

**Immigrants as Aliens:  
Difficult Dialogues About Immigration Throughout American History**

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**Course Number: UGS 303**

**Unique Number: 62450**

**Semester: Fall 2018**

**Meeting Time: TTH 11:00am-12: 30pm**

**Class Meeting Place: SAC 5.102**

**Instructor: Dr. Suzanne Seriff**

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**Office: SAC 4.126**

**Office Hours: TTH 10:00-11:00am**

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**Signature Course Mission:** The Signature Courses at the University of Texas at Austin will connect students with distinguished faculty members in unique learning environments. By way of this rigorous intellectual experience, students will develop college-level skills in research, writing, speaking, and discussion through an approach that is both interdisciplinary and contemporary.

**Course Description:** From Benjamin Franklin's tirades against German immigrants in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, to the Chinese Exclusion Act in the 19<sup>th</sup> and the National Quota Act in the 20<sup>th</sup>, our nation has demonstrated a consistent history of tension over whom we collectively regard as "real Americans" and whom we allow into this country. This course is designed to engage students in a meaningful dialogue about contemporary and

historical issues of immigration in the United States—particularly focused on the changing rhetoric and resultant laws affecting the nationalities, races, genders, sexual identities, ages, marital status, and incomes of people allowed into the country. Students will have a unique opportunity to engage directly with a number of different “stakeholders” on the topic of immigration, including contemporary immigrants, immigration lawyers, community advocates, immigrant workers and employers, and descendants of immigrants who came to this country over a century ago. Students will also engage with each other in an active conversation about enduring questions facing our country as a “nation of immigrants” including “Who should be an American?” and “Who gets to decide?”

### **Course Objectives:**

- Learn to identify, document and analyze the rhetoric around which our nation’s politicians, pundits, and popular media have waged public discussions over key immigration issues in our nation’s history.
- Become proficient in the method of dialogue as a form of scholarly and civic exchange and conflict negotiation.
- Improve critical thinking, reading, analyzing, and writing skills through interdisciplinary explorations of academic texts, public political speeches, film, art, popular media, and first person oral histories.
- Formulate and present original research in interpretive, analytical essays, oral presentations, and multimedia projects.

### **Signature Course Essentials:**

- Information Literacy: Acquire basic research and information evaluation skills of a number of interdisciplinary media—from academic texts to popular news and entertainment media to visual arts, theatre, and film, to first person oral testimony.
- University GEM: Explore campus and community resources through the lens of our class curriculum, including the Blanton Museum of Art, and such community resources as Grassroots Leadership and the Worker’s Defense Project.
- Writing: Develop a solid platform of skills to improve college-level writing, including techniques for planning, drafting and revising

- assignments.
- Oral Communication: Develop competency in a range of oral communication skills including individual presentations, group presentations, and dialogue. As this course is part of the Difficult Dialogue program of the Humanities Institute, special emphasis will be put on learning, practicing, and engaging a number of dialogue tools designed to connect a student's personal issues to the larger community of which we are a part.
  - University Lecture Series: Interact with renowned faculty and civic leaders around a topic of relevance and significance in American public life. Students are required to attend at least one public lecture to fulfill the requirements of this course. After attendance, students will write a blog about what they learned and its relevance to our class. There are a number of options at the beginning of the semester that can fulfill this credit:
    - Sept. 24. First official University Lecture Series at 7:00-8:00pm at the Bass Concert Hall: Keep Calm and Grow Your Mind, featuring Dr. Keffrelyn D Brown (Department of Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education), Dr. Robert Crosnoe (Department of Sociology, College of Liberal Arts), and Dr. Robert Duke (Butler School of Music, College of Fine Arts)
    - Sept 25. Second official University Lecture Series, 7:00-8:00pm at the Bass Concert Hall: Turning Points featuring former UT Presidents William Cunningham and William Powers
    - Oct 15. 4:00-6:00pm Fall Colloquium on Law and the Production of Inequality. Ignacio Saiz, Executive Director, Center for Economic and Social Rights. Sheffield-Massey Room (TNH 2.111)
    - TBD: Campus or off-campus lectures, symposia, or other public gatherings where lectures will be offered or dialogues facilitated around the topic of immigration.

**Cultural Diversity in the United States Flag:** In addition to the signature course essentials, this course also carries the flag for Cultural Diversity in the United States. Cultural Diversity courses are designed to increase your familiarity with the variety and richness of the American cultural experience. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade

to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one U.S. cultural group that has experienced persistent marginalization, especially as this relates to their immigrant experience in the United States.

**Writing Flag:** Writing Flag courses are designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline. In this class, you can expect to write regularly during the semester, complete substantial writing projects, and receive feedback from your instructor and TA to help you improve your writing. You will also have the opportunity to revise one or more assignments, and you may be asked to read and discuss your peers' work. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from your written work. Writing Flag classes meet the Core Communications objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication, Teamwork, and Personal Responsibility, established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Please note that, if you would like additional assistance with your writing assignments, you may make an appointment with the UT Writing Center, which hosts one-on-one appointments with student writers. The Writing Center is located at PCL 2.330 or by apt at [uwc.utexas.edu](http://uwc.utexas.edu). 512 471-6222.

**Attendance and Participation:** Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. In addition to our weekly classes, this course includes special guest lectures, site visits and fieldwork trips, which are mandatory. You are expected to attend every class and organized fieldtrip, arrive on time, and remain throughout the session. Timely arrival is essential to avoid inconveniencing guest speakers, detracting from presentations, or disrupting trips. You are allowed one absence. Any additional unexcused absences will result in a deduction of 1 point from your final grade. If an absence is anticipated, you must notify the instructor prior to the class. In the event of an emergency, or serious illness, please contact the instructor via email.

In addition to class attendance, students will be required to participate fully in class discussion, dialogue, and guest events. Inattentive actions—side conversations, unauthorized cell phone or laptop use, late attendance, or falling asleep, will result in reduced attendance and participation grades.

In addition to class and field trips, there will be two mandatory individual conference sessions with the instructor or TA during the semester. These sessions involve discussion and evaluation of written personal goal statements for the class both at the beginning and midway through the semester.

**Assessment:** This course emphasizes student-driven learning through reading, dialogue, written work, fieldwork research, oral presentations, group projects, community engagement, and site visits. You are expected to complete all readings and projects, engage meaningfully in class dialogues and guest lectures, pose questions, and reflect critically on the issues they raise. You should come to class prepared to actively participate. Grades are based on attendance, class preparation and participation, weekly questions/comments, mandatory goal setting sessions, two written papers, and a final multimedia group project and oral presentation. All assignments must be completed on time. Late assignments will not be accepted unless you have received prior consent from the instructor. All written assignments (including paper drafts) are to be turned in as electronic submissions via Canvas.

**Assignments:** (details in writing at least two weeks before project due date)

**1. Weekly reading, online posting, personal goal setting, and class discussion (25%)**

You are responsible for posting a response to a prompt question posed by the instructor in the Discussion section on our Canvas site each week **by 9pm, Monday evening**. These postings will help guide our class discussions and dialogues for that week. This will require all readings for the week to be completed in advance of our Tuesday class period. The prompt for the post will be uploaded by Thursday afternoon of the week before. You should find freedom in your responses to react honestly, creatively, and thoughtfully to the week's materials. As you read the articles or book chapters for the week, consider the following questions:

- What questions do these scholars raise?
- What types of evidence do they use to investigate their questions?

- What kinds of persuasive language do they use to make their points?
- What methods do they employ to analyze their evidence?
- What conclusions do they try to draw?

2. **Family Immigration Paper (15%) 4-5 pages**
3. **Analyzing Political Rhetoric Paper (20%) 5 pages**
4. **Final Group Project (40%)**

**Grading Policy:** Final grades will be determined on the basis of the following university-prescribed plus/minus rubric. Please note: to ensure fairness, all numbers are absolute, and will not be rounded up or down at any stage. Thus a B- will be inclusive of all scores of 80.00 through 83.999. The University does not recognize the grade of A+.

A = 94-100; A- = 90-93; B+ = 87-89; B = 84-86; B- = 80-83; C+ = 77-79; C = 74-76; C- = 70-73; D+ = 67-69; D = 64-66; D- = 60-63; F= 0-60

**Required Texts:** Our two required books will be available at the University Co-op on Guadalupe Street. You will also be responsible for a number of readings each week which will be uploaded to the Canvas website or listed as URLs in your syllabus. These readings will form the basis of your weekly discussion blogs as well as our dialogues for the week. All readings are mandatory.

Daniels, Roger and Otis L. Graham. Debating American Immigration, 1882-Present. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2001.

Chomsky, Aviva. "They Take Our Jobs!" and 20 Other Myths about Immigration. Beacon Press. 2007.

### **University Policies:**

**Religious holy days:** A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible, so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence.

**Students with Disabilities:** Please notify your instructor of any modification/adaptation you may require to accommodate a disability-related need. You may find out more information on the Services for Students with Disabilities website: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/> and/or <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/how-to-register-with-ssd/>

**Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty:** Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. One such common, and often unintended, form of scholastic dishonesty is plagiarism—using research without citations or using a created production without crediting a source. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. Cutting and pasting, without credit, from any published source, including Wikipedia, is one common form of plagiarism. It is the student’s responsibility to be familiar with all of the rules on plagiarism and other forms of scholastic dishonesty. For further information, please visit the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/>.

**Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students:** All students should be familiar with the University’s official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student’s responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html> .

**University of Texas Honor Code:** “As A Student Of The University Of Texas At Austin, I Shall Abide By The Core Values Of The University And Uphold Academic Integrity.”

### **Important Dates**

Sept 11-13                      Student Conference #1: Setting Goals (students will make individual appts with instructor or TA)

Sept 18	Class Fieldtrip: Blanton Museum of Art
Sept 20	Thesis and Outline of Family Immigration Paper Due; In class workshop
Sept 24, 25	University Lecture Series, Bass Concert Hall (See University Lectures Requirement above)
Sept. 27	Family Immigration Paper Due by electronic submission on Canvas
Oct. 18	Thesis Sentence and List of Texts for Political Rhetoric Paper Due; in class workshop
Oct 25	Political Paper Outline and Annotated Bibliography Due
Nov 1	Political Rhetoric Paper Due by submission to CANVAS
Nov 6-8	Student Conference #2: Midterm Review of Goals
Nov 8	In Class: Assemble Groups for Final Project and Select Topic
Nov 15	Group Project Proposal Due: Topic and Dialogue Questions
Nov 27-29	Individual Dialogues Facilitated by Nov. 27; In-class workshop for Final Projects
Dec. 4-6	Presentation Final Group Projects

## **WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

### **Week 1 – Introduction to “Immigrants as Aliens” – Aug 30**

- Get to know each other in ways that relate to themes of the course.
- Explore issues related to belonging and dialogue about that experience
- Overview of class syllabus and requirements

### **Week 2 – Dialogue as a Technique for Civic Engagement – Sept 4-6**

- Understand the elements of effective dialogue
- Experience dialogue: exercise around question of belonging
- Synthesis and closure

**Readings:** To be completed before Tuesday, Sept 4.

*Tammy Bormann. What is Dialogue? Principles and Core Assumptions*

*“Introduction: The Role of Dialogue in Public Life,” In A Nuts and Bolts*



*Guide from the Public Conversation Project.*  
[www.everydaydemocracy.org](http://www.everydaydemocracy.org). 2006.

*Ruth Abrams, "Kitchen Conversations: Democracy in Action at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum," In The Public Historian. Vol 29, no.1 pgs. 59-76 (Winter 2007)*

### **Week 3 – Family Immigration Stories in Historical Context – Sept 13**

- Introduction: Our Names; Our Stories
- Where does my family's immigration history fit on the immigration timeline?
- What key issues intersect with immigration, in general, and the immigration of my family, in particular: labor, race, gender, business, world events, and human rights?

Class exercise: Placing your family member's story on the Immigration Timeline

NOTE: There will be no class on Sept 11 due to the Jewish Religious holiday of Rosh Hashanah. You may still schedule your individual conference with Sadikshya for that day.

**Personal Goal Assignment:** Bring your one page personal goals statement to your conference this week with the Instructor or TA. Goal statement instructions under Assignment on Canvas.

#### **Readings:**

*Daniels, Roger and Otis L. Graham. Debating American Immigration, 1882-Present. "Introduction" and Roger Daniel's Essay: "Two Cheers for Immigration."*

### **Week 4 – Understanding the Visual Discourse of Immigration – Sept 18-20**

Sept 18: Fieldtrip: Blanton Museum of Art

Sept. 20: Thesis and Outline of Family Immigration Paper Due; Class Peer Review Workshop of Paper Development

**Readings:**

*Daniels, Roger and Otis L. Graham. Debating American Immigration, 1882-Present. Otis Graham essay: "The Unfinished Reform: Regulating Immigration in the National Interest."*

*Leo Chavez, Ch.2 "Developing a Visual Discourse on Immigration," (pgs. 19-23), and Ch. 4 "A Lexicon of Images, Icons and Metaphors for a Discourse on Immigration and the Nation."(Pgs. 53-81) In Covering Immigration: Popular Images and the Politics of the Nation.*

**Week 5 – Immigration and Race: The First Exclusions – Sept 25-27**

**Guest Speaker: Irwin Tang, Sept 25**

**Readings:**

*Aviva Chomsky. "Myth 10: The United States is a melting pot that has always welcomed immigrants from all over the world." Pgs. 77-90*

*Aviva Chomsky. "Myth 11: Since We Are All Descendants of Immigrants Here, We All Start on Equal Footing." Pgs. 91-102*

*Bill Ong Hing, "'The Undesirable Asian' In Defining America Through Immigration Policy, Temple University Press 2004, Pgs. 28-50.*

*Irwin A. Tang. "The Chinese Texan Experiment" In Asian Texans: Our Histories and Our Lives. 2007, Pgs. 1-24.*

**Sept. 27 – Family Immigration Paper Due: To be turned in to Canvas by midnight**

**Week 6 – Immigration and Race: The Latino Threat Narrative – Oct 2-4**

**Readings:**

*Aviva Chomsky. "Myth 12: Today's Immigrants Threaten the National Culture Because they are Not Assimilating. Pgs. 103-109.*

*Leo Chavez, "The Latino Threat Narrative" In The Latino Threat: Constructing Immigrants, Citizens, and the Nation. Stanford University Press, 2008. Pgs. 21-43.*

*Douglas S. Massey. "Immigration Enforcement as a Race-Making Institution. In Immigration, Poverty, and Socioeconomic Inequality. David Card and Steven Raphael, eds. Russell Sage Foundation. (2013). Pgs. 257-281.*

Film Clip:

ABC Primetime Live: What Would You Do? Segment about Hispanic day laborers at a New Jersey Deli.

**Week 7 – Immigration and the Economy: Immigration as Big Business – Oct 9-11**

Who are the stakeholders who have benefited from immigrant labor in American history?

Readings:

*Upton Sinclair. The Jungle. 1906. Chapters 2, 3, and 6. (Canvas)*

*Aviva Chomsky. Ch. 6: "Working (Part 2)" In How Immigration Became Illegal. Beacon Press. 2014. Pgs. 130-151.*

*Michael Grabell: Exploitation and Abuse at the Chicken Plant. A Reporter at Large. May 8, 2017 New Yorker Magazine  
<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/05/08/exploitation-and-abuse-at-the-chicken-plant>*

**Week 8 – Immigration and the Economy: "They Take Our Jobs" and other Myths about Immigration – Oct 16-18**

## Guest Speakers: Workers Defense Project, Oct 16

### Readings:

Aviva Chomsky. "Part I: Immigrants and the Economy" In *They Take Our Jobs: And 20 Other Myths About Immigration*, Boston: Beacon Press Books. Pgs. 3-49.

Juan Tomas Ordoñez, "Boots for my Sancho: structural vulnerability among Latin American day labourers in Berkeley, California"  
<http://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/NK9FY9MvFcyzkTF5fcii/full>

Seth Holmes, "Oaxacans Like to Work Bent Over: The Naturalization of Social Suffering Among Berry Farm Workers." *Journal Compilation*. The Author. 2007.

Film: *Los Trabajadores* (The Workers) by Heather Courtney

Oct 18: Thesis Sentence and Texts of Political Rhetoric Paper Due; In Class Workshop or Film

Week 9 – Immigration and the Law: How Immigrants Became "Illegal" – Oct 23-25

### Readings:

Mai Ngai. "Introduction" and "Chapter I: The Quota Act." In *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2007. Pgs. 1-55.

Chomsky, Aviva: "Myth #7: The Rules Apply to Everyone, so New Immigrants Need to Follow Them Just as Immigrants in the Past Did" Pgs. 53-57

Aviva Chomsky: Myth #8: *The Country is Being Overrun by Illegal Immigrants.*" Pgs. 58-63

Oct. 25: Full Outline and Annotated Bibliography of Political Rhetoric Paper  
Due by 11:59pm

**Week 10 – Immigration and the Law: Fighting for the Rights of Undocumented Children and Families – Oct 30-Nov 1**

**Guest Speaker: Vanessa Rodriguez: University Leadership Initiative representative**

**Readings:**

*José Antonio Vargas: “My Life as an Undocumented Immigrant.”*  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/26/magazine/my-life-as-an-undocumented-immigrant.html>

*Aviva Chomsky. “Ch. 7: “Children and Families.” In How Immigration Became Illegal. Beacon Press. 2014. Pgs. 152-180*

**Nov. 1 – Political Rhetoric Paper Due**

**Week 11 – Immigration and National Security: Prevention Through Deterrence – Nov 6-8**

**In class Film: Crossing Arizona (Benson Collection LAC-Z Rare Books DVD 6230)**

**Readings:**

*Joseph Nevins: “Ch. 1: On Gatekeeping and Boundary Making,” In Operation Gatekeeper and Beyond: The War on “Illegals” and the Remaking of the U.S.-Mexico Boundary. Routledge 2010. Pgs. 1-16*

*TBD*

**Nov 8: Assemble Groups for Final Project: Select Topic**

Nov 6-8 Student Conference #2: Midterm Review of Goals; Bring new

one page goal statement to your conference

**Week 12 – Immigration and National Security: Detention and Criminalization of Asylum Seekers – Nov 13-15**

Guest Speakers, Nov. 15: Kate Lincoln-Goldfinch, Immigration Attorney;  
Bob Libal, public advocate for detained families, Director, Grassroots Leadership,  
[www.grassrootsleadership.org](http://www.grassrootsleadership.org)<http://www.grassrootsleadership.org>

Film: “The Least of These: Family Detention in America: A Documentary”  
Film by Clark Lyda and Jesse Lyda (FAL DVD 8213) or TBD

Readings:

*Aviva Chomsky: Myth #9: The United States Has a Generous Refugee Policy. Pgs.64-76*

*Bill Ong Hing, “The Politics of Asylum” in Defining America Through Immigration Policy, Temple University Press 2004, pgs. 233-258  
Canvas*

*TBD: Media discussion of Trump’s Zero Tolerance/family separation policy, 2018*

Nov. 15: Two Page Group Proposal Due: Final Topic and Dialogue Questions

**Week 13 – Immigration and National Security: Post 9/11: Muslims as the New Terrorist Threat– Nov 20**

Readings:

*Michael Barone, “New Americans After September 11” In Reinventing the Melting Pot: The New Immigrants and What it Means to be an American, ed. Tamar Jacoby. Pgs. 261-269 (2004) CP*

*Tram Nguyen, "Separated by Deportation: Minneapolis," In We Are All Suspects Now: Untold Stories from Immigrant Communities after 9/11. Beacon Press 2005 pgs. 20-44. CP*

Note: Thanksgiving Holiday-No Class, Nov 22

**Week 14 – Review and Group Project Workshops – Nov 27-29**

**Week 15 – Final Group Project Presentations – Dec 4-6**