

PLTC S18: Immigrant Rights in Theory and in Practice

Professor Leila Kawar
Tuesday 10am-1pm, Chase Hall 203
Thursday 1pm-4pm, Chase Hall 203

Short Term 2011

International migration is part of a global political and economic transformation that is reshaping societies and politics around the globe. How is migration produced by law? How does law exclude migrants from membership in the community? How do these legally-excluded migrants use the language of rights to empower themselves and to assert political claims?

Over the course of the term, students will address these questions through three different levels of analysis: close reading of the scholarly literature on the politics of rights, examinations of film and media representations of the contemporary global politics of immigration, and participation in a service-learning project to assist organizations in Southern and Central Maine that mobilize on behalf of immigrant rights.

Grading

Participation in off-campus service learning (20%):

You are expected to spend a minimum of four hours per week working with local community groups engaged in mobilizing law for immigrant rights. Together with classmates who are interning with the same organization, you will be asked to give an in-class presentation about your internship experience on the last day of class. In addition, you will be asked to individually write a 500-word reflective essay relating the themes of the course to your experience in the community.

Class participation (20%):

It is important that you do the readings (which are listed under the class date on which they will be discussed) and participate in class discussions. Reading response questions will be handed out in advance, and these should be completed prior to class.

High class participation grades come with good attendance and active, thoughtful, consistent class participation, revealing thorough preparation and engagement. This means contributing your own ideas as well as providing constructive responses to others' oral and written comments. B-level work means that your participation is of high quality, but not consistent, or you share your own ideas frequently, but may not pay much attention to others' comments. You would receive C-level points if your participation were thoughtful but infrequent, or regular but perfunctory, yet still revealed a satisfactory level of preparation and competence when offered. Few points would accrue if your participation were rare and/or revealed poor or careless preparation.

Assignments (60%):

You will be asked to complete three assignments based on and extending the assigned readings. The first of these is a group presentation project. The other two assignments are individually-written five-page papers analyzing specific films. Details will be provided in class.

Texts (available at bookstore)

Susan Coutin. *Nations of Emigrants*. Cornell University Press, 2007.

Jennifer Gordon. *Suburban Sweatshops*. Harvard University Press, 2005.

Films (on reserve in the library)

H-2 Worker (1990)

Wetback: The Undocumented Documentary (2005)

Swift Justice (2009)

Maquilapolis (2006)

Made in L.A. (2007)

Morristown: In the Air and Sun (2007)

The rough plan for the short term is as follows:

Tuesday, April 26: Overview

- *Suburban Sweatshops*. Chapter 1
- In-class film: *Farmingville*

Thursday, April 28: Migrant Labor and Globalization

- Cholewinski, R. "Protecting Migrant Rights in a Globalizing World"
- Giugni, M. et al. "The Global Justice Movement"
- Lerner, S. "Global Corporations, Global Unions"

Tuesday, May 3: Migrant Labor and Globalization

- Ansley, F. "Local Contact Points at Global Divides: Labor Rights and Immigrant Rights as Sites for Cosmopolitan Legality"
- Ansley, F. "Constructing Citizenship Without a License: The Struggle of Undocumented Immigrants in the USA for Livelihoods and Recognition"
- Guest Speaker: Prof. Fran Ansley, University of Tennessee Law School

Wednesday, May 4: ** Morristown Film Screening and Discussion**
IBEW Union Hall, 5:30-8pm

Thursday, May 5: Migrant Labor and Globalization

- First assignment due (analysis of social justice mobilizations for migrant workers)

Tuesday, May 10: Transnational Identities

- *Nations of Emigrants*. Chapters 1, 3
- In-class film: *Sentenced Home*

Thursday, May 12: Transnational Identities

- *Nations of Emigrants*. Chapter 4
- Second written assignment due (film analysis: how does law create identity?)

Tuesday, May 17: Rights Talk and Collective Action

- *Suburban Sweatshops*. Chapters 2-4

Thursday, May 19: Rights Talk and Collective Action

- *Suburban Sweatshops*. Chapters 5-6
- Third written assignment due (film analysis: rights-talk and political organizing)

Tuesday, May 24: Politics of Immigration

- *Nations of Emigrants*. Chapter 7
- Immigration Policy Beat:
<http://www.migrationinformation.org/USFocus/display.cfm?ID=835>
- In-class film: *Marking Up the Dream*

Thursday, May 26: Final Class

- Service-learning reflective essays due
- Harvard Center service-learning debriefing and group presentations