

PSC 310: Refugees in International Politics
Fall 2024

Tu/Th 12:30-1:50, HB Crouse Kittredge Auditorium

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Course Description This course deals with the global politics of refugee issues, broadly defined to include the movement of people displaced by persecution, conflict, natural or human-made disasters, environmental change, or development projects. It is grounded in the international politics subfield, but students are expected to engage with ideas from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. Topics covered include historical trends in, analytical approaches to, and the international legal framework governing refugees. We also explore the causes, consequences, and responses by state and non-state actors to refugee movements. A series of examples from recent and current events are examined, including a case study on refugees and the Syrian civil war. PSC 310 fosters the Civic and Global Responsibility Shared Competency, Syracuse University's university-wide learning goals for undergraduate students.

Learning Objectives After taking this course, students should be able to:

- Distinguish between types of population movements and recognize worldwide patterns in forced migration
- Understand the origins and evolution of international legal and institutional frameworks governing forced migration
- Reflect critically on responses to asylum-seekers and refugees by states, international organizations, and nongovernmental organizations
- Grasp the complexity, prevalence, and persistence of forced migration as a facet of political life

Course Requirements Students should participate actively in class sessions. Each student will prepare a 2 page memo, due on September 24, that covers a recent or ongoing case of forced migration. In addition, there will be two papers assigned based on the reading materials. A 5-6 page paper covering Part II will be assigned on October 17 and due on October 29. A 7-8 page paper covering Part III will be assigned on November 21 and due on December 16.

Participation	20%
Memo	15%
First Paper	30%
Second Paper	35%

Memo Write a letter, either to the US President or the UN Secretary-General, addressing any recent or ongoing case of forced migration. Guidelines:

- Begin with a brief introductory overview, around two or three sentences long. This introduction should summarize the problem or situation, explain why a decision needs to be made, and outline your recommendations.
- Provide concise background or contextual information that is necessary for the arguments you will build. Focus on the most important facts that your reader needs to know in order to understand the events or circumstances of the problem or issue.
- Present one or more recommendations for why and how either the US or the UN should respond to this issue. Justify your recommendations, clarifying why they constitute the best course of action and demonstrating that they are feasible. Persuade your reader through logical argument, backed up with evidence.
- Conclude by summing up your main points and exploring their implications. Use the conclusion to highlight the consequences of maintaining the status quo, specify the policies your analysis calls into question, or describe additional analysis that is required.

Papers Grading criteria:

- Thesis: Does the paper have a clear thesis that responds to one of the questions?
- Ideas: Does the paper present logical and thoughtful reasoning in support of the thesis?
- Evidence: Does the paper effectively integrate appropriate information from course materials?
- Organization: Does the paper have a clear and coherent structure?
- Mechanics: Does the paper avoid errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation?

Optional Assignment Interested students may earn extra credit via game-based learning. To complete this optional assignment, a student must complete about 60 minutes of play time and submit a 2-3 page written response. The written response is due by November 21, for a maximum of 5% in extra credit. This optional assignment cannot substitute for successful completion of the regular course requirements.

In the video game *Papers, Please*, you are an immigration inspector in the communist state of Arstotzka in 1982. Your job is to screen would-be entrants at the Grestin Border Checkpoint and decide who to admit. Download and install the free beta (v0.5.13) from the developer's website dukope.com (note: the free beta will not run on OSX Mavericks or newer). Play until the end of the beta (i.e., end of Day 8). Then, write 2-3 pages in which you reflect on the game in light of our course. How does gameplay interact with the concepts, approaches, and arguments we deal with in this course? What else can we learn about migration from a game of this kind?

Required Texts The following book is required. An eBook version is available for free via [SU Libraries](#), or you may purchase a physical copy at the SU Bookstore. A copy has also been placed at the Bird Library course reserves.

Alexander Betts, *Forced Migration and Global Politics* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).

All other readings are available electronically via Blackboard.

Policies

- *Attendance:* Students sometimes need to miss class sessions for a variety of legitimate reasons. I do not need documentation, and you will not be penalized. Simply go to Blackboard to view the recording of the session you missed and participate via the relevant discussion topic within 48 hours. Contact me if you are unable to make up your absence via Blackboard, or if you will be missing classes for an extended period of time. **Please do not come to class if you are feeling ill, are awaiting results of a diagnostic test for COVID-19, or have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.**
- *Participation:* Your participation ensures that everyone benefits as much as possible from the course. Your participation grade will reflect the quality (not merely the quantity) of the remarks and questions you raise during class sessions or on Blackboard. All participants are expected to listen attentively and respond respectfully to others.
- *Readings:* You should carefully read the assigned readings for every class session. This will be necessary for you to follow the lectures, ask questions, and participate in class. Your understanding of the readings will be assessed in the papers assigned. Occasionally, you may be assigned a short op-ed or newspaper article covering current events in addition to the readings listed below.
- *Written Assignments:* Each written assignment must be submitted on Blackboard by the day indicated below and should be double-spaced, with 12-point Times New Roman font and standard (1 in.) margins. Any assignment not submitted on time will be reduced by one full letter grade for every day that it is late. If you wish to contest a grade given by a TA, you must explain in writing (within one week) why your grade is inaccurate in light of the comments you received. Contested grades may be adjusted by the professor upward, downward, or not at all.
- *Trigger Warning:* Because of the nature of the topics covered in this class, the course readings or class discussions may generate intellectual and emotional discomfort. These responses are natural parts of intellectual growth. If, however, your emotional response becomes acute psychological distress (triggering), please communicate with me. I invite you to contact me if you have concerns in this regard.
- *Faith Tradition Observances:* Syracuse University's [Religious Observances Policy](#) recognizes the diversity of faiths represented in the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holy days according to their traditions. Under the policy, students are given an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance,

provided they notify their instructors no later than the academic drop deadline. For observances occurring before the drop deadline, notification is required at least two academic days in advance. Students may enter their observances in MySlice under Student Services/Enrollment/My Religious Observances/Add a Notification.

- *Disability Statement:* Syracuse University values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation. There may be aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion and full participation in this course. I invite any student to contact me to discuss strategies and/or accommodations (academic adjustments) that may be essential to your success and to collaborate with the Center for Disability Resources (CDR) in this process. If you would like to discuss disability-accommodations or register with CDR, please visit [Center for Disability Resources](#). Please call (315) 443-4498 or email disabilityresources@syr.edu for more detailed information. The CDR is responsible for coordinating disability-related academic accommodations and will work with the student to develop an access plan. Since academic accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact CDR as soon as possible to begin this process.
- *Discrimination or Harassment:* Federal and state law, and University policy prohibit discrimination and harassment based on sex or gender (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, and retaliation). If a student has been harassed or assaulted, they can obtain confidential counseling support, 24-hours a day, 7 days a week, from the [Sexual and Relationship Violence Response Team](#) at the Counseling Center (315-443-8000, Barnes Center at The Arch, 150 Sims Drive, Syracuse, New York 13244). Incidents of sexual violence or harassment can be reported non-confidentially to the University's Title IX Officer (Sheila Johnson Willis, 315-443-0211, titleix@syr.edu, 005 Steele Hall). Reports to law enforcement can be made to the University's Department of Public Safety (315-443-2224, 005 Sims Hall), the Syracuse Police Department (511 South State Street, Syracuse, New York, 911 in case of emergency or 315-435-3016 to speak with the Abused Persons Unit), or the State Police (844-845-7269). I will seek to keep information you share with me private to the greatest extent possible, but as a professor I have mandatory reporting responsibilities to share information regarding sexual misconduct, harassment, and crimes I learn about with the University's Title IX Officer to help make our campus a safer place for all.
- *Health & Wellness:* Mental health and overall well-being are significant predictors of academic success. As such it is essential that during your college experience you develop the skills and resources effectively to navigate stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health concerns. Please familiarize yourself with the range of resources the Barnes Center provides (ese.syr.edu/bewell/) and seek out support for mental health concerns as needed. Counseling services are available 24/7, 365 days, at 315-443-8000.
- *Turnitin:* This class will use the plagiarism detection and prevention system Turnitin. You will have the option to submit your papers to Turnitin to check that all sources you use have been properly acknowledged and cited before you submit the paper to

me. I will also submit all papers you write for this class to Turnitin, which compares submitted documents against documents on the Internet and against student papers submitted to Turnitin at Syracuse University and at other colleges and universities. I will take your knowledge of the subject matter of this course and your writing level and style into account in interpreting the originality report. Keep in mind that all papers you submit for this class will become part of the [Turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com) reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers.

- *Student Academic Work Policy*: I intend to use academic work that you complete this semester in subsequent semesters for educational purposes. Before using your work for that purpose, I will either get your written permission or render the work anonymous by removing identifying material.
- *Academic Integrity*: As a pre-eminent and inclusive student-focused research institution, Syracuse University considers academic integrity at the forefront of learning, serving as a core value and guiding pillar of education. Syracuse University's Academic Integrity Policy provides students with the necessary guidelines to complete academic work with integrity throughout their studies. Students are required to uphold both course-specific and university-wide academic integrity expectations such as crediting your sources, doing your own work, communicating honestly, and supporting academic integrity. The full Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy can be found by visiting class.syr.edu, selecting, "Academic Integrity," and "Expectations and Policy." Upholding Academic Integrity includes the protection of faculty's intellectual property. Students should not upload, distribute, or share instructors' course materials, including presentations, assignments, exams, or other evaluative materials without permission. Using websites that charge fees or require uploading of course material (e.g., Chegg, Course Hero) to obtain exam solutions or assignments completed by others, which are then presented as your own violates academic integrity expectations in this course and may be classified as a Level 3 violation. All academic integrity expectations that apply to in-person assignments, quizzes, and exams also apply online. Students found in violation of the policy are subject to grade sanctions determined by the course instructor and non-grade sanctions determined by the School or College where the course is offered. Students may not drop or withdraw from courses in which they face a suspected violation. Any established violation in this course may result in course failure regardless of violation level.
- *Artificial Intelligence*: All generative-AI tools are prohibited in this course because their use inhibits achievement of the course learning objectives. This policy applies to all stages of project and writing processes including researching, brainstorming, outlining, organizing, and polishing. Do not use Generative-AI tools to create any content (i.e., images and video, audio, text, code, etc.). If you have any questions about a feature and whether it is considered Generative-AI, ask your instructor.
- *Academic Integrity Online*: All academic integrity expectations that apply to in-person instruction also apply to online instruction. In this course, all work submitted must be yours alone. Using websites that charge fees or require uploading of course material (e.g., Chegg, Course Hero) to obtain exam solutions or assignments completed by oth-

ers and present the work as your own violates academic integrity expectations in this course and may be classified as a Level 3 violation, resulting in suspension or expulsion from Syracuse University.

Course Outline

PART I. PRELIMINARIES

Introduction – Aug 27, 29

Tu

- Th
- Patrick Kingsley and Sima Diab, “Passport, Lifejacket, Lemons: What Syrian Refugees Pack for the Crossing to Europe,” in *The Guardian*, www.theguardian.com/world/ng-interactive/2015/sep/04/syrian-refugees-pack-for-the-crossing-to-europe-crisis (September 4, 2015).
 - *Browse* “Syrian Journey: Choose Your Own Escape Route,” in *BBC News*, www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-32057601 (April 1, 2015).

Concepts and Trends – Sep 3, 5

- Tu
- FMGP: “Categories of Forced Migration” & “The Relationship between Forced Migration and Global Politics,” p. 4-14.
 - Rebecca Hamlin, “The Migrant/Refugee Binary,” in *Crossing: How We Label and React to People on the Move* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2021), p. 1–24.
- Th
- UNHCR, *Global Trends 2023* (Geneva: UNHCR, 2024), p. 1–24.
 - Norwegian Refugee Council, *The World’s Most Neglected Displacement Crises in 2023* (Oslo: Norwegian Refugee Council, 2024).

Analytical Approaches – Sep 10, 12

- Tu
- FMGP: “Chapter 1: International Relations Theories,” p. 18-42.
- Th
- FMGP: “Chapter 2: Sovereignty and the State System,” p. 43-59.
 - FMGP: “Chapter 7: Globalization” p. 145-163.

International Law on Forced Migration – Sep 17, 19

- Tu
- Guy S. Goodwin-Gill, “Introduction to Convention and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees,” in *United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law*, legal.un.org/avl/ (2008), p. 1–9.
 - *Skim* Convention and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees; Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement
- Th
- Edwin O. Abuya, Ulrike Krause, and Lucy Mayblin, “The Neglected Colonial Legacy of the 1951 Refugee Convention,” *International Migration* 59, no. 4 (2021): 265–267.

PART II. CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF REFUGEE MOVEMENTS

Sources of Refugee Movements – Sep 24, 26

(Sept 24: *Memo due*)

- Tu
- Myron Weiner, “Bad Neighbors, Bad Neighborhoods: An Inquiry into the Causes of Refugee Flows,” *International Security* 21, no. 1 (1996): 5–42.
 - Their Story Is Our Story, “2020 Children’s Story Cards,” in *TSOS Interview Gallery*, scholarsarchive.byu.edu/tsos_interviews/47 (2020).
- Th
- Warsan Shire, “Home,” in *The Globe and Mail*, www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/home/article27608299/ (December 4, 2015).
 - Dina Nayeri, “Part One: Escape,” in *The Ungrateful Refugee: What Immigrants Never Tell You* (Catapult: New York, 2019), p. 3–14.

Security Implications of Refugee Movements – Oct 1, 3

- Tu
- Sarah Kenyon Lischer, “Refugee Crises as Catalysts of Conflict,” in *Dangerous Sanctuaries: Refugee Camps, Civil War, and the Dilemmas of Humanitarian Aid* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), p. 1–17.
 - Gil Loescher and James Milner, “Security Implications of Protracted Refugee Situations,” *Protracted Refugee Situations: Domestic and International Security (Special Issue)*, *Adelphi Papers* 45, no. 375 (2005): 23–34.
- Th
- Kelly M. Greenhill, “Understanding the Coercive Power of Mass Migrations,” in *Weapons of Mass Migration: Forced Displacement, Coercion, and Foreign Policy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), p. 12–74.

Statebuilding – Oct 8, 10

- Tu • Karen Jacobsen, “Can Refugees Benefit the State? Refugee Resources and African Statebuilding,” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 40, no. 4 (2002): 577–596.
- Thomas Rogers, “Welcome to Germany,” in *The New York Review of Books*, www.nybooks.com/articles/2021/04/29/welcome-to-germany/ (April 29, 2021).
- Th • *Listen to* Stephen J. Dubner, “Is Migration a Basic Human Right?,” in *Freakonomics Radio Podcast*, freakonomics.com/podcast/is-migration-a-basic-human-right-a-new-freakonomics-radio-podcast/ (December 17, 2015).
- William Wheeler, “How Not to Design a World Without Borders,” in *The Atlantic*, www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2014/07/how-not-to-design-a-world-without-borders/374563/ (July 21, 2014).

Ethical Concerns – Oct 17, 22

(Oct 17: First paper assignment distributed)

- Th • Joseph H. Carens, “Refugees,” in *The Ethics of Immigration* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 192–224.
- Tu • Ibrahim, “Why Did We Have to Freeze in the Forest?,” in *The New Humanitarian*, www.thenewhumanitarian.org/first-person/2022/03/15/ukraine-poland-syria-refugee-welcome-forest (March 15, 2022).

No Class – Oct 24**PART III. RESPONSES TO REFUGEE MOVEMENTS****Responses by Developed and Developing Countries – Oct 29**

(Oct 29: First paper due)

- Tu • FMGP: “Case Study 1: Securitization of Asylum Since 9/11” p. 75-76.
- Karen Jacobsen, “Factors Influencing the Policy Responses of Host Governments to Mass Refugee Influxes,” *International Migration Review* 30, no. 3 (1996): 655–678.
- Luke Mogelson, “The Dream Boat,” in *New York Times Magazine*, www.nytimes.com/2013/11/17/magazine/the-impossible-refugee-boat-lift-to-christmas-island.html (November 15, 2013).

Asylum in the US – Oct 31, Nov 5

- Th • In-class screening of: *Well-Founded Fear*, DVD, Directed by Michael Camerini and Shari Robertson (New York: The Epidavros Project Inc, 2000).
- Tu • Rebecca Hamlin, “Illegal Refugees: Competing Policy Ideas and the Rise of the Regime of Deterrence in American Asylum Politics,” *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 31, no. 2 (2012): 33–53.

International and Regional Cooperation on Refugees – Nov 7, 12

- Th • FMGP: “Chapter 4: International Cooperation,” p. 80-98.
• FMGP: “Case Study 2: African Donor Cooperation in the 1980s,” p. 142-143.
- Tu • FMGP: “Chapter 8: Regionalism,” p. 164-184.

Responses by International and Nongovernmental Organizations – Nov 14, 19

- Th • FMGP: “Chapter 5: Global Governance,” p. 99-126.
- Tu • Jeff Crisp, “Protected? UNHCR’s Organizational Culture and Its Implications for Refugee Advocates and Activists,” in *LERRN: The Local Engagement Refugee Research Network*, carleton.ca/lerrn/2022/unhcr-organizational-culture/ (July 29, 2022).

Humanitarianism – Nov 21

(Nov 21: Second paper assignment distributed)

- Th • Myron Weiner, “The Clash of Norms: Dilemmas in Refugee Policies,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 11, no. 4 (1998): 433–453.
- *Listen to* Mahmoud Hassino, “Nothing Without Us,” in *I Am Not Your Refugee*, www.opendemocracy.net/en/podcasts/podcast-i-am-not-your-refugee/nothing-without-us/ (September 20, 2022).

PART IV. CONCLUSIONS

Case Studies – Dec 3, 5

- Tu • *Browse* Judith Sunderland, “Saving Lives at Sea: A Two-Week Rescue Mission with SOS Mediterranee,” in *Human Rights Watch*, www.hrw.org/video-photos/interactive/2017/11/30/saving-lives-sea (2017).
- Eric Ready, “Destination Europe: Desperation,” in *The New Humanitarian*, www.thenewhumanitarian.org/special-report/2018/07/03/destination-europe-desperation (July 3, 2018).
- Th • *Browse* Amnesty International, “Mapping Myanmar’s Atrocities Against Rohingya,” in *Amnesty International*, mapping-crimes-against-rohingya.amnesty.org/ (2018).

Future Challenges – Dec 10

- Tu • Adam Taylor, “A Silicon Valley Mogul Wants to Solve the Global Refugee Crisis by Creating a New Country,” in *Washington Post*, www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/07/23/a-silicon-valley-mogul-wants-to-solve-the-global-refugee-crisis-by-creating-a-new-country/ (July 23, 2015).
- Kenneth R. Weiss, “The Making of a Climate Refugee,” in *Foreign Policy*, foreignpolicy.com/2015/01/28/the-making-of-a-climate-refugee-kiribati-tarawa-teitiota/ (January 28, 2015).

Dec 16: Second Paper due