Institute for the Study of International Development
McGill University
Winter 2019

INTD 497-001
Seminar: International Labor Migration and Development
(3 credits)

Time: Tuesdays 11:35-14:25
Location: EDUC 613

Instructor: Kazue Takamura
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Email: kazue.takamura@mcgill.ca
Office Hours: Thursdays 14:00-16:00

Course Description

The main purpose of this research seminar is to study in-depth the sociology of international labor migration regimes. We will pay particular attention to the manifold socio-economic effects and human rights dilemmas that are produced by the contemporary patterns of low-end (low-skilled and low-waged) labor migration. The study of low-end labor migration matters to development for the following reasons. First, international labor migration is considered a core economic strategy to reduce poverty and bring tangible development outcomes in developing countries. Second, due to the unequal economic process of globalization, growing numbers of workers from developing countries – of whom more than half are female – are incorporated into global labor markets as cheap and disposable low-end laborers. Third, the current neoliberal-driven labor migration systems trigger a myriad of human rights concerns, including systemic labor exploitation, denial of public medical services and of other basic welfare rights, and family separation. Fourth, with the intensified securitization of borders, migrant workers with temporary legal status or non-status constantly fear deportation and detention.
The seminar themes are divided into three main categories. In the first part, we will analyze the macro structure of the labor migration system, including immigration policies of labor-receiving states, as well as labor-export policies of labor-sending states. We will pay particular attention to the myriad problems related to migrant vulnerability, which itself is produced and normalized by both immigration policies and labor-export policies. In the second part, we will analyze various social implications of labor migration, such as demonization of migration, remittances, reproductive rights of migrants, religion, and food insecurity. In the third part, we will look at the emerging human rights concerns that have been advanced due to the securitization of borders. These include the construction of illegality, deportation and detention, human trafficking, and statelessness. We will also discuss the impact of migrant advocacy. In this course I will show two documentaries related to low-end labor migration to Canada. In order to gain first-hand insight and aspects, we will invite guest speakers from local civil society groups.

Course Requirements

1. Participation
Students are expected to come to class having done the required readings beforehand in order to contribute to class discussion. Readings will average 80-100 pages per week. In order for this seminar to be successful, all students are expected to make thoughtful contributions to the discussion.

2. Précis (reading notes, choose 8 themes out of the 12 weekly themes)
In order to stimulate class participation, students are required to prepare a total of eight précis (short reading notes) out of the 11 weekly themes. You will choose any eight weekly topics between Week 2 (Controlled labor mobility) and Week 13 (Human Rights). Each précis examines one article or one book chapter from the weekly readings. The précis should clarify the main argument of the article and then provide your reflections (including a critique) on the article. The length will be 400-500 words.

Please note that you are not allowed to select the same week for your analytical paper. Each précis must be submitted via MyCourses ["Assignments"] by 17:00 on Monday prior to the seminar meeting. This exercise is intended to ensure that you pro-actively do the readings and are
ready to engage them in the seminar.

3. Group presentation (from Week 5 Feminization of Migration)
Students must do an oral presentation by working in a group comprised of 3-4 people (maximum 4 students). Each group is assigned to a specific week to discuss the given theme. This exercise is to provide a foundation for thoughtful seminar discussion. The group must engage with the given development topic in a critical and empirical manner, addressing both the readings of the week and outside sources.

In the presentation, the group must elaborate on analytical framing, empirical information, and where relevant, comparative perspectives and policy or practical implications. Overall, the presentation should provide deep and insightful analysis for the theme of the week that reflects close engagement of the readings and significant outside research. We will begin this exercise from Week 5 (February 5). Group presentations should not exceed 30 minutes.

Division of labor
In order to ensure equal group participation, you have to make clear the division of labor among the group members. Each member should play a clear role in the group presentation. Please specify each role during the presentation.

Submission of the presentation slides
Submit your group presentation slides by 17:00 the day before the seminar via MyCourses.

Post-presentation comments
You are required to submit post-presentation comments in 500-600 words after the group presentation. The comments should discuss your main role in the group as well as your additional reflections on the specific development theme from the presentation (for example, you could address certain critical questions/issues that you are not able to include in the presentation). You must submit your comments by 11:59pm on the next day following the presentation via MyCourses. Your presentation comments will count for 10% of the presentation grade.

4. Short analytical paper
Students must write 1 short analytical paper based on the assigned readings in 1,700-2,000 words.
The paper is intended to provide an analysis or critique of the reading(s) of a specific week. The goal of this exercise to think critically on the theme of the week and then to write an article that provides a distinct argument on the readings. The paper should advance one central argument regarding the ideas from the readings. The paper should not provide a scattered analysis of the different readings, but instead a coherent, focused argument that covers the theme of the week.

Although some minimal summary of the readings is necessary, the paper should avoid spending significant space summarizing the readings. This is an exercise in analysis and critique.

Submit the paper by 17:00 via MyCourses on Monday prior to the seminar meeting for which you are writing the paper. Note that you must write your paper prior to the seminar meeting, not after the seminar. In other words, you must come to the seminar ready to discuss your paper.

5. Research paper
The research paper should be a minimum of 15 double-spaced pages and a maximum of 20 double-spaced pages. Students can choose any topic related to international labor migration, but the argument should engage with international development.

The goal of the research paper is to employ key concepts discussed in the seminar and to develop one’s own research ideas. The paper should focus on one central argument and examine it through empirical cases.

Submission of the title and an abstract
Students must submit the title of one’s paper and an abstract describing the main argument in one paragraph via MyCourses by 11:59pm on Monday, March 25. Your abstract will count for 5% of the total final research paper grade.

Submission of the research paper
You must submit your research paper via MyCourses by midnight on Friday, April 26. Further details on the research paper will be given in class.
Grade Distribution
1. Seminar participation: 10%
2. Weekly précis: 15% (8 précis)
3. Group project: 15% (including post-presentation comments)
4. Analytical paper: 15%
5. Research paper: 45% (including the title and an abstract)

Books to Purchase
The required books have been ordered at Paragraphe Bookstore on 2220 McGill College Avenue. They are also available online (for example, amazon.ca), often at lower prices for used copies. Copies of the two required books will be placed on reserve in the Humanities and Social Sciences library.


All the assigned articles other than the two required books will be placed on MyCourses. **NOTE:** There is no coursepack for this research seminar.

Plagiarism
*McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/) for more information)*

Policy on Languages
*In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.*
**Course Evaluations**

End-of-course evaluations are one of the ways that McGill works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student’s learning experience. You will be notified by e-mail when the evaluations are available on Mercury, the online course evaluation system. Please note that a minimum number of responses must be received for results to be available to students. I strongly encourage you to complete the evaluations.

**General Information**

If you have a hearing, visual and mobility impairment, please contact the instructor immediately (in advance of any evaluations or other class requirements).

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This course syllabus is subject to change in case of unforeseen circumstances.

**Course Schedule**

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Part 1. Macro Picture: Issues and Actors

WEEK 1 (JANUARY 8): INTRODUCTION

Goal: Discuss the broad outline of the seminar as well as the key assignments for the course. We will also introduce ourselves and share our main interests in the study of international labor migration and development.

Readings:

WEEK 2 (JANUARY 15): CONTROLLED LABOR MOBILITY

Readings:


Film screening:
WEEK 3 (JANUARY 22): PRICE OF RIGHTS

Readings:

WEEK 4 (JANUARY 29): MIGRANTS FOR EXPORT

Readings:


WEEK 5 (FEBRUARY 5): FEMINIZATION OF MIGRATION

Readings:


**WEEK 6 (FEBRUARY 12): REMITTANCES**

**Readings:**


**Optional:**


**Film screening:**

WEEK 7 (FEBRUARY 19): RELIGION

Readings:


Optional:


WEEK 8 (FEBRUARY 26): REPRODUCTIVE VULNERABILITY

Readings:


WEEK 9 (MARCH 12): FOOD INSECURITY AND DISPLACEMENT

Readings:
Part III. Construction of Illegality

WEEK 10 (MARCH 19): MIGRANT SURVEILLANCE REGIMES

Readings:


WEEK 11 (MARCH 26) HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Readings:


Optional:


WEEK 12 (APRIL 2) MIGRANT ADVOCACY
*Field Trip to the Immigrant Workers’ Center (4755 Van Horn, Montreal)

Readings:


WEEK 13 (APRIL 9) EMERGING HUMAN RIGHTS DILEMMAS
