

Course Syllabus

**Peace & Conflict Studies (PACS) 301-001
“Refugees and Forced Migration”**

Winter 2017

Time: Thursdays, 2:30-5:20 p.m.

Location: Conrad Grebel University College, Room 1300

Instructor: Dr. Marlene Epp

Office: CGUC, Room 2118

Office hours: After class or by appointment.

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Description:

This course will draw on case studies from past and present to understand why people flee their homelands to seek refuge elsewhere or are forced to migrate. We will examine the policies and practices of government in facilitating or blocking such movements of people and also the work of non-governmental organizations in support and advocacy for refugees. The course will also explore the attitudes, values, and language embedded in the state, media, and civil society which shape local and global responses to refugee movements. While the context for refugee migrations is international, the specific stories and cases in the course will be drawn mainly from Canada. Students in the course will become acquainted with agencies that work with refugees in Waterloo Region and will gain a critical understanding of Canada’s role in refugee reception. The course themes and topics will be presented and understood largely through the lens of individual stories. As a PACS offering, this course is motivated by a holistic understanding of peace as a “healthy society where communities and individuals flourish.”

Learning Objectives:

- To understand and articulate the reasons for human displacement in past and present.
- To analyze and critique terminology and definitions related to refugees and immigrants.
- To understand and explain the three main refugee streams in Canada today.
- To appreciate the role of personal story in global phenomena.
- To understand the interaction of policy and attitudes in refugee movements.
- To develop research and writing skills.

Disclaimer: This syllabus may be subject to slight changes in course content and organization as opportunities arise and new ideas emerge. The course requirements will not change.

Required Readings:

For sale at the UW bookstore (may be in used bookstore)

Omidvar, Ratna, and Dana Wagner. *Flight and Freedom: Stories of Escape to Canada*. Toronto: Between the Lines Press, 2015.

Posted as PDF in Learn

Epp, Marlene. *Refugees in Canada: A Brief History*. Unpublished manuscript for publication in the booklet series on “Immigration and Ethnicity in Canada”

Other readings as noted in syllabus and available in *Learn*. Additional short readings may be added during the semester and will be available on *Learn*.

Summary of Course Requirements, Grade Weighting, and Deadlines

Attendance & Participation	15%	
Short answer Quiz	10%	January 12
Short answer Quiz	10%	March 30
Report on agency visit	15%	March 13
Research Essay	5 + 25% = 30%	April 2
Proposal & Preliminary Bibliography		February 10
Take Home Exam	20%	April 24

Course Schedule:

Week 1:

January 5

Introduction and Overview
Myths and Realities
Terminology

Week 2:

January 12

Canada's History of Refugee Reception

Reading: Reading: *Flight and Freedom* (henceforth *FF*): "Who is a Refugee?" pp.5-6;
FF, "Then and Now: Would They Get in Today?" pp. 223-47.

Epp, *Refugees in Canada: A Brief History*. Read the whole thing. **PDF in Learn**

Quiz, January 12, on Epp, *Refugees in Canada: A Brief History*.

Week 3:

January 19

Refugee voices 1: Alfred Hecht

Readings: *FF*, Chap. 1, Adeline Oliver; Chap. 2, Mampre Shirinian; Chap. 7, Rabbi Erwin Schild; Chap. 10, Andrew Hidi; Chap. 28, Karim Teja; Chap. 29, Avtar Sandhu;

Week 4:

January 26

Sponsored and Assisted Refugees

Refugee voices 2: Vinh Nguyen

Readings: *FF*, Chap. 4, Ken (Khanh) Do; Chap. 11, Sorpong Peou; Chap. 14, Chairuth (Chai) Bouphaphanh; Chap. 16, Samnang Eam; Chap. 18, Iren Hessami Koltermann;

Week 5:

February 2

Global Overview, Guest Lecturer, Sonal Marwah, Project Ploughshares

Readings: Sonal Marwah, "Asylum-seeker, refugee or migrant," *Ploughshares Monitor* (Winter 2015): 5-9.

<http://ploughshares.ca/wpcontent/uploads/2015/12/PloughsharesMonitorWinter2015WEB.pdf>

"Global Displacement not a European refugee crisis." *Project Ploughshares* online:
<http://ploughshares.ca/2016/12/global-displacement-not-a-european-refugee-crisis/> (including links within article)

UNHCR Global Trends 2015. Read parts 1-3 (pp.2-18):
<http://www.unhcr.org/statistics/unhcrstats/576408cd7/unhcr-global-trends-2015.html>

Reading links in *Learn*.

Film: *Exile Without End: Palestinians in Lebanon*

**Week 6:
February 9**

Claimants and Asylum Seekers
Refugee Voices 3: Crossing Borders presentation (tentative)
or Film: *Seeking Refuge*.

Readings: *FF*, Chap. 3, Loly Rico; Chap. 6, Claudio Durán; Chap. 12, Tarun;
Chap. 21, Humaira; Chap. 27, Robi Botos;

DUE: February 10, Research Essay Proposal and Preliminary Bibliography. Submit to Dropbox in *Learn* by 11:30 p.m.

**Week 7:
February 16**

Visit to agencies: Welcome Home, Reception House, Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support. Class will divide into 3 groups. Bring a small material donation (to be discussed).

Readings: Review the webpages of the agencies; links in *Learn*

Reading Week, February 20-24

**Week 8:
March 2**

Guest Speaker: Dr. Mary Jo Leddy, founder, Romero House (Toronto)

Readings: *FF*, Chap. 15, Zafar Iravan; Chap. 17, Marko; Chap. 24, Mie Tha Lah;
Chap. 30, Sabreen

Other Readings TBA

See article on Romero House:

<https://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2016/04/24/romero-house-25-years-of-welcoming-the-stranger.html>

Week 9:

March 9

Class Visit to Mennonite Central Committee Ontario in Kitchener.

DUE: March 13, Report on Agency visit. Submit to Dropbox in *Learn* by 11:30 p.m.

Week 10:

March 16

Gender and the Refugee Experience
Refugee Voices 4: TBA

Readings: *FF*, Chap. 5, Hodan Ali; Chap. 8, Randy Singh; Chap. 9, Marguerite Nyandwi;
Chap. 13, Yodit Negusse; Chap. 20, Elvis; Chap. 26, Shabnam;

Week 11:

March 23

Family Reunification
Refugee Voices 5: TBA

Readings: *FF*, Chap. 19, Anwar Arkani; Chap. 22, Joseph; Chap. 23, Christine;
Chap. 25, Max Farber

Week 12:

March 30

Summary

Quiz: March 30, on Refugee Voices in-class presentations.

Due: April 2, Research Essay. Submit to Dropbox in *Learn* by 11:30 p.m.

Course Requirements:

Attendance & Participation: 15%

A sign-up sheet will be circulated at each class, beginning Week 1. It will be your responsibility to ensure that your name is on the list. You will not lose marks for absences for illness or emergency but you must let me know by email or phone message before class.

In addition to attendance, participation will be evaluated by evidence that you are doing the weekly readings, as per in-class discussion and activities we do to analyze the stories in the *Flight or Freedom* text.

Quizzes: 10% x 2 = 20%

January 12: Short answer quiz based on Epp, *Refugees in Canada: A Brief History*

March 30: Short answer quiz based on in-class Refugee Voices presentations

Take home exam-essay: 20%

A take home exam will be distributed on the last day of class (and may be posted on Learn earlier) and must be submitted to the Dropbox in Learn by **April 24, 11:30 p.m.**

Report on Agency visit: 15%

Due March 13. Submit to Dropbox in Learn by 11:30 p.m.

Write a 1000-word essay (approx. 4 double-spaced pages using 12-pitch font) that summarizes and reflects on your visit to a refugee-serving agency that occurred on February 16 or March 9.

Introduce the agency and its work and summarize what you learned about the particular 'highway' or stream of refugees that they work with. Include an analysis of at least one story from *Flight or Freedom* whose refugee experience might fit within the mandate of the agency you visited. Any literature or website sources used should be cited using Chicago, APA, or MLA citation style.

Research Essay: 30% (5% for proposal + 25% for final essay)

Proposal & Preliminary Bibliography Due February 10. Submit to Dropbox in Learn by 11:30 p.m.

Final Essay Due April 2. Submit to Dropbox in Learn by 11:30 p.m.

Write a 2500-word research essay (approx. 10 double-spaced pages in 12-pitch font) on a topic of interest to you and relevant to the course themes. Here are some ideas:

A particular refugee movement past or present.

Causes of Displacement

Life in a Refugee Camp

Refugee Sponsorship in Canada

Refugee Claimants in Canada
Family Reunification
Media Coverage of Refugees
Becoming Canadian (integration and adaptation)
Global Attitudes Towards Refugees
Place-based case studies (Syria, Southeast Asia, Middle East, other)
Health or Education issues for Refugees
Climate Refugees
Other types of Forced Migration such as Sex or Labour Trafficking
Your own family history of being refugees

Specifications:

-- On February 10, you will submit a 1-2-page proposal and preliminary bibliography that includes: a tentative essay title; a brief (several paragraphs) outline of your topic and why it interests you; a preliminary bibliography that includes 5 sources you have identified as useful to the research essay (and are listed using an official citation style).

-- Your research must include at least 10 different sources, only 5 of which can be websites; the other 5 must be print sources (books, articles, etc.); e-books or e-journals or e-magazines can be considered print sources (ask me if in doubt). Several different 'pages' on one website are considered 1 source. If this diversity of sources is difficult for your particular topic, see me.

-- Must be double-spaced, 12-pitch font, and approximately 2500 words (excluding citations and bibliography).

-- Must have a title page, bibliography/reference list, and cite sources correctly using either Chicago Style, APA, or MLA citation style.

-- Note materials and suggestions in LEARN related to research and writing.

-- We will devote some class time to talking about research essays, so you should be prepared to spend a few minutes telling the class about your topic later in the semester.

***** ALTERNATIVE OPTION:** If you would like to present your research in a format other than a written essay, you can talk to me about alternatives; such as, visual art, creative writing, video, music, for example. I am open to your creativity.

Your responsibilities as a student in PACS 301-001

1. *Look after yourself.* As I'm sure you know, an important part of academic success is personal well-being. Eat well, sleep sufficiently, get some exercise and spend time outdoors, and don't abuse your body. If you are struggling with more-than-normal (debilitating) stress, anxiety, lack of motivation and/or depression, please talk to friends, family, or relevant professionals. There are many supports here at Conrad Grebel / UW. If you need help sourcing these, come and talk to me. Take responsibility for yourself and look out for others.
2. *Attend class regularly and take notes.* Attending class regularly will help you maintain interest in the topic of the course, keep up with course requirements and guidelines for assignments, and obtain course content that isn't available in readings or on Learn (ie. guest lecturers). Taking notes in class is important as a practice of knowledge retention, a technique for attentiveness, and also to help you gather information that you will need for the take home exam. Attendance is graded: a sheet will be circulated in each class and it is your responsibility to ensure that you have signed-in.
3. *Be attentive to each other and participate in classroom discussions.* Ask questions about things you don't understand or are not clear. Be respectful of other students and their opinions. Remember that everyone has a story.
4. *You are responsible for catching up on material that you have missed.* You can do this by asking me for any handouts, borrowing notes from a classmate (don't ask me for my lecture notes; they likely won't help much!), and asking me how you might view films that you missed. For most classes, I will not be using powerpoint slides to provide outlines of lectures.
5. *LEARN.* This course will have a Desire2Learn (Learn) page. It is your responsibility to ensure you can receive email through Learn, as this is how I will communicate with students and you with each other. Please check the course site regularly for announcements, handouts, suggestions, etc. You will be submitting most of your assignments to a Dropbox in Learn.
6. *Communication.* If you wish to talk with me about any course related or other matters, you may do so after class, by appointment, or through email. I will do my best to respond to your emails within 48 hours. Before you make an inquiry about assignments etc., please do check the syllabus first to confirm whether the information you need is there. All requests for assignment extensions or other special arrangements must be confirmed with me by email, so that we have an agreement in writing (and so that I do not forget!). Ensure that your uwaterloo email address is forwarded to your personal email address (if you prefer to only check the latter).

7. *Understand course requirements.* Please ask questions if these are not clear. Complete assignments on time. I will do my best to grade and return them in a timely manner. If Learn is not functioning, I will communicate alternate submission instructions to you by email. Please plan your academic work carefully, keeping in mind the deadlines for assignments in all your courses. I am generally amenable to requests for extensions in situations of illness, emergencies, or family/personal crises. I do expect that you consult me about an extension **BEFORE** the assignment is due.
8. *Late policy.* Assignments that are submitted past the due date without any prior consultation with me will be subject to a grading penalty of 2% per day.
9. *Electronics:* The use of laptops for the purpose of taking notes in class is acceptable. If other activity such as facebook-ing, texting, etc. becomes distracting to other students or to me or a guest speaker, you will be asked to cease such activity, or your devices might be requisitioned for the duration of the class. Phones should be turned off during class. If you need your phone available for an emergency in a specific class, let me know.
10. *Academic Integrity:* In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage](#) and the [Arts Academic Integrity webpage](#) for more information.
Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).
Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances](#), Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.
Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72 - Student Appeals](#).
11. *Accommodation for Students with Disabilities*
The [AccessAbility Services](#) office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension

(1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.

12. *Writing assistance.* The Writing Centre works across all Faculties to help students clarify their ideas, develop their voices, and write in the style appropriate to their disciplines. Writing Centre staff offer one-on-one support in planning assignments and presentations, using and documenting research, organizing and structuring papers, and revising for clarity and coherence. You can make multiple appointments throughout the term, or drop in at the Library for quick questions or feedback. To book a 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit www.uwaterloo.ca/writing-centre. Group appointments for team-based projects, presentations, and papers are also available.

My general rubric for marking written assignments:

An “A” (85-89) paper is original and creative. It has a clear introductory statement and conclusion and exhibits a strong research effort. It is well-written and well-organized, appropriately footnoted/referenced (making correct use of a citation style), and thoroughly proofread and edited. This paper has gone beyond the basic requirements of the assignment, in terms of excellent writing style, originality in choice of topic, creativity in search of sources (including use of extra sources), and thoughtfulness of analysis and reflection.

An “A minus” (80-84) paper is a strong paper but falls short of a clear A because of minor weaknesses such as typographical errors, for example

An “A plus” (90-100) is a grade that I assign rarely but in cases where a written assignment is clearly much stronger than its peers.

A “B” (70-79) paper demonstrates wide reading, understanding and thought. It is clear and understandable. The research will be thorough, and the paper will be appropriately footnoted/referenced. This paper has met the basic requirements of the assignment, and is graded toward one end of the 70s spectrum because of relative strengths and weaknesses in particular areas.

A “C” (60-69) paper is an acceptable paper. It might be difficult to read. It will have met the research requirements, but barely. It demonstrates adequate understanding. It meets the basic requirements of the assignment overall, but falls short in one or more areas, such as: inadequate sources or heavy reliance on marginal sources (ie. wikipedia); poor writing style; incorrect citations; limited analysis, for instance.

A “D” (50-59) paper is badly organized, poorly written, or inadequately researched. The paper has not met the requirements of the assignment, whether in terms of research, writing, clarity, or referencing.

An “F” (below 50) paper has not followed instructions and has not fulfilled the assignment.

In short you will be graded on: originality, research, organization, writing, and proper documentation.