Current Issues in US Immigration Policy
Tuesdays, 6:30-9:30
January 7 through April 14, 2020

Instructor: Julia Gelatt
Office Hours: TBD, by appointment
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Instructor
Julia Gelatt is a Senior Policy Analyst at the Migration Policy Institute, with the U.S. Immigration Policy Program. Her work focuses on the legal immigration system, demographic trends, and the implications of local, state, and federal U.S. immigration policy. Dr. Gelatt was previously a Research Associate at the Urban Institute, where her mixed-methods research focused on state policies toward immigrants; barriers to and facilitators of immigrant families’ access to public benefits and public prekindergarten programs; and identifying youth victims of human trafficking. She was a Research Assistant at MPI before graduate school. Dr. Gelatt earned her PhD in Sociology and Social Policy, with a specialization in Demography, from Princeton University. She earned a bachelor of the arts in Sociology/Anthropology from Carleton College.

Course description
This course examines contemporary issues in U.S. immigration policy, one of the highest profile policy issues in recent years. The course will introduce students to the structure of US legal immigration and immigration enforcement policies, and will ground current policy debates in historical context. It will also provide an overview of current immigration trends and how they are shaped by policy and how they fit into the demographics of the contemporary United States.

Course objectives
Goal #1: Students will be able to relate their internship experience with the skills and substance learned in their course.
   Objective #1: Students will discuss as part of their class participation how the weekly substance or skills learned applied to the work of their internship.

Goal #2: Students will experience a cultural, historical, policy or other event in the District of Columbia that relates to their course.
   Objective #2: Students will attend (in person) at least one congressional or other government briefing, a think tank seminar or lecture, or NGO/advocacy/nonprofit event, and submit a 1-2 page summary of the event and what they learned.

Goal #3: Students will be able to communicate persuasively in writing and orally.
   Objective #3: Students will write an immigration policy memo. Students will present on a news article in class, participate in class discussions and debates, and present in-class group work.

Goal #4: Students will be able to critically examine competing arguments, and use empirical evidence to research and apply theory to practice.
   Example Objective #4: Students’ policy memos must draw on research evidence that we read and discuss in class. During class discussions and debates, students will be expected to draw on readings and evidence to support their statements and arguments.
**Course materials and accessibility**
Weekly readings will include academic journal articles, news articles, and some book selections. All readings will be available online, or through Canvas or Dropbox. **I reserve the right to make changes to the course materials as the term progresses. This includes, but is not limited to, adding and subtracting articles and other readings.**

**Course Responsibilities and Assignments**

**Class participation:** You are expected to arrive to class having completed all the required readings, and ready to actively participate in large-group and small-group discussions. You will also be asked to present on one news article of your choice to the class over the course of the semester. During some classes, there will be group work and group presentations. Your participation in these activities will form part of your participation grade.

**In-class midterm exam:** The midterm exam will be held on February 18th. It will cover the materials from the first six weeks of the course. It will be a mix of short answer questions and several short essays.

**Attendance at an event:** You are expected to attend, in-person, one Congressional or other government briefing, a think tank seminar or lecture, or an NGO/advocacy/nonprofit event on an immigration-related topic, and submit a 1-2 page summary of the event and what you learned. If your schedule permits, I highly encourage you to attend a Congressional briefing in order to learn how different members of Congress talk about immigration issues, and how they draw upon evidence in their discussions.

**Memo to a member of Congress or 2020 Presidential candidate:** You will be asked to write a memo to a politician, advising them on what position to take on one immigration policy issue. We will discuss in class the range of issues that you might select, but you may select any topic you wish, with my approval. Your advice must be based in research evidence and cite specific evidence from the assigned readings, or other papers of your choosing. This memo is due on Thursday, April 2nd.

**Final exam:** The mid-term exam will be held during the last day of class, April 14th. It will cover the materials from the full course. It will be a mix of short answer questions and several short essays.

**Grading Standards and Measurement**
Individual assignments in this course will be worth various points but converted to a 100 point scale such that an A=100-93%, A-=92-90%, B+=89-87, B=86-83, B-=82-80, etc. You should understand that only excellent work will earn an A. If the work is good, it will earn a B, and satisfactory work will earn a C. You will earn Ds and Fs if your work is less than satisfactory or of poor quality. If you fail to complete the work, you will earn a 0 for the assignment. Incompletes will be allowed only under the most exceptional circumstances.

Grades in this class will be based on the following:
- Class participation – 25%
- In-class midterm exam – 20%
- Attendance at one outside event, and written notes on the event – 10%
- Policy memo to a member of Congress or a 2020 Presidential candidate – 25%
- Final exam – 20%

According to general university policies, final course grades earned in this class will be worth the following points: A=4.0, A-=3.7, B+=3.3, B=3.0, B-=2.7, C+=2.3, C=2.0, C-=1.7, D=1.0, F=0.
**Course Communication Tools**
I will use email and Turnitin for communicating with you this term. Unless you tell me otherwise, I will be communicating with you using the email address that you included as your primary address when you enrolled for classes. You are responsible for checking your email and Turnitin regularly for messages and feedback. You are responsible for letting me know if you change your email address.

Turnitin may be used for submitting and returning graded writing assignments. We will discuss in class how to create an account if you don’t already have one, and how to use the software. Read more about academic misconduct below. Also, I encourage students to use the Purdue University OWL site for very accessible and useful information about writing styles and rules.

If you have questions during the class, please email me at jelatt@migrationpolicy.org. I will do my best to answer emails quickly, but will be slower to answer on weekends, so please do plan ahead.

**Policy for Attendance**
Attendance in all class sessions is required. Excused absences are usually extraordinary events such as the death of an immediate family member (parent, sibling, or grandparent), personal illness, or a major religious holiday that is recognized by the [UCDC calendar](#). You MUST provide written documentation for each of these absences; and for religious holidays, you must submit your excuse two weeks in advance of the absence to be excused. On occasion, and with at least 48 hours notice, you may request to be excused for a special internship or other DC event. If granted, it is likely you will be asked to report on your experience in class. For information about missed and late assignments, see below. Each unexcused absence will lower your final course grade to the next lower grade (e.g. A- will become a B+).

**Policy for Late Assignments**
All assignments are considered due by midnight on the stated due date. Requests for extensions for compelling reasons will be considered on a case-by-case basis, if submitted at least 48 hours in advance of the due date. Late assignments not excused in advance and that are NOT accompanied by an acceptable excuse (extraordinary events such as the death of an immediate family member (parent, sibling, or grandparent), personal illness, or a major religious holiday that is recognized by the UCDC calendar) will be addressed as follows: For every 24 hour period after the date and time that the assignment is due (including weekends), the grade received for the assignment will be decreased by two (2) parts of a grade.

**Policy on weather emergencies**
In the event of a weather emergency, UCDC follows the [federal government’s decisions](#) about delays and closures.

**Statement on Academic Misconduct**
UCDC has a zero-tolerance policy for cheating, plagiarism, and any other form of dishonesty. Students should refer to their home campus Student Code of Conduct for the regulations that apply to them. The burden is on each student to know what behaviors constitute cheating and plagiarism. Ignorance of these behaviors is not an adequate defense.

**Statement on Classroom Conduct**
In this class we will be discussing controversial topics, that can touch on personal experiences. I expect you to be respectful to each other, even as you disagree. Respectful and thoughtful debate is
encouraged, but personal attacks and dehumanizing language will not be tolerated. Also, in
consideration of your classmates and me, you should observe the following rules: (1) DO set your
cell phones to silent and answer them only in an emergency (e.g. child care or medical for you or an
immediate family member). (2) Do NOT arrive late to class unless you have advanced approval. (3)
Do NOT do homework for other classes or read material not related to this class while in class. (4) Do
NOT use a laptop computer, other electronic device, or audio taping equipment unless you have
approval from me. For any of these infractions, you will be warned only once; after the warning, you
may be excused from class and will be docked 2 percentage points of your total course grade for
each infraction at the end of the term.

Statement on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence
The University of California is committed to creating and maintaining a community where all individuals
who participate in University programs and activities can work and learn together in an atmosphere free
of harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. Every member of the community should be aware that the
University prohibits sexual harassment and sexual violence, and that such behavior violates both law and
University policy. The University will respond promptly and effectively to reports of sexual harassment
and sexual violence, and will take appropriate action to prevent, to correct, and when necessary, to
discipline behavior that violates this policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence.

Students who wish to speak confidentially about an incident of sexual misconduct should contact UCDC’s
Counseling Services at UCDCCounseling@gmail.com. To report sexual misconduct to ask questions about
UCDC policies and procedures regarding sexual misconduct, please contact the UCDC Title IX
administrator, Josh Brimmeier (202-974-6214 or josh.brimmeier@ucdc.edu). Because the University of
California is legally obligated to investigate reports of sexual misconduct, the confidentiality of reported
misconduct cannot be guaranteed.

For more on this policy, please see: http://policy.ucop.edu/doc/4000385/SHSV.

Statement on Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
In compliance with the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (Public Law 93- 112) and the
Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-336), University of California policy prohibits
unlawful discrimination on the basis of disability in its programs, services, and activities.

For more on this policy, please see: http://policy.ucop.edu/doc/2710534/PACAOS-140.

If you require accommodation for class, please let me know at our first meeting (if not earlier) so the
necessary arrangements can be made.
**Course schedule:**

**Session 1 – January 7th: Introductions, the long history of global migration, US immigration policy through 1924**
  * Note that the author intentionally uses this term, often associated with racism, not because she endorses its use but rather because her work investigate the historical origins of the concept of illegality within immigration law.

**Session 2 – January 14th: Contemporary immigration policy from 1924 to today**

**Session 3 – January 21st: The demographics of immigration**

**Session 4 – January 28th: US refugee policy**
Session 5 – February 4th: Policy toward asylum seekers

Session 6 – February 11th: The economics of immigration: Do immigrants take jobs from Americans?

Session 7 – February 18th: Midterm exam

Session 8 – February 25th: Focus on legal immigration policies – family-based versus employment-based, temporary versus permanent, setting the level

Session 9 – March 3rd: Immigration enforcement at the border and in the interior

Session 10 – March 10th: The state and local role in immigration
• Utah Compact on Immigration, https://theutahcompact.com/compact-%26-signatories

March 17th – Spring Break

Session 11 – March 24th: Unauthorized immigration and related policies – IRCA, DACA, TPS, and proposed DREAM Acts


Session 12 – March 31st: Immigration integration

Session 13 – April 7th: Immigration and the 2020 elections – where do the candidates stand? Where do American voters stand?
- Please note that readings for this week are particularly likely to change.

Session 14 – April 14th: Final exam