

JSIS B 441A: Forced Migrations

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Instructor: Kathie Friedman

Overview

The forced displacement of persons across or within national borders has been one of the most tragic and persistent problems of the twentieth century, and seems likely to remain so during the twentyfirst. This course introduces students to the study of refugees, other types of forced migrants, and international humanitarian responses.

This course will provide a critical understanding of displacement processes (the complex causes, characteristics, and consequences of forced migration experiences across the "refugee cycle"). It will explore how international policy-makers, humanitarian workers, and social scientists have constructed forced migration as a problem for analysis and action -- and some of the positive and negative consequences of this construction.

We will consider some of the ethical and moral dilemmas raised in protecting and in studying forcibly displaced people. Finally, we will examine various issues raised in refugee communities in the United States and Europe.

To help develop an appreciation of specific contexts and regional dynamics, we draw cases mainly, though not exclusively, from conflicts in the Middle East, the Balkans and Africa -- where ethno-national and political persecution, war, and economic devastation have created recurrent displacement crises. At the same time, a central theme of this course is that forced migration is not just a product of internal wars and local impoverishment, but rather that its causes and consequences are also closely linked to economic, political, and social transformations of the contemporary world. Reflecting forced migration's social, cultural, economic, and political complexity, this course is intentionally broad and interdisciplinary.

Topics include:

- The scope, impact, and significance of displacement
- Migration and Forced Displacement: Construction of a Field of Study
- The International Refugee Regime and Responses to Forced Displacement
- A Global Portrait of Today's Refugees
- Issues in Forced Migration in the Middle East, Balkans, and Africa
 - Refugee Camps in Kenya
- Durable Solutions: Local Integration in Country of First Asylum, Voluntary Repatriation to Country of Origin, and Third Country Re-settlement
 - Refugee Youth and Children of Refugees in the United States
- Debating Problems of Protection: Some Ethical Questions and Moral Dilemmas
- Problems of Post-Conflict Return or Third Country Resettlement

Role of Service-Learning in the Course

Assignments Related to Service-Learning

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171 Mary Gates Hall • (206) 616-2885 • <http://exp.washington.edu/carlson>