PPD 686: U.S. Immigration Policy
Syllabus Spring 2015
Section 51268R
2:00 to 5:20 pm, Monday, THH214

Instructor: Roberto Suro
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Office hours: Tuesdays 2 to 6:30pm and by appointment (preferably)

What immigration strategy best serves U.S. national interests today?

How does that strategy translate into policies at the federal, state and local level?

The basic project of this course will be for students to develop their own answers to both those questions. It will be an effort in applied policy studies. The approach will be intensely interdisciplinary, drawing ideas and information from multiple sources in the social sciences, policy-making, advocacy and journalism. The perspective on immigration will be as a phenomenon that is both international and domestic, that affects multiple aspects of national and community life from the labor market to the character of civic engagement and that presents an array of policy challenges far more numerous and complex than simply deciding who gets a visa. The course will unfold against the backdrop of important ongoing debates about immigration in the United States and Western Europe that we will monitor throughout the term.

The semester is roughly divided into three segments: The first four sessions will be spent reviewing broad ideas and basic data. The next five segments will focus on key aspects of the current debate over U.S. immigration policy. The last four sessions will take global view to examine broad policy challenges faced by all countries of destination.

Beyond the subject matter, a major objective of this course will be the development of communications skills appropriate to a professional policy analyst. This goal will be pursued through several different types of classroom presentations, frequent blogging and the production of two policy memos that will be the major written assignments for the course.

Learning objectives

1) Become knowledgeable about some of the key social science theories and research findings about migration and apply those lessons to policy analysis.
2) Develop a detailed understanding of current controversies in U.S. immigration policies and their historical antecedents.
3) Explore the emerging challenges faced by Western democracies seeking to balance migration control and the acquisition of human capital.
4) Develop skills in arguing from evidence. Students will practice the use of data and other research findings as instruments of persuasion.
5) Develop skills in the art of framing and coupling—defining a policy challenge so that the proposed solution seems to flow from it.
6) Developing skills in writing short.

Course notes
-- Students will not be permitted to use laptops, tablets or smartphones during class.
-- Grading for this course will be on the standard USC letter grade system.
-- Blackboard will serve as the sole point of official communication for the course. Updates and advisories regarding class activities and assignments will be disseminated via Blackboard. Students will be responsible for monitoring the email address associated with them on Blackboard. With the exception of Motomura book noted below and occasional classroom handouts, all instructional materials including required readings, lecture slides and assignments will be posted on Blackboard. Other than blog posts, all written assignments must be submitted as a word processor document. Assignments submitted in Portable Document Format (pdf) will not be accepted.
-- Any student unable to complete an assignment on schedule must contact the instructor and seek an extension via email prior to the assignment deadline. Extensions will be granted only under exceptional circumstances such as illness, family emergencies or unexpected professional obligations. A late assignment will be penalized by half a grade over the first 24 hours and a full grade thereafter.
-- Given the reduced number of class sessions due to Monday holidays in the spring term, every student is expected to come to the instructor’s office hours twice during the term. The first visit should take place prior to Spring Break. The second will provide an occasion to discuss the second policy memo.
-- Students should assume that all written work may be shared with the rest of the class for critique and discussion.

Required Reading
All required readings will be posted on Blackboard except for:
Written Assignments and Class Presentations

News Blog: Immigration policy is again on the agenda for the Congressional session that will be underway this term, and immigration controversies are roiling Germany, France, the United Kingdom and other nations. We will spend part of every class session assessing these events as they unfold. To keep track of events and provide a basis for class discussions students will maintain a group blog about relevant developments. Moreover, the blog serves as a vehicle for students to set the agenda for class discussions.

Blog posts should be brief (100 to 200 words) comments on a news article, the release of a report or study, a speech or the announcement of a proposal, etc. Ideally, the posts should seek to provoke classroom conversation by raising a question or suggesting a connection to a concept that has come up elsewhere in the course. Posts should always include a link to a relevant news item or document.

Comments on posts can be even briefer (50 to 100 words) and can comprise an observation or an argument or a link to an additional development that furthers discussion of a post.

Students will be responsible for originating eight posts and seven comments. Posts will follow a schedule set by the instructor.

All students should be prepared to discuss the latest traffic on the blog at every class session.

Research brief: Each student will write a brief (500 to 750 words) memo summarizing the findings and policy relevance of a research paper and will then present that summary in a five to seven minute presentation in class. Two students will be assigned to lead questioning. The instructor will provide a list of potential papers for this exercise and students will be free to nominate their own. Students will be assigned a due date for the written and in-class briefings between February 2 and March 2.

Policy debates: Students working in teams (to be assigned well in advance by the instructor) will hold a series of five debates arguing the pro and con sides of a designated policy proposition. All of the materials necessary to argue either side will be contained in required or optional reading for that week's class. Each student will participate as a debater once. Students in the audience will question, judge and critique the debaters. The form of the debates will be discussed extensively in class.

The debate schedule:

- **March 30**—Resolved: Any legalization program for unauthorized migrants must contain a clear and practicable path to U.S. citizenship.
- **April 6**—Resolved: Family reunification should be replaced as the primary avenue of permanent migration with a system that judges applicants on their potential economic contributions.
- **April 13**—Resolved: Eligibility for means-tested welfare, health and education programs should be limited to U.S. citizens.
Policy memos: The written work in this course is meant to be terse and persuasive. It will develop skills in summarizing information from several sources. It will test abilities to advocate and analyze. Students should assume they are addressing a motivated, intelligent but non-scholarly audience, an audience with a short attention span. Think in terms of the board of directors of a foundation, an agency head, or senior staff of a congressional committee.

The first of the two memos will be on the topic of temporary workers. As assigned by the instructor, students will assume the role of an analyst for a major actor in the immigration policy debate—a labor union federation, a corporate umbrella group, immigrant rights advocates, etc. The assignment will be to make recommendations on how to improve on the temporary workers program in the reform legislation passed by the Senate in 2013. This is an exercise in understanding how various interest groups develop widely differing positions on the details of a single immigration policy issue. Temporary workers will be the topic of the class session on March 9 and students working in teams will have a chance to discuss and test ideas on the positions held by interest groups. The written memos will be due March 23 following Spring Break.

The second of the two policy memos will be on a topic of the student’s choice—subject to the instructor’s approval. Students will be free to pick a topic related to the subject of their debate question or another subject that has been discussed in class. The second memo will be due on the course’s exam day.

These memos will advocate for specific policy options based on a research-based diagnosis of a problem and an analysis of alternative solutions already available in existing policy debates. Students should not attempt to devise new policy mechanisms. This is not an exercise in innovation. There are three key elements to this assignment: the use of evidence, the definition of the problem and of the desired outcomes and the argumentation in favor of the proposed solutions. The format for the policy memos will be discussed in detail in class.

The deliverables will be comprised of the following elements:

1. Executive summary: A one-pager, a maximum of 500 words, must fully summarize the problem and the proposed solution in a manner that conveys the coupling between them. Along the way it should highlight the most persuasive evidence for the case being made.

2. Policy Memo: This is a tightly written, stand-alone document that aims at persuasion. It must define a problem, assess the available policy options and argue for a solution that will achieve desired outcomes. The memo should make skillful use of evidence for purposes of argumentation while assuming that the full literature review is available to the reader. (2,500 to 3,000 words)

3. Documentation: Given the emphasis on synthesizing information developed by others extensive and complete attribution is essential. This will be accomplished using the notes and bibliography method as described in the Chicago Manual of Style. Word lengths for assignments do not include documentation.

4. Students will make informal five-minute presentations on their policy memo #2 topics during class April 20 and 27.
Class Schedule:

**January 12:** Introduction to the course  
Deliverables: None

**January 19:** Martin Luther King Jr. Day—No class

**January 26:** Immigration Theory and Overview of the history of US Immigration Policy  
Reading:  
Deliverables: None

**February 2:** The policy challenges of unauthorized migration  
Reading:  
-- Motomura, Hiroshi. Chapter 2 of *Immigration Outside the Law*.  
http://www.pewhispanic.org/2014/09/03/as-growth-stalls-unauthorized-immigrant-population-becomes-more-settled/  
-- Blackboard file: Documents and news coverage related to President Obama’s 2014 executive action on immigration.  
Deliverables:  
-- Research briefs group 1

**February 9:** Immigration federalism  
Reading:  
-- Motomura. Chapter 2  
Deliverables:  
-- Research briefs group 2
February 16: Presidents Day – No class

February 23: Public Opinion, the Media and the Social Impact of Immigration
Guest speaker: Mark Hugo Lopez, Pew Research Center, director Hispanic Trends Project.

Reading:
-- Blackboard file: Documents and news coverage related to public opinion on immigration.
-- Motomura, Chapter 3
-- Between Two Worlds: How Young Latinos Come of Age in America, Pew Hispanic Center. [Overview and Executive Summary] (2009)

Deliverables:
-- Research briefs group 3

March 2: U.S. Immigration Policy since 9/11

Reading:
-- Blackboard file: Major addresses on immigration policy by George W. Bush and Barack Obama.

Deliverables:
-- Research briefs group 4
**March 9**: Temporary Workers

**Reading:**

**Deliverables:**
Team presentation of positions on temporary worker programs

**March 16**: Spring Break—No Class

**March 23**: Immigration Enforcement

Guest speaker: Virginia Rice, communications director, western region, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

**Reading:**
-- Blackboard file: Documents and news articles on immigration enforcement
-- Motomura, Chapter 4

**Deliverables:**
Policy Memo on temporary workers

March 30: Legalization

**Reading:**
Motomura, Chapters 5 & 6

**Deliverables:**
Debate
April 6: Permanent Migration and the search for human capital

Reading:

Deliverables:
Debate

April 13: Immigrant integration

Reading:
--Executive Order 13166: “Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency” Federal Interagency Website on LEP

Deliverables:
Debate

April 20: Framing immigration: Narratives of inclusion and restriction

Reading:

Deliverables:
Presentation of policy memo topics
April 27: The Mobility Agenda: Migration and Development

Reading:

Deliverables:
Presentation of policy memo topics

Grading:

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<th>Assignment</th>
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<td>Class participation</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>Blog</td>
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<td>Research brief</td>
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Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct
Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity http://equity.usc.edu/ or to the Department of Public Safety http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.
Support Systems
A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information http://emergency.usc.edu/ will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.