WS 308-4 Transnational Migration, Women and Labour

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This course examines the global division of labour where migrant as well as immigrant women tend to be heavily employed in jobs that are menial, low-skilled, low-paid, which typically expose them to be exploited in numerous forms ranging from being commodified/de-skilled to the risk of sexual assault. Further, immigration as well as social policies tends to create a highly stratified society despite the rhetoric of multiculturalism and the existence of welfare policies. Key objectives of the course are to:

(i) examine the role of institutions in facilitating transnational migration;
(ii) discuss the underpinnings of transnational migration and various theoretical frameworks of migration;
(iii) evaluate women’s paid, unpaid labour and the feminization of migration;
(iv) explore various levels of commodification and de-skilling related to migrant and immigrant women;
(v) analyse the role of multiculturalism and social policies in two major migrant-receiving countries, i.e., Canada and Australia – to illustrate the processes of commodification and de-skilling of immigrant labour force, particularly women.

Required readings:


Women’s Studies Custom Courseware, available at the university bookstore

Course requirements and Grading Structure:
25% - Book Review and presentation (1500 words; 6-8 pages)
30% - Interview of either an immigrant or an immigrant woman’s daughter (Written report- 2000 words; 8-9 pages and presentation)
35% - Final Exam (take-home; two short essays out of four)
10% - Attendance and participation

Prerequisites: Six credits in Women’s Studies including WS 101 and/or WS 102. Students who have taken SA 335 and/or WS 310 with the title Women and Work cannot take this course for further credit.

The Department of Women’s Studies encourages clarity of thought and expression and good writing. Students will be evaluated on these skills in all courses given by the Department.