

HIST 4399

A Refugee Crises: My Home, My Identity, My Story

Living in another country, even for a short period, allows one to develop a sense of cultural empathy and understanding that cannot be replicated within your home country. This course helps students not only think more deeply about their own cultural identity, but helps them build a framework for understanding one of the most pressing issues of our time, how to manage the greater than 50 million refugees across the world. We will examine the issue from an academic and personal perspective interacting with the local community in Heidelberg and beyond as we review myriad of sources from poems, to news articles, to journal articles, to works of art.

The seminar format takes advantage of a variety of teaching and learning methods to develop not just content knowledge, but builds skills in critical thinking, creativity, writing, and independence. The course is divided into three parts which broadly meet three liberal learning objectives as well as civic engagement and information literacy. Students will keep a digital journal for the course and will share in the maintenance a blog for the course. More traditional classroom learning will be supported with exploration of the city and the surrounding area as well as visits to companies, museums, and non-profit organizations.

I. Refugees in Modern Times: Leaving Home (World Views and Ways of Knowing) 5 weeks

According to the UNHRC, by the end of 2014, it was estimated that there were more than 50 million refugees, displaced people and asylum-seekers around the world.

In this phase of the course we will examine the idea of ‘home’ as a universal construct and then explore some contemporary cases of mass migration of people. We will see that although home is a varied reality, the idea of “home” remains relatively consistent. Through this exploration we will research the social, economic, cultural and political impacts that forced millions to leave their homes as well as the long-term implications of these movements on various global and regional policies.

- Africa: Rwanda, Darfur, and Kenya
- Eastern Europe: Yugoslavian War
- Asia: Cambodia and North Korea
- Middle East: Syria and Libya

In this section of the course, students will begin to learn about the academic research process as they are required to use various data-bases and prepare research briefs. The briefs begin as annotated bibliographies, and progress to extended synthesis-based outlines. Our research skill focus in this section is on understanding the impact of various types of sources, how to find these sources, and how to properly cite the material. The writing skill focus is on thesis development, synthesis, and simple argument development as we create a “story” that weaves together numerous sources.

Students will also work on presentation, public speaking, and group management skills as they go through in-class group exercises, and prepare their regional “My Home” multi-media presentation.

Community and Museum visits:

- Ethnographical Museum – this museum shows what life is like in many parts of the world. Students will choose two exhibits and explain how they present contrasting or similar perspective on the idea of home
- Prinzhorn Collection – museum showcases “patient” art work and examines issues of mental health. Students will think about the interaction of home and mental health and prepare a journal entry for discussion
- Odenwald Forest – students will hike or bike in and around the area to get a sense of the impact that climate and geography have on the development of a community and home
- Heidelberg Schloss – students will visit this castle and think about the issue of safety and size when defining what a home should be. They will contrast this type of home with their dorm room, and a refugee tent.

Reading List:

- Somerville, Peter. "Homelessness and the meaning of home: Rooflessness or rootlessness?" *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 16.4 (1992): 529-539.
- <http://eprints.lincoln.ac.uk/3141/3/3141%20Homelessness%20and%20the%20Meaning%20of%20Home.pdf>
- Easthope, Hazel. "A place called home." *Housing, theory and society* 21.3 (2004): 128-138.
- George, Rosemary Marangoly. *The politics of home: postcolonial relocations and twentieth-century fiction*. Cambridge University Press, 1996. (read introduction and chapter 1)
- Muggeridge, Helen, and Giorgia Dona. "Back home? Refugees' experiences of their first visit back to their country of origin." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 19.4 (2006): 415-432.
- Taylor, Helen. *Narratives of loss, longing and daily life: The meaning of home for Cypriot refugees in London*. Diss. University of East London, 2009.
- Carl Sandberg, “Home Thoughts,” and “Home Fires;” Lucy Maud Montgomery, “The Old Home Calls;” and Rumi, “The Guest House.”
- http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/06/09/world/migrants-global-refugee-crisis-mediterranean-ukraine-syria-rohingya-malaysia-iraq.html?_r=0
- https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/new-un-report-says-worlds-refugee-crisis-is-worse-than-anyone-expected/2015/06/17/a49c3fc0-14ff-11e5-8457-4b431bf7ed4c_story.html
- Hein, Jeremy. "Refugees, immigrants, and the state." *Annual Review of Sociology* (1993): 43-59.
- Chimni, Bhupinder S. "Globalization, humanitarianism and the erosion of refugee protection." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 13.3 (2000): 243-263.

- Gale, Peter. "The refugee crisis and fear Populist politics and media discourse." *Journal of sociology* 40.4 (2004): 321-340.
- Additionally each group will find and examine 8 -10 additional sources on their geographic region and refugees – causes, consequences, and the ability (willingness) to return home

II. Construction of Identity: Creating Narratives of Who we Are (Gender)

5 weeks

In this phase of the course we will examine how identity is constructed and what it means to identify with a specific group. We will explore the impact of place, possession, and ideology on one's own identity and further examine what happens when our identity is challenged. Additionally we will research cases where identity is limiting and the role of prejudices, particularly those related to gender and ethnicity.

- The Special and Complex Case of Women: A Cross Cultural Examination of Gender Bias and Gender Roles
- It is More than What I Eat and the Language I Speak: A Cross Cultural Examination of Ethnicity
- Life Purpose and Understanding: A Cross Cultural Examination of Faith and Identity

In this section of the course, students will build on their academic research skills as they move to more complex readings and synthesis papers. Our research skill focus in this section is on speed and the development of skimming skills so that students can review larger quantities of information. Our writing focus is on understanding "underlying mechanisms" and how they influence argument development. Thus, we move from simple argument development to more complex understanding and presentation as the "stories" we create become more nuanced.

Students will again build their presentation, public speaking, and group management skills through in-class group exercises, and their "Who am I" multi-media presentation developed in a slightly larger group format.

Museum and Cultural visits:

- Sinti and Roma center – Students will examine what it means to be identified as a "Gypsy" and the particular role that women play in their culture
- Carl Ebert Memorial – Students will think about how the working class identity changed over the past 100 years and how it has remained the same
- Museum of Ecclesiastical Arts – Students will examine the role of artifacts in creating religious identity as they explore the defining role of faith for the Jesuits. Students can also visit other religious centers to explore this question.

Reading List:

- Hall, Stuart, and Paul Du Gay, eds. *Questions of cultural identity*. Vol. 126. London: Sage, 1996. (Read introduction and chapter 1)
- Hall, Stuart. "Cultural identity and diaspora." (1990): 37.

- Giddens, Anthony. *Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age*. Stanford University Press, 1991.
- Malkki, Liisa. "National geographic: the rooting of peoples and the territorialization of national identity among scholars and refugees." *Cultural anthropology* 7.1 (1992): 24-44.
- Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Elena, and Yousif M. Qasmiyeh. "Muslim asylum-seekers and refugees: negotiating identity, politics and religion in the UK." *Journal of Refugee Studies* (2010): feq022.
- O'Flaherty, Michael, and John Fisher. "Sexual orientation, gender identity and international human rights law: contextualising the Yogyakarta Principles." *Human Rights Law Review* 8.2 (2008): 207-248.
- Gauntlett, David. *Media, gender and identity: An introduction*. Routledge, 2008. (read Introduction and chapters 1, 3, and 6).
- Harp, Dustin, Jaime Loke, and Ingrid Bachmann. "More of the same old story? Women, war, and news in Time magazine." *Women's Studies in Communication* 34.2 (2011): 202-217.
- Morley, David, and Kevin Robins. *Spaces of identity: Global media, electronic landscapes and cultural boundaries*. Routledge, 2002.
- Dato, Al-Karim. "Media and youth identity in Pakistan: Global-local dynamics and disjuncture." *Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences* 2.1 (2010).
- Monin, Benoit, and Dale T. Miller. "Moral credentials and the expression of prejudice." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 81.1 (2001): 33.
- William Butler Yeats, "A Dialogue of Self and Soul;" Kem Glowery "EveryMan;" and Persian Nightingale :Identity of the Self."
- <http://dartcenter.org/content/immigration-and-refugee-workshop-opens>
- <http://www.politico.eu/article/german-identity-threat-refugees-migration-merkel/>
- http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/fareed-zakaria-refugee-crisis-identity_us_569fca1be4b0a7026bf9df4b
- http://www.refugee-action.org.uk/refugee_voices
- <http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/syrian-refugees/story/refuge/>
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- Additionally each group will review a minimum of 8 additional sources to be used in their case presentations.

III. Social Change: Facilitating Social Action and Developing Sustainable Solutions (Social Change in Historical Perspective) 5 weeks

In this section of the course we will use what we have learned to move beyond understanding the problems and issues facing displaced people, to examining solutions and the various challenges those solutions pose. We will explore the contemporary refugee crisis in Europe and look at various responses by individuals, NGOs, firms, and countries. We will also examine the idea of creating persuasive narratives to impact policy.

Our skill development shifts in this section of the course as we use our content knowledge to devise solutions and build awareness for the crisis. Thus the focus in this section is on using the research to create policy position papers, OpEd writing, and a digital narrative of the student's choosing that serves as their culminating project. Students will apply information and communication technologies to all aspects of their culminating project as they learn from individuals and organizations outside the classroom and beyond published sources.

Reading List:

- Chimni, Bupinder S. *From resettlement to involuntary repatriation: towards a critical history of durable solutions to refugee problems*. Centre for Documentation and Research, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 1999.
Link:
https://www.researchgate.net/profile/B_Chimni/publication/31137020_From_Resettlement_to_Repatriation_Towards_a_Critical_History_of_Durable_Solutions_to_Refugee_Problems/links/55f15f9108ae0af8ee1d5c95.pdf
- Barutciski, Michael, and Astri Suhrke. "Lessons from the Kosovo Refugee Crisis: Innovations in Protection and Burden-sharing." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 14.2 (2001): 95-134.
- Crisp, Jeff. "No solution in sight: the problem of protracted refugee situations in Africa." *Center for Comparative Immigration Studies* (2003).
- Garvey, Jack I. "Toward a Reformulation of International Refugee Law." *Harv. Int'l. LJ* 26 (1985): 483.
- <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2015/10/eight-solutions-world-refugee-crisis/>
- <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646cf8.html>
- <https://www.yahoo.com/news/merkel-solution-refugee-crisis-eus-exterior-borders-123312889.html>
- Additionally, each group will find and synthesize 10-20 sources for their digital advocacy refugee solutions project. The readings will be a mix of content based materials and primers for digital advocacy, using film and documentaries for persuasive, and preparation of policy papers.

Service and Community Engagement

Service experiences will be embedded into the course so that students can better understand the city they are living in and the people that inhabit that city.

- German-American institute – teach English volunteer at an event
- Patrick Henry Village, former U.S. Army Barracks, now a Refugee Center – volunteer for activities

Pre-reading and films for Course: These pre-course activities help us to have a shared context and vision as well as allow students to begin to develop a framework for their own understanding of the refugee crisis in the world.

Starting your digital journal:

- My home – take a series of photos that will be indicative of your home and what ‘home’ means to you. Prepare the photos in a slide show or collage that can be shared (or reviewed when you need a dose of ‘home’). What will it be like to live in a new home? What will be different and perhaps difficult, what will be similar, and what will be exciting?
- My identity – take a second series of photos that are indicative of your identity. Again prepare the photos in a slide show or collage. How does your family, religion, cultural heritage, and national identity shape who you are? How will moving to another country alter your identity?
- My story – think about how your home and your personal and cultural identity shape your story. What can this experience provide as a chapter in shaping your life story?

We will visit these questions when we land in Germany and when we are ready to return home to see how your perceptions of home, identity, and even story have changed.

Reading List:

- <http://www.theguardian.com/childrens-books-site/2015/sep/08/fiction-refugee-crisis-gillian-cross> - read the article and choose 3 poems listed
- Oxford Handbook of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies – introduction https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Oxford_Handbook_of_Refugee_and_Force.html?id=kzDKAwAAQBAJ&source=kp_read&printsec=frontcover&source=kp_read_button#v=onepage&q&f=false
- The Making of the Modern Refugee - \$35 (ebook edition)
- The Long Road Home: The Aftermath of the Second World War – choose 2 stories
- Human Cargo: A Journey Among Refugees – choose 2 stories
- The State of the World’s Refugees 2012 <http://www.unhcr.org/4fc5ceca9.html>

Film Screenings: must watch at least 3 of the 6

- Hotel Rwanda - The true-life story of Paul Rusesabagina, a hotel manager who housed over a thousand Tutsi refugees during their struggle against the Hutu militia in Rwanda in what would become one of the greatest humanitarian crises of our time. This film allows the viewer to think about issues of identity, prejudice, and violence.
- The Killing Fields - The true story of New York Times journalist Sidney Schanberg and Cambodian journalist and translator Dith Pran, who found themselves trapped in the Khmer Rouge revolution in Cambodia. This film allows the viewer to think about the role of cultural and class identity as a means of political control.

- **Tears of the Sun** - Lt. A.K. Waters, a Special-Ops commander leads his team into the jungle of Nigeria to rescue a relief worker, who agrees to go only if they help bring 70 refugees back too.
- **Beyond Borders** - An epic tale of a romance between two people who share a passion for changing the world. This film provides some inspiration for your own life as a change agent.
- **The Letter** - In 2002, Larry Raymond, mayor of Lewiston, Maine, sends letters to more than 1,000 refugees from Somalia asking them to tell other Somalis not to move to the city. The resulting firestorm reveals an America divided on issues of immigration and race, as Raymond's letter receives condemnation from community leaders but support from white supremacist groups. Several months after the original letter, those for and against ethnic diversity converge on Lewiston for a protest and counter-protest. This film clearly highlights prejudice and makes the viewer think about how refugee populations reshape ideas of home and identity for the host community.
- **Refugee: Stories of the Selfhelp Home** – This documentary tells the stories of German Jews who escaped Nazi Germany and went to Chicago to establish a sanctuary. This story shows pain, prejudice, and resilience of people and helps to understand the history of Germany.