PUBPOL 750: IMMIGRATION AND THE RESHAPING OF U.S. AND EUROPEAN POLITICS

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Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy

Fall 2023

Time: T and Th: 8:30 – 9:50 am
Office hours: T and Th: 10:00 – 11:00 pm
Classroom: 2120 WEILL
Office: 4204 WEILL
(or by appointment – see Canvas)

Topics Addressed

Claims tied to immigration are all over the news, for example:

– “In an effort to outflank Trump, DeSantis has veered sharply to the right on issues ranging from gay rights to abortion and immigration.” (Financial Times, July 24th, 2023)
– “One of Germany’s most powerful regional leaders has blamed the rise of the far-right AfD on a recent surge in illegal immigration” (Financial Times, July 24th, 2023)
– “Rishi Sunak has lost control of migration” (Keir Starmer, leader of the Labour Party)
– “One in Five Canadians is Now an Immigrant, and the Nation Approves” (New York Times, October 29, 2022)
– “Swedish PM says integration of immigrants has failed, fueled gang crime” (Reuters, April 28th, 2022)

These quotes call to mind many questions: Why is immigration such a salient issue for Republican voters? Is the rise of xenophobic far-right parties an unavoidable consequences of high levels of immigration? What might “controlled” immigration look like? Why is Canadian public opinion favorable to immigration when public opinions in most countries are not? What does it mean to call the integration of immigrants “a failure”? Is veering to the right on immigration issues merely a case of democratic responsiveness? In this course, we will discuss research that provides answers to these questions. In doing so, you will acquire concepts and factual knowledge that will help you critically engage —whether as a policymaker, as a researcher or as a citizen—with debates and policy issues central to U.S. and European political life.

Caveats: In this course, the emphasis is on politics broadly defined. Unfortunately, this course does not offer an in-depth review of immigration and refugee law, nor does it cover work in labor economics on immigration’s impact on wages or crime. It also does not offer a detailed discussing of work in sociology on immigrants’ cultural and social integration. Finally, we will not cover the effects of migration on sending countries.

Objectives

Understanding the “social science” of immigration policy and politics The first objective of this course is to read and critically engage with social science research on the politics of immigration and immigration-induced demographic change. The selected readings provide possible answers to the questions raised earlier. Not all of these answers are convincing, something we will unpack through in-class discussions and assignments. Some of you may be unaccustomed to the amount and types of reading required for this course. Do not
worry, the design of this course accounts for this, e.g., short lectures and purposefully designed in-class assignment will help you through the readings. I have also minimized the number of “demanding” assignments. This is to make sure you can dedicate yourself to doing the weekly readings.

Equipped with a better understanding of immigration policy and politics, you will be asked to put this knowledge to use. How you do so will vary somewhat depending on whether you choose the policy track or the research track (I will ask you to pick your preferred track in week 3).

Understanding policy change (and its absence) If you care more about policy, your in-class exercises and final assignment will reflect that. They will be “applied,” with an emphasis on immigration policy, that is, the bundle of policies that shape immigration flows. By the end of the course you will be able to look beyond the rhetoric of immigration as a perpetual “crisis” and identify the structural and political parameters that affect immigration policy in the U.S. and in Western Europe. The final assignment will require that you think through what a politically sustainable immigration policy looks like (i.e., one that stands a chance of being enacted into law and that limits destabilizing policy feedbacks).

Advancing our collective understanding of the political dynamics around immigration If you care more about research, then your in-class exercises will focus on identifying the limits of existing work in the social sciences and your final assignment will consist of a research project. Note that you will not be asked to implement this project.

Assignments and Grading

This is a reading-heavy and discussion-intensive course. Your main assignment is to do the readings and come ready to discuss and participate. If you have not done the readings, you cannot actively participate. Beyond coming to class, active participation involves: 1) turning in your weekly reading reflections (and turning them in on time), 2) participating at least once per class; 3) knowing when you’ve been dominating the conversation and letting others talk (if you have more to share, please come to office hours, I would love to hear your insights and answer your questions).

The final grade is based on active participation (60%) and the final project (40%). Because of the emphasis on reading and discussion, written assignments are not too demanding (the exception is the final paper in the research track, see below). They are mostly meant to either help you prepare for class discussion (e.g., the reading reflections) or give you deadlines to work on your final project (doing something at the last minute is rarely a good idea).

Active participation (60%)

I will assess your participation based on:

- Your attendance (10%)
- Whether or not you turned in your reading reflections (it has to be on time!) (25%)
- Your in-class participation (both discussion and in-class exercises) (25%)

Attendance This being an elective, I do not expect attendance to be an issue, but here is my usual grading scale as a FYI:
Reading reflections  During the course of the semester you will submit ten (10) reading reflections (RRs) on Canvas. I will read them and use them to facilitate class discussions. RRs can vary in length, but are typically around 300 words (never more than 500 words please). Your RR should speak to more than one reading. Summaries of readings should be kept to a minimum. You should see your RR as an opportunity for you to identify the main themes and concepts discussed, ask questions to me or to the class, and probe insights you have as you read. While you should treat your RR as formal pieces of writing, you do not need to provide formal citations for assigned reading. If you refer to outside material, please provide footnotes/endnotes.

To help you write your RR, I have, for each week, written small overviews of how the readings fit together (they are available in the reading folder). I have also posted examples of RRs I have written when I was a first year MA student (Files > Assignments > Reading reflection examples). I have added some comments to help you understand the goal of the exercise. These examples are not a template to follow, you are free to write your RR as you wish.

RRs are graded as pass (turned in) / fail (not turned in, turned in late). Note that turning in a RR that clearly shows that reading was not done counts as fail. In addition, I will provide FYI letter grades as follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>Accurate, thoughtful, holistic insights. Evidence of exceptional effort and insight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Good effort to connect all readings. Demonstrates careful effort and serious thought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Generally good, but too general or many empty claims. Enough insights that, with more work, could have been an A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Provides only summary. Misses readings. Shows little engagement or insight. Clear that work was hurried or careless.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Assignment substantially incomplete or not turned in on time.</td>
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</tbody>
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These grades do not count, they are just a way to give you quick feedback.

In-class participation  If you participate regularly (i.e., at least once per class session), you are guaranteed an A. If you participate roughly 2/3 of the session, you can expect a B. My goal is to avoid giving out Cs. If I notice that you struggle to participate, we will find ways for you to meet the bar for at least a B.

Final Project (40%)
The final project will depend on whether you choose the policy or the research track.

Policy track  Students in the policy track will spend the second half of the semester preparing for a 30 min round table that I will moderate (20%). This will take place in weeks 14 and 15. Everyone not participating in the round table will be part of the audience and will have the opportunity to ask questions during a Q&A session. We will also
do a debrief session.

There will be 2 round table topics to choose from. If several of you can agree on a topic, then you can also propose a round table of your own. Below are examples of possible topics:

- With regards to immigration reform, should (can) the United States move toward a point system similar to the Canadian one?
- Should the 10 million undocumented immigrants currently living in the U.S. be put on a pathway to citizenship? If so, how to go about it?
- What are the main lessons from Brexit for immigration policy?

Topics are chosen in week 6. In week 8, you will be asked to turn in a background memo (10%). In week 10, you will turn in a policy position/strategy memo (10%). Based on these documents, at the end of week 11, I will assign you a line of argumentation that you will have to follow during the round table. To prepare for the discussion, you will have to do some additional background research between then and the day of the event. You can develop and deviate from your assigned position but not to the point of taking the opposite position. More information on these three assignments (as well as the rubrics) are provided through Canvas (Files > Assignments > Round Table).

**Research track**

Students in the research track will be asked to turn in a written research proposal. The proposal should identify why a given issue is important, articulate your central hypotheses or arguments, review the most salient academic literature, describe the type of evidence to be explored, suggest methods for its exploration, and speculate about likely findings and conclusions. The proposal should be 15 to 20 pages long at most (around 5,000 words max, exclusive of references, tables, and figures). You should think of this assignment as a research project short of the actual field work or data analysis.

If you are in the research track, you will also be asked to present your project to the rest of the class (and collect feedback and ideas). This will take place in weeks 14 and 15. The length of the presentation will vary depending on how many people end up signing up for this track. Note that presentations are not graded: they are there to help you clarify your thoughts and collect feedback. The final version of your project is due on December 12th (no extension possible, I have to turn grades in three days later).

By the end of week 8, you will have to turn in a draft of three possible ideas and sign up to discuss them with me in office hours. By the end of week 11, you will have to turn in a 2 page proposal. More information on these assignments are provided through Canvas (Files > Assignments > Research proposal). I will also make available a rubric describing what a research proposal needs to include/achieve. Your grade is only based on the final proposal.

**Class Format**

Note that this is not a literature review course. In designing the course, I have chosen topics and readings that speak to often-heard claims (many of them polemical) about the causes and consequences of immigration. As a policy maker, you will need concepts and tools to unpack these claims. As a researcher, you will need to produce knowledge that might debunk some claims and nuance others.

We will meet twice a week for 80 minutes each time. You must have done all the weekly readings by the first session (Tuesday). Your reading reflection must be turned in by 7 pm the previous day (Monday). I will usually start class with a short background lecture presenting the general topic covered that week and presenting concepts and information necessary for discussing the readings. We will then jump into a class discussion
of the readings. This discussion will be led by me, drawing on content from your reading reflections. This means I might ask you to present your point and develop it to others. If you sometimes struggle to participate in class, please speak with me. I will be happy to give you strategies to increase and improve your participation.

In the second session, we will either jump back into discussing the readings (depending on what happened in the Tuesday session) or we will immediately break into groups, with separate in-class exercises designed for the policy and the research tracks. At the end of the session, I will take 10 min to summarize what I believe to be important take-aways from the week’s readings and discussion. I will always tie these comments back to the quote and media claims used to introduce the course section.

For “complicated” (i.e., with stats or econometrics) research papers, I might ask PhD students in the class to jump in and practice explaining the paper to everyone (e.g., What is the research questions? What is the theory being tested? What empirical implications one can derive from this theory? How are these implications being tested?). If you are not a PhD student, you should also feel free to volunteer. Note that I will share documents that provide a template on the best way to summarize and explain a quantitative research paper.

The last two weeks of the class will be dedicated to the final round table and presentations (see previous section for more details).

Readings

All book chapters and articles will be made available as PDFs through Canvas. We will also read a significant share of two books. For copyright reasons, these books cannot be scanned (they are listed below). Both are available electronically through the U-M Library. If you would like to buy them, they are both available for less than $18 each. If you would like to buy one book only, I recommend you buy the Massey et al. (2002). If you are a PhD students interested in building a library on the topic, I can share a longer list of books to read/buy.


Course Schedule

On Canvas, you will find, alongside PDFs of the readings, a short text situating the readings relative to the week’s topic. Readings marked with a *** are recommended reading for Masters students and required reading for PhD students.

1. Introduction: Why Do People Emigrate?

In the first session (Tuesday), we will go over the syllabus and discuss class objectives, readings and assignments, as well as class policy around ChatGPT. On Thursday, we will discuss the factors that shape the decision to leave one’s country and settle in another (or attempt to). Massey (1999) provides important background information on the structural (mostly economic) factors that shape the size and timing of migration flows from one country to another. Notice how there are limited references in this piece to refugees and to the factors that affect the decision to apply for asylum in a foreign country. Hamelin (2021) argues that the distinction between people who immigrate searching for economic security and people who immigrate because they flee persecution in their home country is a fraught one. We will discuss implications for politics and policymaking.

- **Week 1**

2. Is immigration “out of control”?

“Immigration in recent years has been too high. We need to bring immigration under control.” (David Cameron, British Prime Minister, Conservative Party, 2014)

“The numbers are too high and we want to bring them down.” (Rishi Sunak, British Prime Minister, Conservative Party, 2023)

“Rishi Sunak has lost control of migration.” (Keir Starmer, leader of the Labour Party)

- **Week 2**

- **Week 3**

The Massey et al. book is written for a general audience and is an easy read.
3. **“Economists love immigration: why do so many people hate it?”**

“Brexit was fueled by irrational xenophobia, not real economic grievances” (Vox, 2017)

“There is a tendency to say ‘those people [who raise questions about the level of immigration into the UK] are racist’, which is just outrageous, absolutely outrageous.” (Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, 2014)

- **Week 4**

- **Week 5**
4. Can we attribute the Far Right’s electoral success to immigration?

“One of Germany’s most powerful regional leaders has blamed the rise of the far-right AfD on a recent surge in illegal immigration and called for the country’s constitution to be amended to restrict the right to asylum” (Financial Times, July 24th, 2023)

“Many white [Trump supporters] believe their privileged status is being eroded by the past half-century of moves toward treating minorities and women as truly equal citizens” (Vox, 2017).

- Week 6
  
  
  


5. How has the rise of the Far Right affected policy making?

“In an effort to outflank Trump, DeSantis has veered sharply to the right on issues ranging from gay rights to abortion and immigration.” (Financial Times, July 24th, 2023)

“Macron kicks off push to ‘appease’ nation with row over immigrant welfare fraud” (France 24, April 19th 2023)

- Week 7
  
  
  

  
6. Becoming mainstream, reshaping the Mainstream: What counts as “successful integration”?

“If current immigration levels continue]’ the United States is on track to reach its anticipated 2044 ‘majority minority’ milestone: the moment when the majority ethnic group, non-Hispanic white people, becomes one of multiple minorities” (Foreign Policy, March 22, 2022)

“Swedish PM says integration of immigrants has failed, fueled gang crime” (Reuters, April 28th, 2022)
- Week 8-9

  - Roger Waldinger. 2018. “Immigration and the election of Donald Trump: why the sociology of migration left us unprepared and why we should not have been surprised.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 41:8, 1411-1426


- Week 10


- Week 11


7. The “Progressive Dilemma:” Does immigration undermine social solidarity?

  “The basis on which you can extract large sums of money in tax and pay it out in benefits is that most people think the recipients are people like themselves (...). If values become more diverse, if lifestyles become more differentiated (...) (p)eople ask: ‘Why should I pay for them when they are doing things that I wouldn’t do?’ This is America versus Sweden. You can have a Swedish welfare state provided that you are a homogeneous society with intensely shared values. In the United States you have a very diverse, individualistic society where people feel fewer obligations to fellow citizens. Progressives want diversity, but they thereby undermine part of the moral consensus on which a large welfare state rests.” David Willetts (Conservative member of parliament 1992-2015)

- Week 12
8. Immigration policy in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century: What will it look like?

“Calling on Congress: Fix America’s Broken Immigration System” (U.S. Chamber of Commerce, January 20th, 2023)

- **Week 13**
  
  
  
  
  

- **Week 14** Round tables

- **Week 15** Presentation of research proposals
Immigration and the Re-Shaping of U.S and European Politics

ChatGPT and other AI tools  Large language models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT have caused a stir. They might be a good thing, they might be a bad thing, they are likely a mix bag. In any case, they are there to stay and most people use them. I want you to use them well and this course is where you can practice doing that. This means you are welcome to use generative AI tools to assist you in your course work. When doing so, please be aware that these tools make errors and the work they produce rarely includes original thinking (we will discuss an example in class). Most importantly, any content produced using a generative AI source must be noted/cited in your work, failure to do so will be treated as an instance of academic misconduct.

Ford School Inclusivity Statement  Members of the Ford School community represent a rich variety of backgrounds and perspectives. We are committed to providing an atmosphere for learning that respects diversity. While working together to build this community we ask all members to:

- share their unique experiences, values and beliefs
- be open to the views of others
- honor the uniqueness of their colleagues
- appreciate the opportunity that we have to learn from each other in this community
- value one another’s opinions and communicate in a respectful manner
- keep confidential discussions that the community has of a personal (or professional) nature
- use this opportunity together to discuss ways in which we can create an inclusive environment in Ford classes and across the UM community

Ford School Public Health Protection Policy  In order to participate in any in-person aspects of this course—including meeting with other students to study or work on a team project—you must follow all the public health safety measures and policies put in place by the State of Michigan, Washtenaw County, the University of Michigan, and the Ford School. Up to date information on U-M policies can be found here. It is expected that you will protect and enhance the health of everyone in the Ford School community by staying home and following self-isolation guidelines if you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19

Student Mental Health and Wellbeing  The University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students. We acknowledge that a variety of issues, both those relating to the pandemic and other issues such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, and depression, can directly impact students’ academic performance and overall wellbeing. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available.

You may access the Ford School’s embedded counselor Paige Ziegler (contact information TBD) and/or counselors and urgent services at Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) and/or University Health Service (UHS). Students may also use the Crisis Text Line (text ’4UMICH’ to 741741) to be connected to a trained crisis volunteer. You can find additional resources both on and off campus through the University Health Service and through CAPS.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities  The University of Michigan recognizes disability as an integral part of diversity and is committed to creating an inclusive and equitable educational environment for students with disabilities. Students who are experiencing a disability-related barrier should contact Services for Students with Disabilities https://ssd.umich.edu/; 734-763-3000 or ssdoffice@umich.edu). For students who are connected with SSD, accommodation requests can be made in Accommodate. If you have any questions or concerns please contact your SSD Coordinator or visit SSD’s Current Student webpage. SSD considers aspects of the course design, course learning objects and the individual academic and course barriers experienced by the student. Further conversation with SSD, instructors, and the student may be warranted to ensure an accessible course experience.
**Academic Integrity**  The Ford School academic community, like all communities, functions best when its members treat one another with honesty, fairness, respect, and trust. We hold all members of our community to high standards of scholarship and integrity. To accomplish its mission of providing an optimal educational environment and developing leaders of society, the Ford School promotes the assumption of personal responsibility and integrity and prohibits all forms of academic dishonesty, plagiarism and misconduct. Academic dishonesty may be understood as any action or attempted action that may result in creating an unfair academic advantage for oneself or an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any other member or members of the academic community. Plagiarism involves representing the words, ideas, or work of others as one’s own in writing or presentations, and failing to give full and proper credit to the original source. Conduct, without regard to motive, that violates the academic integrity and ethical standards will result in serious consequences and disciplinary action. The Ford School’s policy of academic integrity can be found in the MPP BA, and PhD Program handbooks. Additional information regarding academic dishonesty, plagiarism and misconduct and their consequences is available here.

Links to documents mentioned:

- [https://www.dropbox.com/s/06x1tzt1e32pjjw/FINAL%202023%20PHD%20Handbook.pdf?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/06x1tzt1e32pjjw/FINAL%202023%20PHD%20Handbook.pdf?dl=0)
- [https://rackham.umich.edu/academic-policies/section8/#112](https://rackham.umich.edu/academic-policies/section8/#112)

**Use of Technology**  Students should follow instructions from their instructor as to acceptable use of technology in the classroom, including laptops, in each course. All course materials (including slides, assignments, handouts, pre-recorded lectures or recordings of class) are to be considered confidential material and are not to be shared in full or part with anyone outside of the course participants. Likewise, your own personal recording (audio or video) of your classes or office hour sessions is allowed only with the express written permission of your instructor. If you wish to post course materials or photographs/videos of classmates or your instructor to third-party sites (e.g. social media), you must first have informed consent. **Without explicit permission from the instructor and in some cases your classmates, the public distribution or posting of any photos, audio/video recordings or pre-recordings from class, discussion section or office hours, even if you have permission to record, is not allowed and could be considered academic misconduct.**

Please review additional information and policies regarding academic expectations and resources at the Ford School of Public Policy:

- [https://intranet.fordschool.umich.edu/academic-expectations](https://intranet.fordschool.umich.edu/academic-expectations)