

Economics of Migration

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I. Overview

This course will explore migration from an economic perspective within a multidisciplinary context. It will introduce students to key economic theories of the nature, determinants, and consequences of migration, emphasizing the multidimensionality of economic arguments and their place within the broader social science arena. It will teach students to understand and critically evaluate the methods used to test these theories and their implications for immigration policy, attending to key basic questions, focal points, and approaches coming from the current literature. This is not a formal course on economics, but rather a course that provides an economic perspective on a complex social phenomenon.

II. Objectives

The primary objectives of the course are to:

- provide students a solid understanding of key economic theories of migration;
- teach students how these theories are tested empirically, placing them in a position to critically evaluate and engage with migration economics literature;
- enable students to draw on economic approaches within the broader, multidisciplinary context of migration studies.

III. Prerequisites

There are no formal prerequisites to this course and no background in economics is expected.

IV. Skills

The course will teach students:

- Economic theory
- Quantitative methods
- Research and evaluation
- Policy analysis

V. Methodology

The course will be conducted as a combination of lectures, class discussions, and group presentations. Students will be given readings for each class, and will be asked each week to write a short (1-2 page) essay, in which they offer either (1) a critique of one or more arguments raised in the readings, or (2) an original idea or hypothesis inspired by the readings and a sketch of how this might be tested empirically. Students will be expected to discuss the readings and their essays in class, and some of the responses will form the basis for in-class group exercises. The assignment for the final week will be a

longer essay (5-10 pages) synthesizing the material covered in class and proposing a potential research agenda linking this material with each student's main areas of interest. Students will be asked to give a short presentation of this essay in the final class.

VI. Evaluation

Students will be evaluated based on a combination of class participation (5%), 8 short writing assignments due in weeks 2-9 (80%), and the final longer writing assignment due in week 10 (15%).

VII. Contents and structure

The course will be structured as follows:

INTRODUCTION

- Class 1: Viewing society through the lens of economics. Economic theory and methods.

DETERMINANTS OF MIGRATION

- Class 2: Neoclassical approaches
- Class 3: New economics, psychology, and social networks

CONSEQUENCES OF MIGRATION

- Class 4: Jobs and wages
- Class 5: Public fisc

SYSTEMS AND SCALE

- Class 6: Global migration at the scale of cities
- Class 7: Circular migration and migration system complexity

POLICY

- Class 8: Admission, integration, and citizenship
- Class 9: Border control and expulsion

SYNTHESIS

- Class 10: Recap, putting it all together, and exploring future directions. Student presentations.

VIII. Bibliography

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