POLT 306
Current Controversies in Immigration

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In this seminar, we will comprehensively explore issues of immigration and the current controversies that arise from attempts to formulate immigration policy. After an overview of the history of American immigration policy and a discussion of some of the current controversies we will focus on the development of individual student work.

In the wake of legislation in Arizona, a sluggish economy, and a relative lack of a comprehensive national immigration strategy, the issue of immigration has come to the forefront. However, these challenges lead to larger and broader issues relative to national identity, the United States ethno-racial taxonomy, international relations and larger trends of global migration. In this seminar, we will attempt to explore these areas in-depth both through seminar readings and discussions and through the student research project.

While the seminar will include broader issues of American immigration and a comparative perspective particular attention will be to current issues regarding migration from Mexico and Latin America. As this community spreads from the Southwest throughout the nation to the Midwest, South and Northeast they continue to form one of the most dynamic and contentious areas of concern. Traditionally, immigration in the United States has been concentrated in the five states of California, Florida, Illinois, New York and Texas but in the past two decades immigration (often primarily Latino) has spread to states such as Georgia, Nebraska and North Carolina. Globally, immigration has been particularly concentrated in the three federal settler nations created by British settlers who displaced indigenous peoples: Australia, Canada, and the United States. Smaller amounts of immigration have occurred in wealthier European Union nations such as France and Germany.

Course Goals and Objectives
In this course, students will:
1) Acquire an understanding of current issues regarding immigration and the skills to formulate both questions and possible solutions to problems.
2) Critically assess ideas and information regarding immigration.
3) Participate in the seminar in a full and engaging manner.
4) Create an original seminar paper that is both theoretically and empirically grounded.

Course Requirements
1. Participation will account for 25% of a student’s grade. Students will be expect to attend class, complete all required readings and participate in the discussion. Students
will also be expected to post a 100-200 word Blackboard posting by 9pm the day before the class meeting.

2. Students will complete an approximately 25 page research paper on a topic of the students choice. The topic will involve any political issue regarding immigration, sufficiently narrowed to the scope of the paper. The overall assignment will be 55% of the student’s grade. The annotated bibliography will be worth 5% and the rough draft will be worth 5% (an interim grade will be given to show the student where they are in terms of the paper’s development). The final draft will be worth 45%.

3. Students will make a complete presentation regarding their research topic to the seminar. The presentation will count for 20% of the student’s grade. Students should present a handout and give a 15-20 minute presentation after which the professor and fellow students will have the opportunity to ask questions.

**Reading:**
The following two books have been ordered for the course at Barnes & Noble and are available on reserve in the library:

Other readings will be made available through the Blackboard site of the course.

**Course Outline**
February 7 Introduction: Immigration and the American Polity
Begin reading Zolberg book and Skrentny Article

February 14 Past and Present: Contemporary Immigration Problems and the Beginning of a Nation by Design
Prepared for the Working Group on Obama’s Agenda and the Dynamics of U.S. Politics. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, October 2010
Zolberg, *A Nation by Design*. Chapters 1, 2, 3

Recommended:
Zolberg, *A Nation by Design*. Chapters 4-6
(with Charles Hirschman and Josh Dewind), (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1999).

February 21 History of Immigration Politics and Policy Part II
Zolberg, *A Nation by Design*. Chapters 9-11 and Conclusion

Recommended:
Zolberg, *A Nation by Design*. Chapter 7

February 28 The Construction of “Illegal” Immigration
Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects.* Introduction, Chapters 2-4

**1 page description of research topic due to instructor**

Recommended:

March 7 Meetings with Students Regarding Research

March 14 Gender, Sexuality and Asylum

Recommended Reading:
Victoria Hattam and Carlos Yecas. “From Immigration and Race to Sex and Faith: Reimagining the Politics of Opposition.” *Social Research.* Vol 77 No.1 Spring 2010

March 21 Immigration and Identity Formation
Rogers Smith. "From a Shining City on a Hill to a Great Metropolis on a Plain?"

Recommended Reading:

April 4 Policy Change: Immigration Reform and Restriction Past and Present
Tex of Arizona SB 1070
State level immigration change articles to be distributed by the instructor.

**Bibliography Due**

Recommended:

April 11 A New Generation of Immigrants: Midwestern Immigration, the Next Generation and Political Incorporation

Recommended Reading:

April 18 The Global Flows of Migration: Emigration, Terror and Comparative
Perspectives

Recommended Reading:

April 25 Student Research Presentations
Rough Draft of Paper Due

May 2 Student Research Presentations

May 9 Student Research Presentations and Course Wrap-up

Final Paper Due at the end of the final exam period scheduled for the course