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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 January</td>
<td>Course begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>19 February</td>
<td>No class</td>
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<tr>
<td>22 February</td>
<td>No office hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 March</td>
<td>No class (reading week)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 March</td>
<td>Policy briefings due (optional)</td>
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<tr>
<td>19 March</td>
<td>Deadline for confirmation of research paper topic (by email); deadline for submission of reflective essays (optional)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 April</td>
<td>No class (Easter Monday)</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 April</td>
<td>Last class, final papers due</td>
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Assignments and assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Participation in class</td>
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<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Two discussion papers, or one discussion paper and one policy briefing (weighted equally)</td>
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<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Group facilitation of seminar</td>
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<tr>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Research paper</td>
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Students must pass each element of the assessment structure in order to pass the course. Further information on assignments, assessment and extra credit opportunities is available at the end of the syllabus.

Program

Class 1: Monday 8 January 2018
Introduction to the course

Part I: Forced migration: Concepts, causes and responses

Class 2: Monday 15 January 2018
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 different or 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
  o Responses to Hathaway by Adelman and McGrath and Cohen, also in Journal of Refugee Studies 20(3).
• Hannah Arendt (1948) The Origins of Totalitarianism, Chapter 9.

Class 3: Monday 22 January 2018

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
INTD 497: Refugees and Forced Migration: Rights and Responsibilities


Class 4: Monday 29 January 2018
Topic: Humanitarian responses to refugees: Institutions and obligations

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?

Class 5: Monday 5 February 2018
Security and 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?
**INTD 497: Refugees and Forced Migration: Rights and Responsibilities**

**Required reading**

**Optional reading and additional resources**

**Class 6: Monday 12 February 2018**
**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**


**NOTE:** Monday 19 February 2018: No class. No office hours Thursday 22 February 2018.

**Part II: Resolving displacement**

**Class 7: Monday 26 February 2018**

**Topic:** Introduction to “durable solutions,” focus on local integration

**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**


**NOTE:** Reading week, 5-11 March 2018.

**Class 8: Monday 12 March 2018**

**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
- Hyndman, J. and Giles, W. (2016) “It’s so cold here, we feel this coldness” (chapter 5) in *Refugees in Extended Exile: Living on the Edge.* (course pack)

Optional reading and additional resources

Class 9: Monday 19 March 2018

Topic: Voluntary repatriation/return (student-led seminar)

Note: Deadline for confirmation by email of proposed final essay topics. Deadline for submission of 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: Monday 26 March 2018**

**Topic: Representing refugees (student-led seminar)**

**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**


**NOTE:** No class on Monday 2 April 2018 (Easter Monday).

**Class 11: Monday 9 April 2018**

**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


Optional reading and additional resources


Class 12: Monday 16 April 2018

**Topic: Open borders?**

**Key themes/questions/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 one class, 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
INTD 497: Refugees and Forced Migration: Rights and Responsibilities

**Two discussion papers (25%)**

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 25, 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. 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? What tensions emerge when the readings are compared? If so, students may use the discussion papers as an opportunity to begin formulating their own ideas and questions on these issues. (NB: This is not an exercise in summarizing the readings. For each reading, no more than one or two sentences should be devoted to summarizing the key argument the reading advances.)

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

**Option: Policy briefing**

Students may opt to prepare a policy briefing in lieu of one of the two discussion papers that are otherwise required for this course. Students opting to complete a policy briefing rather than a second discussion paper will submit their work on Monday 12 March 2018 at 2:35PM. The policy briefing should tackle a current/ongoing challenge related to forced migration, and should address a specific target audience (e.g. the Government of Canada, donor states, UNHCR Executive Committee Members, UNHCR, humanitarian NGOs, and/or a combination of these actors). The policy briefing should (a) succinctly summarize the issue at hand, demonstrating why it is important to act; (b) analyze the challenges that have been encountered in this situation that must be overcome to successfully address the issue; and (c) present clear recommendations for particular actors to address these challenges. For the purposes of this assignment, it may be helpful to imagine that you are preparing the policy briefing in the context of your work as an analyst for a non-governmental organization such as Refugees International or Human Rights Watch.

Policy briefings should be max. 2,500 words (including citations). Present your policy briefing in a visually engaging manner (with headings, etc.) to make the key elements for your analysis, and your recommendations, as clear as possible.

The policy briefing should draw on and cite relevant research, but stylistically students should bear in mind that in contrast to a traditional academic paper, the aim of this assignment is to clearly communicate arguments and recommendations based on a well-focused, up-to-date analysis to key policy and practitioner audiences.

**Break-down of marks**

- **10 points** Effective communication of ideas
  - Clear and logical organization of ideas/structure
  - Clear explanations of key concepts
  - Engaging presentation of analysis and recommendations
Students may wish to consult the following policy briefings to get a sense of how to approach this assignment in terms of style/tone, format, etc.:


**Group facilitation of seminar (25%)**

Students will be responsible for designing and facilitating (in coordination with the instructor) a seminar covering 2 hours and 10 minutes (including a 10 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, 6, 8, 9 and 10 may be led by student groups.

The student-led seminars should make use of the assigned reading for the class, but also require extensive additional, independent research. That is, the team leading the seminar cannot work only with the required readings, but must incorporate additional research into their presentation.

Each group will consist of 5 students. At least ten days before the students present the seminar they have designed, a minimum of three members of the group must meet with the instructor (at a pre-arranged time) 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 40 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**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Effective communication of ideas</th>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Logical organization of ideas/structure</td>
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<td>Clear explanations</td>
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<td>Relevant examples</td>
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<td>Appropriate use of visual or oral learning aids, and creative learning techniques</td>
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<td>Ability to engage with the class</td>
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INTD 497: Refugees and Forced Migration: Rights and Responsibilities

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/integration of insights from background research
• 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 (35%)
Deadline: 2:35 PM, Monday 16 April 2018

The final paper should be a minimum of 12 and maximum of 14 double-spaced pages, plus bibliography. The topic must be different than that chosen for your presentation (and policy briefing, if relevant). 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.

The final paper must:
• Be typed in 12-point, double-spaced, Times New Roman font with standard margins
• Use in-text citations, following a standard style (e.g. Chicago Manual of Style)
• Have page numbers
• Define the key terms used in the paper
• Explain the principal theoretical and conceptual debates related to the topic
• Advance a clear, effectively structured argument supported by empirical research and/or theoretical analysis (the thesis and structure of the paper must be clearly indicated in the introduction to the paper)
• 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
10 points Effective communication
• Clear and logical organization of ideas
• Pertinent examples
• Style, grammar and spelling
• Standardized referencing according to academic conventions

10 points Understanding and application of relevant theories and literature
• 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 and structure of the argument
• Effective support provided for argument
• Quality of conclusions and/or recommendations

Extra credit opportunities

Course evaluations
In order to encourage the timely completion of course evaluations, each student will receive an extra 0.5% if at least 85% of enrolled students complete the on-line course evaluation on time. The extra 0.5% will count toward the participation grade. Please note that the participation grade is never to exceed the percentage established for the course.
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. Reflective essays are due in hard copy by 2:35 on Monday 19 March 2018. Late reflective essays will not be accepted. Papers should be a minimum of four pages and a maximum of five pages, double spaced (plus citations).

Students who complete the optional reflective essay will receive a bonus of up to 4%. 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
- *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
4 points Effective communication of ideas
- Clear and logical organization of ideas/structure
- Clear explanations of key concepts and ideas
- Style, grammar and spelling

8 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

**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 (on the total value of the assignment), starting with the due date. Extensions will not be granted, except in case of medical or family emergency, accompanied by appropriate documentation.

**Language**
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.
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 be in-text and follow a standard academic format. Page numbers are required on all assignments. Hard copies should be stapled.

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/students/srr/honest for more information).