

**University of Waterloo**  
**Conrad Grebel University College**  
**Peace & Conflict Studies**  
**PACS 325**  
**Refugees and Forced Migration**  
**Fall 2021**  
**Online in Learn**

**Instructor Information**

Instructor: Marlene Epp: call me Dr. Epp, Prof. Epp, or Marlene  
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Office Phone: not using office phone; will supply cell number only in special cases  
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**Course 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.

## Format

The format of this 'remote learning' course will include the following:

- short video talks by me, posted in Announcements or in Weekly content;
- readings most weeks that are listed in Weekly content and in the Course Schedule;
- text and powerpoint slides in Weekly content;
- recorded interviews with experts in refugee work;
- short videos and a few longer films;
- discussions in small groups (5 times);
- live chats with each other and Marlene one hour every other week.

## Required Text

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

I encourage you to obtain a hard copy of the book so that you can spend time reading away from your screen. But that is up to you. Here is information on various formats of the textbook from the UW Store.

## Course Materials List

There are 2 purchase options available for one required textbook, one digital, and one physical format, as well as a free etext available through the UWaterloo Library. Please choose only 1 of the 3 options below:

### BOOK 1: Required

#### Option 1: (Digital)

Title : Flight and Freedom

Author: AC Omidvar and Wagner

ISBN : 9781771132305

Price : \$13.99 (lifetime access)

To order the access code and receive it instantly, please follow [this link](#). You will need a major credit card to complete the purchase.

#### Option 2: (Paperback)

Title : Flight and Freedom

Author: AC Omidvar and Wagner

ISBN : 9781771132299

Price : \$29.95

#### Option 3: ([Library Etext](#))

The printed book can be ordered online from [wstore.ca](#), as well as the access code. You can log in to [UWaterloo BookLook](#), using your UWaterloo email and password, to view your personalized booklist

and add items directly to your shopping cart. **Please note that access codes ordering through the MyBookLook are filled manually, and can take up to 3 business days to process.**

A common list of online questions, such as shipping rates and returns, can be found on our website at [wstore.ca/help](http://wstore.ca/help).

If you need assistance with your online order, please email [wstore@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:wstore@uwaterloo.ca). A member of our team will reach out as soon as possible.

### **Other Readings Available on LEARN**

There will be some additional readings, available in Course Reserves or as Links in the Weekly Content. Weekly readings will not generally be more than 30 pages.

### **Course Requirements and Assessment**

Information on course requirements and assessments.

Assessment	Weighting
Introduce Yourself	3% CR/NC
Response to short video Week 1	2% CR/NC
Group Discussions x 5	25%
Questions for Guest Lecturers x 5	5%
Film Reflection	10%
Research Essay Proposal	10%
Research Essay Final	25%
Final Exam	20%
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Total	100%

### **Introduce Yourself and Response to short video Week 1**

Throughout the semester, you will be required to post comments/questions to the whole class and participate in small group discussions. These will take place on the General Discussion Board and within Small Group Discussions.

General Discussion Board.

1. Topic: Introduce Yourself CR/NC 3%

In a few sentences, respond to these questions by way of introducing yourself:

Name, program, where are you living this term?

What is your relationship to this topic? Have you or any family members been a refugee? Have you done paid or volunteer work related to refugees?

If you were forced to flee your home with just 24 hours' notice, what would you take with you? Don't think too long about this question, since refugees often have little time to make these decisions.

Read everyone's introductions and respond to one other person's introduction in one sentence. There should only be one response for each introduction. Complete this by Monday, Sept. 13 at 11:30 p.m.

## 2. Topic: What They Took With Them CR/NC 2%

After viewing the short video – What They Took With Them – provide a 2-3 sentence response about what you found interesting/surprising about objects that refugees took with them. Complete this by Monday, Sept. 13 at 11:30 p.m.

## Small Group Discussions x 5

5 x 5% = 25%

An important way to develop and articulate your ideas and responses to course material is in conversation with your classmates. During the term, you will be divided into small groups for focused discussion. You will be randomly placed into small groups of 5-6 by the end of the day on Wednesday, Sept. 15.

These discussions serve several purposes: they give you a sense of being 'in the classroom' by interacting with other students enrolled in the course; they allow you to put into words your questions and ideas regarding information and themes in the course; they help you develop clarity of thought as you articulate your ideas for others.

Group membership can be viewed from the Course Home page by clicking Connect and then Groups on the course navigation bar.

Questions for each of the 5 Discussions can be found in the Weekly content.

Here is how it works:

1. There will be five group discussions. Each discussion will have several questions that you are invited to discuss with your group. You should have completed the content in the relevant week before beginning the discussion.
2. You will be graded on your individual participation, not that of the group overall. Your grade is based on how well you demonstrate a good grasp of the material being discussed and how active you are in the discussion, according to the criteria under point 6 below.
3. The group discussions will occur using the group discussion forums. You are not expected to do 'real-time' chat, that is, you do not need to be logged on simultaneously for group discussions.
5. Each student is responsible for participating appropriately in the discussion. If, for any reason, a student is unable to participate in the group discussion, that student is responsible for contacting the instructor and their group members.
6. Groups are free to discuss the assigned question(s) as much as they like. The minimum amount of participation expected is an initial posting with your responses to the question(s), followed by at least two additional response posts that respond to a classmate specifically or to the overall exchange. You can respond to all of the discussion questions in one post.

- a. Initial Post: Your initial posting should be made by the date listed in the Course Schedule. Your initial post for each question should be at least 150 words. This posting will likely be longer than your subsequent exchanges on a topic.
- b. Response Post(s): Your additional response should be made by the date listed in the Course Schedule. Postings do not need to be long. Nevertheless, don't just respond with 'I agree' but offer a meaningful several-sentence addition to the conversation.
- 7. Your instructor will be monitoring your group discussions and providing feedback as appropriate.
- 8. You are encouraged to express your opinions and ideas in an open manner, with respect for the diversity of identities and views in the class. A university course environment should be space for exploration and curiosity about ideas, accompanied by interest, respect, and compassion for others. Your instructor will be interjecting as needed, to provide important information or feedback on the quality of the discussion.

### **Questions for Guest Interviewees-Lecturers x 5**

During the course of the term, I will post half hour video interviews I did with individuals who are experts or have experience with refugees locally and internationally. Those interview-lectures will be in the weekly content. After watching/listening to these experts, I want you to post ONE question for at least 5 of these individuals. You will post your question on the General Discussion Board with a topic named for the individual. I will choose up to 3 questions and send these to the experts who have promised to respond to you. Check due dates in the Course Schedule and Calendar. 5 x 1% = 5%

### **Film Reflection**

During Week 2 you will view the film 'Human Flow', an overview of the plight of refugees around the world. Write a 500-word reflection (no citations required) on this film, responding to these questions: What visual images had an impact on you?

What specific information had an impact on you?

What was new or surprising?

Throughout the film, there are brief bits of poetry. Choose one of those and describe how you think it relates to the theme of the film.

Submit this to the Dropbox by Monday, Sept. 27, 11:30 p.m. 10%

### **Research Essay**

Write a 2000-word research essay (approx. 8 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

(Other ways to get topic ideas are from the film 'Human Flow', look at 'Issues' in the Canadian Council of Refugees website, look at UNHCR website for ideas)

#### Specifications:

-- your essay should begin with a research question of 1-2 sentences; this is partly a statement of topic, but also succinctly states what is the question that your research seeks to answer; it doesn't need to be earth-shattering and could be simple and straight-forward, but nevertheless provides a goal for your research. Here are a few examples:

1. If your topic is about the Rohingya refugees, your research question might be: This essay will seek to understand the causes for the Rohingya refugee crisis in Myanmar and Canada's response to that crisis.
2. If your topic is about refugee mental health, your research question might be: This essay will seek to understand the mental health issues experienced by children who grow up in refugee camps.

-- Your research must include at least 10 different sources, at least 5 of which should be academic sources such as books and journal articles (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. See the Resources for Research page in the course for links to many useful websites.

– Must be double-spaced, 12-pitch font, and approximately 2000 words (excluding citations and bibliography).

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

-- Note materials and suggestions in LEARN related to research and writing, including Steps to Writing a Research Paper.

#### Stages:

Topic Proposal:

Submit a research essay proposal and preliminary list of sources that includes the following:

A tentative essay title;

A brief (approx. 200 words) outline of your topic and why it interests you;

A preliminary list of at least 5 sources you have identified as useful to the research essay (and are listed as a Bibliography or References using an official citation style).

This is due in a Dropbox on Wednesday, Oct. 6, 11:30 p.m. 10%

Final Research Essay:

Your final Research Essay is due in a Dropbox by Tuesday, Dec. 7, 11:30 p.m. 25%

## **Final Exam**

A final take home exam will be posted on Learn in the last week of class. More detail will be given.

The exam is due in a Dropbox Thursday, Dec. 16, 11:30 p.m. 20%

See the Online Syllabus in Learn for the following material:

Course Schedule with weekly topics, readings, activities and assignments, due dates.

Course Policies with late assignment policy, communication guidelines, self care, and writing aids.

University of Waterloo Policies.