

U.S. Immigration Policy and Stories of Migration

MAS 364U / GOV372C

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Course Description

The story of racial and ethnic politics in the United States is one of struggle, resistance, and change. While many sought to migrate to the U.S., its doors have not always been open to everyone. Who can enter the United States and become American? This political and social question has had different answers throughout history. In this course, we will cover the role of immigration policy in defining the face of American politics and society. From Asian exclusion, landmark immigration reform in 1965, the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, to more recent policies like the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, we will discuss how these policies have impacted migration into the United States and their impact on defining who can become American. We will combine the history of immigration policy with memoirs of migration, immigration policy, and incorporation, providing a fuller picture of how immigrants affected by these policies are treated in the United States.

Course Requirements

Four books are required for this course. If you are a MALS major, please see Luis Guevara to receive a copy of your books. Otherwise, you can pick up a copy at the bookstore or online. Feel free to purchase audiobooks or ebooks if that is your preference. **I strongly recommend you purchase the audio version** of Everyone Who Is Gone Is Here. Any additional readings will be uploaded to the course web page.

Books

- Blitzer, J. (2024). Everyone Who Is Gone Is Here: The United States, Central America, and the Making of a Crisis. Penguin. (Audiobook strongly recommended.)
- Cantú, F. (2018). The Line Becomes a River: Dispatches from the Border. Penguin.
- Castillo, M. H. (2020). Children of the Land: A Memoir. HarperCollins.
- Jones, R. (2021). White Borders: The History of Race and Immigration in the United States from Chinese Exclusion to the Border Wall. Beacon Press.

Grading

Attendance/ Participation	10%
Note Taking	10%
Literature / reflection papers	60%
Final paper / project	20%

Due Dates

- Tuesday, October 6 — First reflection paper, in class
- Thursday, October 15 — Second reflection paper, in class
- Thursday, November 19 — Third reflection paper, in class
- Thursday, December 3 — Fourth reflection paper, in class
- Tuesday, December 15 — Final paper / project due

Reflection Papers

Students are expected to finish all assigned readings and be prepared to participate in class discussions. To help motivate participation, students will be required to write in-class reflection papers throughout the term. There are four reflection papers planned for the semester. These reflection papers will be written by hand in class. Students will be given a study guide with some key terms related to the reflection paper one week in advance. Students will be allowed to bring in one page of handwritten notes or quotes from the text.

Final Paper / Project

In lieu of a final exam, students have the option to write a final paper or conduct a final project. The topic for the final paper will be given later in the semester. This paper should be 10 pages, double-spaced, using APA guidelines, and using a minimum of 5 sources, 2 of which must be scholarly. If you have an idea for a different final project, you are welcome to present it to me for consideration. Alternative projects must also have a 3-page write-up explaining how the project relates to our course. I must approve any alternative project by the end of week 12.

Reading note taking

Students will help build a record for the assigned class readings. Working in teams of 2 or 3, students will create a handout style report (between 2-3 pages). Students must sign up for their note taking day by the end of week 1 or they will be assigned a date. This write up should be posted to Canvas before class the day that the reading is assigned. Your handout should address the following points;

- What is the reading about? What does the author intend to convey?
- Give a short summary of the reading (about 1/2 a page).
- (If not a memoir) What is the author's main point?
- How does this connect to other themes we have discussed or relevant in the news today?
- Is there anything in this reading that was unclear to you?
- Pose two questions that this reading made you think about. Try your best not to repeat the same questions as previous presenters.

Attendance & Participation Policy

Seminar attendance is important for receiving participation credit. Excused absences will be granted for medically documented emergencies or illnesses (this requires a doctor's note) or a note from an administrator explaining your extenuating circumstances. Absences are unexcused for all other reasons. Everyone gets three free unexcused absences. After your third unexcused absence, each unexcused absence will lower your attendance and participation grades by a letter grade. In addition to being present, it is also important that you are on time. Anyone who is more than 10 minutes late will be marked as absent.

While being present in class is important, this course emphasizes in-class discussion. Even if you are present in every class, you will not receive participation points unless you are actively participating in discussion. I keep track

of how frequently everyone speaks up in class. This tally sheet is used to calculate participation scores at the end of the semester. If you come to every class but only speak up twice, you should not expect to receive higher than 50% of your participation grade.

Rules and Guidelines

- **Late policy-** If you fail to turn an assignment in on time, you are welcome to submit it after the deadline. The assignment in question will be marked down 5% for each day it is late.
- **Office Hours-** Office hours will be held in my office, GWB 2.102. If my office hours do not work for you, please email me and schedule an appointment.
- **Emails-** When emailing me, please include your name and reason for emailing in the subject line of your email. Emails should start with a greeting and my name, have at least one body paragraph, a closing, and your signature. Below is an example of a proper email format.

Subject line: "Julian Castro set up an appointment"

Hi Dr. Gutierrez,

I was wondering if it would be possible to schedule an appointment to discuss the course material. Are you available anytime Monday afternoon between 2:00 pm and 3:30 pm?

Thanks,
Julian Castro

I will do my best to respond within 48 hours; however, it may take longer on the weekend. Please note that emails should not ask for a summary of the concepts covered in class or whether I will read your paper before you turn it in. I will happily discuss material and ideas with you during office hours.

- **Electronics-** You are welcome to use your laptops in class so long as they do not serve as a distraction. This means no Facebook, iChat, Gchat, Twitter, ESPN, etc. Allowing the use of computers is meant for note-taking and to reference previous notes. If it becomes a problem, I will ask you to put your computers away. I also ask that you place your phones out of sight and on silent during class time to minimize disruptions.
- **Classroom Recording-** [HOP 2-9970](#) prohibits students from recording class instruction (audio or video) unless a student obtains the instructor's permission or Disability & Access has approved audio recording as an accommodation.
- **Students with Disabilities-** If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations, please contact D&A. Contact and more details are available on D&A's website: <http://disability.utexas.edu>. If you are already registered with D&A, please share your accommodation letter with me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and needs in this course.

Extra Credit / Absence Make-Up

Students can receive extra credit or make up an unexcused absence in the course, which will count towards their final grade. To receive extra credit, attend a MALS or another campus event related to the course material. After attending the event, write up a 1-page summary of the event. The summary write-up must provide details of the event (i.e., title, location, date, who was present, who led the event, what type of event, etc.), and it must also address how the event related to a concept, theory, or idea discussed during class. If you are unsure whether an event qualifies, please get it approved by me in advance. Students may complete a maximum of 2 extra credit assignments. Each extra credit event is worth one absence or 1% added to your overall grade.

Academic Honesty

Your work should consist of your own ideas and your own words. Quotations and ideas used from authors and texts must be properly cited. Plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean.

- **AI Policy-** Students are not authorized to use AI to generate ideas, outline an approach, answer questions, solve problems, or to create any product or output with any generative AI tool. All work in this course must be produced entirely on your own or created in group work, where allowed. Using generative AI tools for academic work in this course may constitute academic misconduct under UT Austin's Institutional Rules and may be referred to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students for resolution.
- **Academic Misconduct-** All allegations of academic misconduct will be referred by faculty to the Office of the Dean of Students. Students who violate University rules on academic misconduct are subject to the student conduct process. A student found responsible for academic misconduct may be assigned both a status sanction and a grade impact for the course. The grade impact could range from a zero on the assignment in question up to a failing grade in the course. A status sanction can include a written warning, probation, deferred suspension, suspension, or expulsion from the University. To learn more about academic integrity standards, tips for avoiding a potential academic misconduct violation, and the overall conduct process, please visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at <https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/student-conduct-processes.php>

Writing Center

The University Writing Center is a great resource for improving writing skills. They will look at drafts and preliminary outlines or even discuss how to get started. You can contact them online at <https://uwc.utexas.edu/>.

Final Remarks

I cannot stress the importance of communicating with me should problems arise during the semester. It is better to be proactive about situations than to wait until it is too late to find a solution.

Course Schedule

Week 1

- **Tuesday, August 25:** No reading
- **Thursday, August 27:** White Borders Ch Intro through Ch 2

Week 2

- **Tuesday, September 1:** White Borders Ch 3–5
- **Thursday, September 3:** Children of the Land (First movement: DACA)

Week 3

- **Tuesday, September 8:** Children of the Land (Second movement: Interview on Allegiance)
- **Thursday, September 10:** White Borders Ch 6–8

Week 4

- **Tuesday, September 15:** Children of the Land (Third movement: Sentence Served)
- **Thursday, September 17:** White Borders Ch 9–11

Week 5

- **Tuesday, September 22:** Children of the Land (Fourth movement: Glass)
- **Thursday, September 24:** White Borders Ch 12–14

Week 6

- **Tuesday, September 29:** White Borders Ch 15 & Conclusion
- **Thursday, October 1:** Children of the Land (Fifth movement: Asylum)

Week 7

- **Tuesday, October 6:** First Reflection Paper — White Borders
- **Thursday, October 8:** Everyone Who Is Gone Is Here (Ch 1–6)

Week 8

- **Tuesday, October 13:** Everyone Who Is Gone Is Here (Ch 7–13)
- **Thursday, October 15:** Second Reflection Paper — Children of the Land

Week 9

- **Tuesday, October 20:** Everyone Who Is Gone Is Here (Ch 14–20)
- **Thursday, October 22:** Everyone Who Is Gone Is Here (Ch 21–26)

Week 10

- **Tuesday, October 27:** Everyone Who Is Gone Is Here (Ch 27–30)
- **Thursday, October 29:** The Line Becomes a River, Part 1

Week 11

- **Tuesday, November 3:** Everyone Who Is Gone Is Here (Ch 31–36)
- **Thursday, November 5:** The Line Becomes a River, Part 2

Week 12

- **Tuesday, November 10:** Everyone Who Is Gone Is Here (Ch 37–41)

- **Thursday, November 12:** The Line Becomes a River, Part 3

Week 13

- **Tuesday, November 17:** Everyone Who Is Gone Is Here (Ch 42–48)
- **Thursday, November 19:** Third Reflection Paper — The Line Becomes a River

Week 14

- **Tuesday, November 24:** Thanksgiving Break — NO CLASS
- **Thursday, November 26:** Thanksgiving Break — NO CLASS

Week 15

- **Tuesday, December 1:** Everyone Who Is Gone Is Here (Ch 49–54)
- **Thursday, December 3:** Fourth Reflection Paper — Everyone Who is Gone is Here