

# Global Migration & Transnational Politics (GMTP)

CONF399, CONF695, GOVT444, GOVT739 – Spring 2010

*Thursday, 4:30-7:10pm*  
*Robinson B205*

## Instructors

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In this course we will explore the interface of global human mobility and political activism. Our primary focus will be the political role of diasporas and transnational communities and the impact they have on political processes, conflicts and development outcomes in their “homeland” countries. After providing a brief introduction to the major issues in global migration, the course will survey the development of the literature on diasporas and transnational politics in recent years. We then move on to a series of case studies that illustrate various facets of the new transnational politics. We consider the role of diasporas in fomenting and resolving civil wars and conflicts in their homelands, the impact of diasporas on political development and democratization, and a variety of new practices involving the extension by some nation-states of certain forms of citizenship rights to their migrant populations overseas. Case studies to be considered include Mexico, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Ireland, Liberia, Somalia, the Dominican Republic, Morocco, and the Balkans, among others. In considering the impact of globalization (especially in terms of new media and communication technologies) on transnational politics, this course seeks to clarify where new and innovative forms of political identity are emerging, and where globalization actually serves to expand the remit of traditional forms of community and social structure.

This course is based in good measure on the findings of a recent research grant from the John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation on ‘Global Migration & Transnational Politics.’ We thank the Foundation for its support of this work.

## Course format

The class will consist of a mixture of lectures, group discussion (general & text-based), and independent study/reading. The undergraduate and graduate sections of the class will generally meet together for lecture/discussion, but at several points during the semester the two groups will break into separate discussion sections. It is vital that, at an *absolute minimum*, you **complete your weekly reading assignments** and show up to class ready to discuss the week’s material.

Required course texts

1. Stephen Castles & Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, New York: Guilford Press, 2009, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition.

2. Gabriel Sheffer, *Diaspora Politics: At Home Abroad*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

**\*\* Additional required readings will be provided to you as PDFs or accessed through the library electronic journal databases.**

Recommended texts

Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*, London: Routledge, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 2008.

Rey Koslowski (ed.), *International Migration and the Globalization of Domestic Politics*, London: Routledge, 2005.

Nadje Al-Ali and Khalid Koser (eds.), *New Approaches to Migration? Transnational communities and the transformation of home*, London: Routledge: 2002.

Idean Salehyan, *Rebels Without Borders: Transnational Insurgencies in World Politics*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009.

Sanjeev Khagram and Peggy Levitt (eds.), *The Transnational Studies Reader: Intersections & Innovations*, New York: Routledge, 2008.

Schedule of classes, topics & required readings

PDF = Available to download in PDF format from class filestore at:

<http://idisk.mac.com/mandaville-public/GMTP/>

\*\* The filenames of the PDF readings reflect the author's last name (e.g. diouf.pdf)

January 21	<b>Class introduction &amp; topic background</b>
January 28	<b>Global Migration: An Overview</b> Reading: Castles & Miller, Chs. 1-3, 8, 9, 11, 12
February 4	<b>Diasporas and transnational communities</b> Reading: Cohen, <i>Global Diasporas</i> , Chs. 1, 8, 9 [PDF] James Clifford, "Diasporas" [PDF]
February 11	<b>Cosmopolitanism &amp; post-national identity</b> Reading: Appadurai, "Patriotism & Its Future" [PDF]

Appiah, “Cosmopolitan Patriots” [PDF]  
(Breakout discussion sessions)

February 18

**Immigration, interest groups & “ethnic lobbies”**

Reading: Ambrosio, “Ethnic Identity Groups and U.S. Foreign Policy” [PDF]  
Smith, “Introduction,” *Foreign Attachments: The Power of Ethnic Groups in the Making of American Foreign Policy* [PDF]  
Haney and Vanderbush, “The Case of the Cuban American National Foundation” [PDF]

February 25

**Think locally, act globally: nationalism & politics at a distance**

Reading: Adamson, “Mobilizing for the Transformation of Home” [PDF]  
Sokefeld, “Mobilizing in Transnational Space: A Social Movement Approach to the Formation of Diaspora” [PDF]  
Koser, “From Refugees to Transnational Communities?” [PDF]  
(Breakout discussion sessions)

March 4

**The globalization of local & traditional authority**

Reading: Diouf, “The Senegalese Muride Trade Diaspora and the Making of a Vernacular Cosmopolitanism” [PDF]  
Amoako, “Ethnic Identity, Conflict, and Diasporic Constructions in the New World: The Case of Asante Chieftancy in North America” [PDF]

March 11

NO CLASS – Spring Break

March 18

Guest lecture: *TBA*

March 25

**Diasporas & development I: democratization at a distance?**

Reading: Koinova, “Diasporas & Democratization In the Post-Communist World” [PDF]  
Shain, *Marketing the American Creed Abroad* [PDF]

April 1

**Diasporas & development II: mobilizing the virtual nation**

Reading: Brinkerhoff, *Digital Diasporas* [PDF]  
Hassanpour, “Satellite Footprints as National Borders: MED-TV and the extra-territoriality of state sovereignty” [PDF]

- April 8                    **Diasporas, conflict & war I: mobility & security**  
 Reading:                Adamson, “Crossing Borders” [PDF]  
                                  Salehyan, “Transnational Rebels” [PDF]  
                                  *(Breakout discussion sessions)*
- April 15                   **Diasporas, conflict & war II: peace-wreckers or peacemakers?**  
 Reading:                Lyons, “Conflict-Generated Diasporas and  
                                  Transnational Politics in Ethiopia” [PDF]  
                                  Orjuela, “Distant Warriors, Distant Peace  
                                  Workers?” [PDF]
- April 22                   **Citizenship unbounded?**  
 Reading:                Thomas Faist, “Dual Membership as Overlapping  
                                  Membership” [PDF]  
                                  David Fitzgerald, “Citizenship à la Carte” [PDF]  
                                  *(Breakout discussion sessions)*
- April 29                   **Towards a transnational comparative politics**  
 Reading:                Lyons & Mandaville, “Think Locally, Act  
                                  Globally” [PDF]
- May 6                      **Final Exam**

Your grade for the course will be derived from the following elements:

### **Undergraduates**

**1. Political diaspora profile paper** (due: Feb 18, 2000-3000 words)

Choose a diaspora or migrant community that has played a role in politics and write a concise analytical overview of this group explaining its origins, how it came to be involved in politics, its political goals, and assess its impact.

*E-mail submission filename syntax:* LASTNAME\_profile.doc

**2. Critical reading responses** (x 4) (due: Feb 11, March 4, April 1, April 15, 500-1000 words each)

For each of the days that a response is due you will have been assigned a reading that advances a particular, and in some cases a contentious, argument. You are to write a brief critical response to reading and *submit it before the beginning of class*.

*E-mail submission filename syntax:* LASTNAME\_response1.doc

**3. Midterm essay** (due: March 18, 2000-2500 words)

Choose one of the two questions below and write a response in essay form:

1. “Geographic proximity and political efficacy have become decoupled.” To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? Support your position with evidence and examples.
2. Does globalization strengthen or diminish national identity?

*E-mail submission filename syntax: LASTNAME\_midterm.doc*

#### **4. Research paper** (due: April 29, 3000-5000 words)

This is your opportunity to write a longer, research-style paper on a topic of your choice. You might, for example, select a particular political diaspora (e.g. Croatians in Canada), or a particular theme (generational difference in diasporic political engagement) and write a paper that, based on your research, advances some kind of argument. More conceptual topics and theoretical essays are also welcome. You are required to choose your topic in consultation with one of the course instructors, and we will give you guidance as to how you should formulate your question and where to get started in terms of sources. It is expected that you make full use of a range of research resources for this paper and that you relate the research you present to the key themes discussed in class.

*E-mail submission filename syntax: LASTNAME\_research.doc*

#### **4. Final exam** (May 6)

### **Graduate students**

#### **1. Critical review essays** (x4) (due: Feb 11, Feb 25, April 8, April 22, 1500-2000 words each)

These essays should be written in the style of an academic book review and assess the central arguments advanced in the books we will read in the supplementary close reading meetings.

*E-mail submission filename syntax: LASTNAME\_review1.doc*

#### **3. Midterm paper** (due: March 18, 2500-3000 words)

Choose **one** of the propositions below relating to transnational politics and evaluate its claims, making reference to empirical cases and readings beyond those on the syllabus where appropriate.

**Proposition 1:** Transnational political mobilization tends to amplify the extremes of the political spectrum rather than to foster convergence in the center.

**Proposition 2:** Transnational politics reproduces traditional structures of social power (e.g. patrimonialism, sectarianism) rather than serving as a vehicle for social transformation.

**Proposition 3:** Transnational politics largely occurs outside structures of accountability. That is to say, there is often a disjuncture between those who instigate and those who are on the receiving end of political outcomes.

**Proposition 4:** Subsequent generations in the diaspora are less likely to engage in transnational politics.

*E-mail submission filename syntax:* LASTNAME\_midterm.doc

#### **4. Final research paper** (due: May 6, 5000-7000 words)

This is similar to the undergraduate research paper described above, but longer and with a higher standard expected in terms of your ability to identify and deploy an appropriate theoretical framework for presenting your research.

*E-mail submission filename syntax:* LASTNAME\_research.doc

#### Writing Guidelines

Your written assignments for this class will be graded according to the following criteria. The relative weight given to each of these categories will vary depending on the nature of the assignment.

1. Clear and sound content, including a well-stated thesis, related points to support that thesis, and applicable, logically presented, and specific evidence; clarity of argument.
2. Depth of engagement with ideas; originality; seriousness of thought; conceptual complexity.
3. Well-organized structure; text “flows” with coherent and effective transition between and among ideas; appropriate voice, tone, and style for audience and purpose (e.g. no slang); accurate word choice.
4. Sufficiently and consistently cited and documented; one style of citation used throughout the paper; references adequate number and appropriate type of sources; uses quotations and reference marks appropriately.
5. Correct mechanics including grammar, syntax, spelling, and punctuation.

All papers should be thoroughly proofread before being handed in, and will be marked down for excessive typographical errors. Students often ask if the quality of their writing will affect the grade they receive. Our answer to this question is an unequivocal “yes”! This does not mean that we employ a standard grade deduction for bad grammar. Rather, how well you write has an enormous impact on criteria 1, 3 and 5 specified above. In short, if the writing is poor, then you are likely to be unable to clearly communicate a well-stated thesis.

#### References and citation

Unless otherwise specified, it is expected that your written work will make proper use of references and citations. Your ability to learn from, integrate, and synthesize other

sources in the context of your own arguments is a large part of what you will be graded on. In particular, any time you use the words or ideas of another author, you must provide a reference. Whenever another author's exact words are used, they must be set apart from your text "in quotes," with a proper foot/endnote or parenthetical citation included.

Learning to make proper use of referencing and citation systems is a part of your overall education at college. For this class, we **require** you to use the **Chicago citation style**, with in-text citations and an accompanying list of references at the end of your paper. A quick guide to this system is available at:

[http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)

Since you are using in-text citations + a reference list you should pay attention to those items denoted T and R in this citation guide.

Papers that do not make proper use of the Chicago citation system will be marked down or returned to students for revision prior to being accepted as complete. *In short, your paper cannot and should not be regarded as finished until you have finalized and formatted all citations in one of the approved citations styles.*

#### Submitting assignments

All written assignments for this class **must be submitted by e-mail as Microsoft Word attachments**. Please be sure that your filenames follow the syntax specified under each of the assignment descriptions above. It is your responsibility to ensure that your files are properly attached. Please make sure that each document contains your name and the assignment title. This filename should also be the subject line of your e-mail. E-mail all assignments to: **gmtp.assignments@gmail.com**

#### Late work policy

Late work will have one letter grade deducted for each day it is overdue. This turns into an F very quickly, so make sure you meet your assignment deadlines!

#### Class communications

Outside the classroom we use e-mail as the primary form of communicating with you. We will set up a class e-mail list based on your GMU e-mail addresses. If you do not use your gm.u.edu account as your main e-mail address, it is your responsibility to set up your GMU e-mail so that it forwards to whatever account you prefer to use. If not, then you should at least check your GMU MEMO account several times per week at <http://mail.gmu.edu> We accept no responsibility for the consequences of missed e-mail communications!

### Attendance

Attendance at each class session is mandatory (see University policy in your *Student Handbook*), and you will be penalized for persistent unexcused absences. Students are expected to inform the instructors before any anticipated absence or as soon as possible afterwards in emergency situations. Absence from class does not relieve you of the obligation to complete and graded work or assignment associated with that particular class. Quiz/exam make-ups are not routinely offered, and you must have a seriously good reason for missing them.

### Problems & disabilities

If you are having problems—academic, medical, or personal—please let us know as soon as possible. We will do my best to help you and be sympathetic, *but only if you are forthcoming with us sooner rather than later*. In other words, don't suddenly tell us at the end of the semester that you have been experiencing personal problems for several months.

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see us and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

### University Honor Code

As in all other aspects of community life at George Mason University, the Honor Code applies in this class. We take it extremely seriously and will enforce it with a zero tolerance policy. The policy endorsed by the members of the Department of Public and International Affairs relative to the types of academic work indicated below is set out in the appropriate paragraphs below. The Honor Code in its entirety can be found in your *Student Handbook*.

“Quizzes, tests and examinations. No help may be given or received by students during the taking of quizzes, tests, or examination, whatever the type given or wherever taken, unless the instructor specifically permits deviation from this standard.

Course requirements: All work submitted in fulfillment of course requirements is to be solely the product of the individual(s) whose name(s) appear on it. Except with permission of the instructor, no recourse is to be had to projects, papers, lab reports or any other written work previously prepared by another student, and except with permission of the instructor no paper or work of another type submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of another course may be used a second time to satisfy a requirement of any course in the Department of Public Affairs.”

Furthermore, no assistance is to be obtained from [or given to] commercial organizations which sell, lease [or otherwise provide] research help or written papers. With respect to all written work as appropriate, proper footnotes and attribution are required.



This last point is particularly relevant to the preparation of your term papers. Whenever you make use of the ideas of others – either indirectly or in paraphrase – they must be accorded due attribution. *When you use the words of another author, they must be set apart from your own text in the appropriate manner.* Using or adapting large tracts of text from another source and then adding a footnote is not acceptable and will be regarded as a violation of the Honor Code. Direct quotation from sources should be used very sparingly and only in order to support a point you are already making yourself or to make use of a particularly apt turn of phrase. Do not directly quote third party sources to provide basic factual information.