Class time: Fridays, 2:35-5:25 PM
Room: Leacock 14
Instructor: Professor Megan Bradley
Office hours: Fridays 9:00-11:00, Leacock Building, Room 539
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Course description

Millions of people around the world have been forced from their homes by interlinked factors including persecution, armed conflict, natural disasters, development projects and socio-economic deprivation. Resolving large-scale displacement represents a critical challenge for contemporary peacebuilding and development processes. This seminar will: (i) examine international, regional, national and local responses to the problem of forced migration; (ii) investigate the obstacles to effective protection and assistance for refugees and displaced persons; (iii) explore the challenge of resolving displacement crises, and (iv) discuss some of the moral dilemmas raised by forced migration. Students will examine various historical and contemporary cases of forced displacement, integrating diverse disciplinary approaches, including legal, political and moral analysis.

Learning objectives and approach

This course is organized in three parts:

- Part I: Forced migration: Concepts, causes and responses
- Part II: Resolving displacement
- Part III: Moral dilemmas and debates

In each section of the course, participants will explore the rights and responsibilities of different actors in the contemporary international refugee regime, including host states, states of origin, donors, humanitarian agencies and NGOs, and displaced persons themselves. By examining forced migration through the lens of rights and responsibilities, this course will investigate the benefits and challenges associated with attempts to conceptualize and respond to displacement through rights-based frameworks.

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Appreciate the complexity of contemporary processes of forced migration, from a range of different perspectives;
- Critically analyze key principles (legal, political and ethical) related to refugees and forced migration;
- Develop and present persuasive oral and written arguments related to forced migration;
- Critically analyze, from an inter-disciplinary perspective, the behaviour of different actors involved in the creation and resolution of displacement crises;
- Engage in contemporary debates on forced migration and humanitarian responses from an inter-disciplinary perspective, drawing on insights from historical experiences and current cases; and
- Think critically and creatively about policies related to refugees and forced migration, identifying their positive and problematic aspects and the intentions underlying them.

The teaching and learning methods that will be used to achieve these objectives include:

- Brief lectures to introduce key theoretical and conceptual issues;
- Class discussions;
- Student-led seminars;
- Extensive reading and guided independent secondary research.

Required readings
INTD 497: Refugees and Forced Migration: Rights and Responsibilities

Required readings are identified below, along with an indication of whether they are available on-line, or are collated in the course pack, available for purchase at the McGill bookstore.

Optional readings and additional resources are also suggested below.

Important dates

5 September Course begins
3 October No office hours, no class
31 October Deadline for confirmation of research paper topic (by email)
28 November Last class, final papers due

Assignments and assessment

15% Participation in class
30% Two discussion papers (weighted equally)
25% Group facilitation of seminar
30% Research paper

Further information on assignments, assessment and extra credit opportunities is available at the end of the syllabus.

Program

Class 1: Friday 5 September 2014
Introduction to the course

Part 1: Forced Migration: Concepts, causes and responses

Class 2: Friday 12 September 2014
Topic: Who is a refugee? Questioning categories

Key themes/questions

- Who is a refugee? Legal, political and theoretical definitions and frameworks
- Do refugees have a stronger claim to protection and assistance than other groups, such as internally displaced persons (IDPs) and economic migrants?
- Political and scholarly consequences of definitions

Required reading


Optional reading and additional resources

- Major legal agreements and standards
INTD 497: Refugees and Forced Migration: Rights and Responsibilities


  - Responses to Hathaway by Adelman and McGrath and Cohen, also in Journal of Refugee Studies 20(3).

Class 3: Friday 19 September 2014
Topic: Seeking asylum, refugee status determination and the rise of restrictionism

Key themes/questions
- The development of asylum policies
- Deterrence and interdiction policies
- Refugee status determination

Required reading

Optional reading and additional resources

Class 4: Friday 26 September 2014
Topic: Humanitarian responses to refugees: Institutions and obligations
INTD 497: Refugees and Forced Migration: Rights and Responsibilities

Key themes/questions
- Major actors/agencies (Displaced persons, governments, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs) (Focus on UNHCR)
- How do humanitarian agencies attempt to respond to the needs of displaced populations? Are current institutional responses sufficient?
- Organizational mandates: Is UNHCR really a non-political organization? Is it possible (and desirable) for a humanitarian agency to be neutral?

Required reading

Optional reading and additional resources
- Forced Migration Review 29 on Humanitarian Reform: Fulfilling its Promise?

NOTE: Friday October 3, 2014: No office hours, no class

Class 5: Friday October 10 2014
Securitizing forced migration (student-led seminar)

Key themes/questions
- Refugee warriors, forced migration and peacebuilding
- Why has forced migration been perceived and portrayed as a threat to national and regional security?
- Is it justifiable to view forced migration in security terms?
- What are the consequences of “securitizing” forced migration?

Required reading


Optional reading and additional resources


Class 6: Friday 17 October 2014

**Topic: Displacement and natural disasters (student-led seminar)**

**Key themes/questions**

- Politics and protection in natural disasters
- Climate change and forced migration

**Required reading**


**Optional reading and additional resources**

INTD 497: Refugees and Forced Migration: Rights and Responsibilities


Part II: Resolving displacement

Class 7: Friday 24 October 2014
Topic: Introduction to “durable solutions,” focus on local integration (student-led seminar)

Key themes/questions
- Trends in the pursuit of durable solutions to displacement
- Obstacles to local integration
- Conceptualizing local integration: How do we know integration when we see it?

Required reading

Optional reading and additional resources

Class 8: Friday 31 October 2014
Topic: Resettlement (student-led seminar)

Note: Deadline for confirming paper topic with instructor.

Key themes/questions
- Resettlement as a protection tool
- How should limited resettlement opportunities be distributed?

Required reading
INTD 497: Refugees and Forced Migration: Rights and Responsibilities


Optional reading and additional resources


Class 9: Friday 7 November 2014
Topic: Voluntary repatriation/return (student-led seminar)

**Note:** Deadline for confirmation by email of intention to complete optional reflective essay.

**Key themes/questions**

- The meaning and significance of voluntariness
- The meaning and significance of return in “safety and dignity”
- The rise of return as the “preferred” solution to displacement
- The nexus between return, reintegration and peacebuilding

**Required reading**


**Optional reading and additional resources**


Part III: Moral dilemmas and debates

Class 10: Friday 14 November 2014
Topic: Representing refugees (student-led seminar)

Note: Deadline for confirming final paper topics with instructor (by email). Deadline for submission of optional reflective essays.

Key themes/questions
- How are refugees represented in the mainstream media and by humanitarian agencies? What are the implications of these representations?
- Is it acceptable for humanitarian agencies to use images of extreme human suffering in order to raise money for relief operations?
- What principles should guide the depiction of human suffering by humanitarian agencies?

Required reading

Optional reading and additional resources

Class 11: Friday 21 November 2014
Topic: Accountability, moral dilemmas and forced migration

Key themes/questions
- The concept of a moral dilemma
- Accountability of humanitarian agencies: Dilemmas surrounding the withdrawal of aid
- Accountability for the creation of refugees: Dilemmas surrounding the restitution of refugees’ property

Required reading
INTD 497: Refugees and Forced Migration: Rights and Responsibilities


Optional reading and additional resources

Class 12: Friday 28 November 2014
Topic: Open borders?

Key themes/questions
- Should states be required to open their borders to all who wish to enter?
- Are open borders necessary to reduce global economic inequalities and the abuse of migrants?
- Is free movement a fundamental human right?

Required reading

Optional reading and additional resources

Course Assignments and Evaluation Criteria

Participation in class (15%)
Active participation of all students is essential to a successful seminar. Participation will be assessed on the basis of:
- Regular presence in class (each student can miss up to two classes, excused or unexcused, without incurring penalty)
- Demonstrated preparation (required readings done, questions prepared on each reading)
- Contribution to discussion
- Active participation in class activities
- Encouragement of participation of other students
Two discussion papers (30%)
Students will choose two seminar classes (other than the one they will facilitate) and write a discussion paper on the theme of each class, drawing on the required readings for the chosen class. Discussion papers should be max. 4 pages long, typed in 12-point, Times New Roman font, doubled-spaced with standard margins. Each paper will be graded out of 15, and the average of the two papers will be used to obtain each student’s final mark. Discussion papers should be submitted at the beginning of the class for which they are prepared. For classes in which there are numerous assigned readings, discussion papers should engage at least three of the readings. Short assigned readings (e.g. articles of less than 5 pages) do not count towards this total.

The discussion papers should succinctly summarize and critically engage with the main arguments advanced in each reading. Do the authors successfully defend their arguments? What questions do the readings raise? Are there important issues related to the seminar theme that the readings do not address? If so, students may use the discussion papers as an opportunity to begin formulating their own ideas and questions on these issues. (NB: Summaries of the readings should be no longer than 1 short paragraph.)

Students may draw on the optional reading or other sources in the discussion papers, but are not required to do so.

Break-down of marks
5 points
- Effective communication of ideas
  - Clear and logical organization of ideas/structure
  - Clear explanations of key concepts
  - Style, grammar and spelling

10 points
- Understanding of topic, insightful and critical engagement with readings
  - Brief, accurate expression of key concepts and arguments in each reading
  - Insightful reflections on the authors’ arguments and approaches (strengths and weaknesses, etc.)
  - Identification of insightful questions raised by the readings

Group facilitation of seminar (25%)
Students will be responsible for designing and facilitating (in coordination with the instructor) a seminar covering 2 hours and 20 minutes (including a 15 minute break). This will be a group activity and students are encouraged to be creative in the means they use to present information and encourage class participation and discussion. Each student-led seminar should include class participation and/or small-group activities of at least 45 minutes in duration.

Classes 5-10 may be led by student groups.

The student-led seminars should make use of the assigned reading for the class. The group may wish to add extra readings. If this is the case, these should be made available electronically at least one week in advance.

Each group will consist of 5 students. At least ten days before the students present the seminar they have designed, a minimum of two members of the group must meet with the instructor (during office hours, unless otherwise arranged) to discuss the team’s plans. During this meeting, the team should be prepared to provide a detailed overview of the team’s goals for the seminar (what are the key questions or ideas you wish to raise?); the timeline for the seminar overall and for each element of the seminar; and the team’s strategy for introducing, running and debriefing activities involving class participation.

A laptop and projector for powerpoint presentations will be available. If other equipment is required, this must be confirmed with the instructor at least one week in advance.

Group members will all receive the same mark. Group members will be expected to submit a short evaluation of their own work, within one week of delivering their seminar. In addition, all members of the class will complete short
evaluations of each student-led seminar. The self-evaluations and peer evaluations will inform the instructor’s determination of the final mark for each group.

The final 30 minutes of each class that is led by a student team will be devoted to discussion facilitated by the instructor, and completion of the peer evaluations by members of the class.

**Break-down of marks**

10 points Effective communication of ideas
- Logical organization of ideas/structure
- Clear explanations
- Relevant examples
- Appropriate use of visual or oral learning aids, and creative learning techniques
- Ability to engage with the class

15 points Understanding of topic, analysis and argument
- Explanation of relevant terms and socio-political context
- Explanation of principal debates (theoretical, empirical)
- Critical engagement with the relevant literature
- Articulation and defence of clear, insightful arguments, and/or stimulation of debate around different approaches to the issue under discussion
- Relevance and analytical depth of discussion questions

**Research paper (30%)**

**Deadline:** 2:35 PM, Friday 28 November 2014

The final paper should be a maximum of 3,500 words (approximately 14 double-spaced pages), excluding footnotes and bibliography. The topic must be different than that chosen for your presentation. Topics best suited to this assignment are those that involve a specific case study, actor, challenge or debate related to forced migration, and pose a specific research question.

Students are required to type their text in 12-point font with standard margins. Please double space the text. Use single spacing for block quotations, footnotes and other reference notes, appendices and the bibliography.

Citations must follow a standard academic format. In-text citations are preferred.

The final paper must:
- Define the key terms used in the paper
- Explain the principal theoretical and conceptual debates related to the topic
- Advance a clear argument effectively supported by empirical research and/or theoretical analysis
- Situate the topic in the context of the country or community studied (if applicable)
- Draw some conclusions and/or pose recommendations (if applicable).

**Break-down of marks**

7.5 points Effective communication
- Clear and logical organization of ideas
- Pertinent examples
- Style, grammar and spelling
- Standardized referencing according to academic conventions

7.5 points Understanding and application of relevant theories and literature
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- Understand and critical analysis of relevant theoretical, conceptual and practical debates and perspectives
- Understanding and critical analysis of relevant academic literature

15 points  Analysis and argument
- Clear articulation of student’s position
- Effective support provided for argument
- Quality of conclusions and/or recommendations

Examples of topics
- Analysis of efforts to promote NGO accountability to refugees receiving assistance in a particular country
- Analysis of UN responses to the militarization of refugee camps in the DRC
- Analysis of the ‘non-political’ character of UNHCR
- Examination of the problems associated with humanitarian agencies’ use of images of extreme human suffering in order to raise money to provide relief to displaced populations
- Critical examination of the ‘voluntariness’ of the repatriation of Afghan refugees from Pakistan
- Analysis of the evolution of Canadian policies on providing asylum to members of sexual minorities
- Examination of the role of resettlement in resolving the protracted displacement of Bhutanese refugees
- Critical examination of an NGO’s decision to extend or withdraw assistance in a complex forced migration scenario

Extra credit opportunities

Course evaluations
In order to encourage the timely completion of course evaluations, each student will receive an extra 1% if at least 85% of enrolled students complete the on-line course evaluation on time.

Attendance at McDonald Currie Lecture
The Institute for the Study of International Development (ISID) annual McDonald Currie Lecture will take place on Thursday, October 23, 2014, from 5:00-6:30 PM. The location, speaker and topic will be confirmed shortly. Attending students will receive an extra 1% that will count toward their participation grade. Please note that the participation grade is never to exceed the percentage established for the course. At the lecture, there will be a sign up sheet. Before the lecture begins, students should sign up, providing their name, student ID number, and provide a signature. Attendance for the full lecture is necessary to receive the extra credit.

Reflective essay on experiences of forced migration
In order to encourage the exploration of literature that addresses personal experiences of the themes at the heart of this course, students are invited to submit one reflective essay that incorporates analysis of a work of fiction, investigative journalism or biography related to forced migration and/or humanitarian crises, alongside discussion of issues addressed in the required and/or optional readings on the syllabus. Students who opt to prepare the reflective essay must inform the instructor by email by 7:00PM on Friday 7 November 2014. Reflective essays are due in hard copy by 2:35 on Friday 14 November 2014.

Students who complete the optional reflective essay will receive a bonus of up to 5%. The reflective essays will be evaluated according to the criteria below. It is left to the student’s discretion to determine which issues/course readings will be explored in the reflective essay. The works of fiction and/or biography that may be analyzed for this assignment include:

- *A Constellation of Vital Phenomena*, Anthony Marra
- *Sweetness in the Belly*, Camilla Gibb
- *Half of a Yellow Sun*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- *What is the What*, Dave Eggers

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- *Zeitoun*, Dave Eggers
- *The Book of Negroes*, Lawrence Hill
- *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures*, Anne Fadiman
- *The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, Junot Diaz
- *Ignorance*, Milan Kundera
- *Mister Pip*, Lloyd Jones
- *Footnotes from Gaza*, Joe Sacco (graphic novel)

Suggestions for additional works to add to this list are welcome for future versions of the course.

Break-down of marks

5 points
- Effective communication of ideas
  - Clear and logical organization of ideas/structure
  - Clear explanations of key concepts and ideas
  - Style, grammar and spelling

10 points
- Insightful analysis of themes and critical engagement with readings
  - *Brief*, accurate expression of key themes drawn from the novel or biography, and related course readings
  - Insightful, original reflections on the relationship between the individual (fictional or biographical) experiences addressed in the novel or biography, and themes addressed in the course
  - Identification of insightful questions raised by the readings

Useful websites

Canadian Council for Refugees: www.ccrweb.ca
Forced Migration On-line: www.forcedmigration.org
Forced Migration Review: www.fmreview.org
Human Rights Watch: www.hrw.org
Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada: www.irb-cisr.gc.ca
International Committee for the Red Cross: www.icrc.org
International Crisis Group: www.crisisweb.org
Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre: www.idmc.org
MSF Virtual Refugee Camp: www.refugeecamp.org
Norwegian Refugee Council: www.nrc.no
Refugees International: www.refintl.org
Relief Web: www.reliefweb.int
UNHCR: www.unhcr.org
University of Oxford Refugee Studies Centre: www.rsc.ox.ac.uk
Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children: www.womenscommission.org
York University Centre for Refugee Studies: www.york.ca/crs

General instructions and policies for written assignments

Late policy
Written work (discussion papers and research paper) is due at the start of class on the specified due dates. Late papers will be subject to a 10% penalty per day, starting with the due date, except in exceptional cases, with the professor’s prior agreement. Extensions will not be granted on the day an assignment is due, except in case of medical or family emergency, accompanied by appropriate documentation.

Language
As per university policy, written assignments may be submitted in French or English.

**Format and style**
Students are required to type their text in 12-point font with standard margins. Please double space the text. Use single spacing for block quotations, footnotes, appendices and bibliographies. References and citations must follow a standard academic format. In-text citations are preferred.

**Special Needs**
If you have a disability, please contact the instructor to arrange a time to discuss your situation. Please also make contact with the Office for Students with Disabilities.

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