Critical Perspectives of Borders, Security, and Global Migration

IS 319

Fall 2017
Instructor: Dr. Greg Feldman
Course time: Wednesdays 1:30-5:20
Room: HC 1425
Email: gfeldman@sfu.ca
Office hours: Wednesday 11:30-12:30 pm, or by appointment
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Course summary:
This course examines the conditions and experiences of global migration when understood as a “security” issue. Our understanding of contemporary migration still assumes the primacy of nations and national borders, but also increasingly obligations to humanity, which ostensibly knows no borders. The ways in which these concepts are invoked to justify, or not, security measures is always subject to the political interests of the key actors involved. As part of these matters, we will examine the ambiguous ways that borders operate in the post-Cold War era of globalization. For example, is the border simply a line on a map, or has it been respatialized so that wealthy countries can keep would be migrants and asylum-seekers at off-shore locations? Today’s global migration involves sophisticated security apparatuses that illuminate travelers through a number of surveillance mechanisms, ranging from document checks to remote sensing technologies. Yet, simultaneously, these same conditions have led to the formation of sophisticated smuggling and trafficking networks that facilitate clandestine movements around the world. We will survey a range of contemporary migrations that connect different geographic regions and ask under what conditions people must move in “security” situations; what their journeys entail; how they are organized; and what security measures are or are not taken for or against them.

Required readings:


Plus articles and book chapters available on the SFU Library website.

Assignments:
One mid-term exam: 25%
One take-home final exam: 25%
Four response papers: 40%
Class participation: at 10%
**One mid-term exam:** 25%. This will be an in-class essay exam during the first half of the class on **Oct. 18th**.

**One take-home final exam:** 25%. The take-home final will be an essay exam. It will be available for pick up at the SIS main desk on the 7th floor of the Harbour Centre by noon on **Nov. 29th**. It must be handed out in at the same location by noon on **Dec 11th**.

**Response papers:** 4 at 10% each. Each student must submit four typed discussion papers on the assigned articles. You may not write on any of the three assigned books. You may submit only one paper per class meeting. You must do the following in your paper: 1) summarize the reading; 2) explain how the author reasons their way through the argument; and 3) critique and/or comment on what they have written. This assignment involves no outside sources and there is no need for citations or a bibliography. Papers must not exceed 750 words. Please include a word count at the end of the paper. You must submit your paper on the same day as the reading appears on the syllabus. Papers must be submitted at the **beginning** of the class or the late policy applies. **Please staple your papers together.**

**Class participation:** 10%. Class discussion is NOT evaluated according to how much you talk in class, but rather how much you help the class discussion move forward. This occurs, for examples, by asking stimulating, open-ended questions; by explaining why you found a particular issue in the readings to be confusing or unclear; by asking questions that force a clarification of the discussion; by politely prompting fellow students to further explain what they mean; and by making connections between different points that have come up in the discussion. Successful class participation is not necessarily a function of how well you understand the readings, but rather how much you contribute to a richer discussion of them. Do not worry about your daily class participation mark. If you do the readings with curiosity and interest, then you will find that you will have much to contribute. The written comment will help you read with more focus and prepare you for class discussion.

**Late policy:**

Unless proper and authentic documentation is provided, anything handed in **after the beginning** of class is one day late and subject to a 1/3 letter grade reduction. Anything handed in the next day is two days late. Additional 1/3 reductions apply for each subsequent working day that the assignment is late. **No assignment will be accepted electronically.**

**Email policy:**

Though I communicate via email, please note that I am not obligated to provide a prompt reply. If a situation emerges in which you need one, then it is advised to contact the main office.
Academic Integrity:

All students are expected to read and understand the university’s policies with regard to academic dishonesty (T10.02 and T10.03). These policies are available through the following url: [http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/teaching.html](http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/teaching.html)

Forms of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to the following:

- Submitting all or a portion of the same work for credit in more than one course.
- Representing another person’s work as your own for course assignments.
- Failure to acknowledge sources of facts, information, analyses, interpretations, and arguments that you incorporate in your work, whether from a source that is written, spoken communication, or the internet and whether it is published and unpublished. Appropriate documentation of your sources is necessary when you quote, paraphrase or incorporate information and ideas generated by others.

All students in SIS classes are expected to read the SFU Library lesson on “What is Plagiarism?” and take the interactive tutorial, “Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism”


Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism: [http://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/tutorials/plagiarism-tutorial](http://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/tutorials/plagiarism-tutorial)

**Turnitin.com:** All written assignments are to be submitted both electronically through turnitin.com and a hard copy to me by the due date. The hard copy and the e-copy must be identical. Please upload your discussion paper under the week for which you are writing the paper (i.e. if you are writing a discussion paper for the week 5 reading, then upload it under the heading “discussion paper week 5).

The turnitin website is: [http://turnitin.com/en_us/home](http://turnitin.com/en_us/home). Follow the instruction to create an account through which you submit your written assignments.

- **Class ID:** 16100329
- **Enrollment password:** borsecmig

**Schedule:**

**Sept 6th, Week 1: Course introduction**

**Sept 13th, Week 2: Borders and migration in history**

*Video:* “And the Ship Sails On” (selected scenes) directed by Federico Fellini

**Sept 20th, Week 3: Borders and migration in colonialism**


*Reading:* Spener, introduction and ch. 1
*Film:* “Continuous Journey”
Sept 27th, Week 4: What is to be defended? The ideological fault lines in contemporary migration

*Reading:* Spener, ch. 2 and ch. 3  

*Video:* Fortress Italia (Vice News)

Oct 4th, Week 5: Liberals and global migration: a borderless world?  
*Reading:* Spener, ch. 4, 5


*Video:* “Harvest of Empire”, pt. 1 (Getzels and Lopez, dirs.)

Oct 11th: Week 6: Neo-nationalists and global migration: rebordering the nation  
*Reading:* Spener, ch. 6 and conclusion


*Video:* “Harvest of Empire”, pt. 2

Oct 18th, Week 7: **Mid-term exam in first half of class**

*Reading:* Tinti and Reitano, pp. 1-60

*Video:* “Libya’s Migrant Trade: Europe or Die” (Vice News)

Oct 25th, Week 8: Borders, Smuggling, and Trafficking, part I  
*Reading:* Tinti and Reitano, pp. 60-81 and 103-143


*Video:* “Gypsy Child Thieves” (BBC)
Nov 1st, Week 9: Borders, Smuggling, and Trafficking, part II  
(class meeting cancelled. Keep reading)

Reading: Tinti and Reitano, pp. 145-181 and 249-279.


Nov 8th, Week 10: Borders, Smuggling, and Trafficking, part III

Reading: Agier, pp. 1-59


Video: “People and Power – The Nigerian Connection” pts. I & 2 (Al Jazeera)

Nov 15th, Week 11: Refugees, asylum, and humanitarianism, part I

Reading: Agier


Video: “The Trouble with Aid”, pt. 1 (BBC on Vimeo)

Nov 22nd, Week 12: Refugees, asylum, and humanitarianism, part II

Reading: Agier, pp. 132-160


Video: “The Trouble with Aid”, pt. 2 (BBC on Vimeo)

Nov 29th, Week 13: Refugees, asylum, and humanitarianism, part III  
(Class meeting cancelled. Keep reading.)

Reading: Agier, pp. 161-216