Course Information

Name: Immigrants, Human Rights and Society: Mexico as a Migration Case Study

Teaching Institution: La Salle University

Location: Mexico City, Mexico

Dates: 22nd January – 14th February 2015

Duration: 3 weeks

Course contact hours: 36 hours of academic classes, 20 hours of professional visits to social and community organisations, 15 hours of cultural activities

Pre-requisites: Students should have completed one year or more of a degree related to International Relations, Politics, Human Rights, Social Science, Social work, Sociology, Community Development, or Law at the time of program.

Language of Instruction: English

Instructor Information

The course is taught by Professor Luis Demetrio Moreno in conjunction with a small number of guest lecturers.

Students will also learn about Mexico as a transit migration country through a range of field visits and activities.

Materials

Students will be provided with all learning materials (including relevant reading lists) on arrival at La Salle University. During the program students will have access to computing facilities, though students are advised to bring their own laptop if they have one.

Course Description and Learning Outcomes

The course is designed to give students a strong understanding of the complex issues around migration and immigration using the example of Mexico as a case study.
Over the course of 3 weeks students will study Mexico’s unique position as a key geographic pathway, where migration movements are from the southern border into Mexico, from the northern border into the US and also within Mexico.

The classes will examine the roles of the various stakeholders involved in migration issues both, at a domestic level by the Mexican federal government, local authorities, NGO’s and, at an international level by the Canadian and US governments. The program will delve into the various facets of immigration to analyse not only the economic, legal and political consequences, but also the social aspects and the human rights issues it raises.

The program will examine this environment and the various factors that influence regional mobility patterns, taking into consideration the historical background and the current situation, as viewed by key players and academics.

**Academic Classes (36 hours)**
Over the course of 36 hours, you will attend academic classes, seminars and guest lectures around the following topics:

1. Overview of migration patterns throughout Mexican history
   - European emigration to Mexico. Colonial Period.
   - Mexican settlement in the American Southwest. 1845-1942
   - Contemporary patterns of Mexican Migration.

2. Contemporary Mexican Society.
   - Political, social and cultural patterns

3. Introduction to economic and social and political issues of Mexico-USA migration.
   - Economic migration: In search of work and remittances
   - Social networks: a transnational perspective
   - The Political value of migration: current issue

4. Transit Migration: human rights and legal issues
   - Mexico as a county of transit of Central America Migration
   - Immigration Policy of Mexico
   - Undocumented migration and organized crime
   - Migration and Human Rights: vulnerability perspective

5. The Rio Grande, Mexico’s northern border and trans nationality issues
   - Twin cities: commercial, energy and governance patterns
   - Population in the borders: migration flows.

6. Mexico-US migration Management
   - World War II: The Bracero program
   - 1986: Immigration Reform Control Act (IRCA)
   - XX Century: From 2001 Temporary Worker Programs to the Immigration Modernization Act 2013
   - The Mexican Federal government’s role in Migration issues
7. Human trafficking and migration
   - Trafficking networks
   - Labor and sexual slavery

8. Forced displacement
   - Definition of Forced Displacement.
   - Regulation in Mexico and Latin-America
   - Case study: Chiapas.
   - Other relevant cases of Forced Displacement in Mexico

9. Mexican agricultural workers; following the crops. Internal migrant rights.
   - Agricultural temporary workers programs
   - Agricultural workers in California.
   - Case study: Canadian Agricultural Worker Program

10. US Immigration Policy Part I
    - Migration Policy: Effects on Mexican Migration.
    - State and local migration policy against immigrants

11. US Immigration Policy Part II
    - Deportations and family separation issues
    - Dreamers: Young Americans born in Mexico

12. The gender perspective, role of women in migration
    - Traditional labor markets for female migration: economic and social segregation.
    - Migrant women and Family.
    - Women in Migration Policy: vulnerability perspective.

**Practical Components (20 hours)**
Field trips are an important part of the course. There will be 20 hours of onsite visits to:

- CAFEMIN, female refugee center run by nuns in Mexico City
- Temporary shelter for transit migrants
- NGO organisations

**Cultural Components**
The program contains a number of cultural activities. The highlight of this is homestay accommodation with local families.
1. Cultural day trips to:
   Pyramids of Teotihuacan, Plaza of the three Cultures and Basilica de Guadalupe
   Historical centre of Mexico City
   Coyoacan: Frida Kahlo Museum, Trotsky Museum, Central Plaza
   Museum of Anthropology
   Xochimilco and Dolores Olmedo Museum

2. Overnight trip to Puebla

3. Afternoon activities including:
   - Viewing of documentary film: De Nadie (Border crossing) and discussion
   - Viewing of movie: El Jardinero (the gardener) and discussion
   - Walking tour
   - Salsa lesson
   - Mexican cooking class

**Learning outcomes**

*Course aim:* To develop participants' awareness and understanding of the issues surrounding migration in general and the difficulties Mexico faces as a transit country in particular; to allow students to critically reflect on the Australian immigration system from an international perspective.

*On completion of this program, students should be able to:*
   - Summarise the current key issues Mexico faces as a source transit country
   - Compare the position of Australia as a destination country for illegal immigrants and Mexico as a transit and source country
   - Evaluate the challenges that countries such as Mexico face in regards to managing migration and migrants
   - Analyse the human rights issues resulting from migration
   - Interact and collaborate with community groups volunteers in a cross-cultural setting
   - Compare and contrast cultural differences between Mexico and Australia and assess how these differences affect attitudes towards migration
   - Reflect on strengths and weaknesses of the Australian migration system from an international perspective

**Course requirements (assessment)**
Assessment done by Academic Coordinator is based on the following:

*Final paper – 3000 words (50%):*
Grading based on: Relevance of topic, sources and pertinent information, use of analytical skills, accuracy of sources, development of research question and/or thesis statement, body and conclusions.
Reference style: MLA, APA or Harvard accepted as different Australian Universities use diverse citation styles. Consistency throughout the paper is a must.

**30% class presentation:**
20 minutes presentation. Presentation (.ppt or other) must also be submitted. Grading based on: Knowledge of topic, accuracy and relevance of information, presentation skills, and quality of PowerPoint presentation.

**20% participation:**
Grading based on: active participation in class during lectures and during site visits, information sessions and conferences, as well as attendance.

Students will meet with an Academic coordinator throughout the program to discuss their assignment and presentations.

The final written assignment will be due 3 weeks after the final day of the course (Friday 6th March 2015).

**Topic Selection for Final Assignment**
Students must select a topic on which they will write their final paper and make their final presentation. This topic can be related to their personal interests but must be based on some aspect of the content of the course. Final Papers can be either based on a topic focusing on a migration issue or a Comparative Mexico-Australia perspective.

Presentation and Final paper can be a group project. Due to the intensive nature of the program students are allowed to work either in groups of 2, or individually.

Every member of the group must submit a Final Paper of approximately 3000 words.

Final paper requires submission of a draft to Academic Coordinator for comments and suggestions for improvement. This is to be handed in by the second academic meeting.

**Attendance**
Students are required to attend all lectures, presentations, visits, practical and cultural activities that are scheduled as part of the program.

**Class participation**
Students will be required to participate in discussions during lectures, seminars and visits. Participation in these activities will be assessed as 20% of the total assessment load.

**Academic honesty**
Students will be required to comply with La Salle University’s policies regarding plagiarism and academic integrity.

**Grading**
The course will be assessed as above and students will receive a mark out of 100, where 60% is the passing mark. Students will receive an academic record for the course as well as a certificate.

Course results will be available *approximately* 4-6 weeks after the due date for the final assignment.

**Available Support Services**
The program is fully supported by La Salle University’s international office and students will have access to both academic and pastoral support. Students will have access to campus computing and library facilities to assist them with completing the program’s required assessment.

**Contact Information**
For further information regarding this syllabus, please contact the Australian Institute for Mobility Overseas:
info@aimoverseas.com.au
Phone: (02) 9975 7792
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