solely) based upon opinion or personal experience often fall within this category.
Minimal (D)	The comment/response presents little or no new information. However, the comment/response may provide important social presence and contribute to a collegial atmosphere.
Unacceptable (F)	The comment adds no value to the discussion.
Excellent Subject Line	The subject field is a complete sentence and conveys the main point of the comment . The reader should be able to clearly understand the main point of the comment before reading it.
Descriptive Subject Line (could be better, see above)	The subject field provides key word(s) only. The reader knows the general area that the comment deals with.
Subject Line is not acceptable	The subject field provides little or no information about the comment.