COURSE SYLLABUS

Migration, Borders, Integration and Activism in Europe

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Fall, 2023
Course level: BA and MA
2 Credits (4 ECTS Credits)

Course Description

In the last two decades, the European borders have increasingly been monitored and extremely supervised with scrutiny by authorities tasked with border control issues. The application of security procedures of containment in the efforts of European authorities to deter irregular migration only contribute to the exacerbation of human suffering along the EU maritime and territorial borders. As a manifestation of Fortress Europe, the maritime border has been transformed into a liquid graveyard, while detention camps in precarious conditions are now a constant feature of the territorial border. However, by manifesting possibilities for resistance, ordinary people and civil society have been creating and reinforcing channels, structures, networks and initiatives in the attempt to respond adequately to this violent border regime.

These channels, structures, networks and initiatives make part of a range of civic activities performed by pro-migrant activists, who aim at the development of systems of knowledge and deployment of tactics for integration, inclusion and solidarity. Pro-migrant initiatives, such as cultural projects and media objects produced by activists to support those who experienced migration or any kind of displacement feature prominently, as well as the work of non-profit humanitarian organizations that conduct search and rescue (SAR) operations of migrant boats in distress on the Central Mediterranean Sea.

To explore these activities that focus on migration struggles along the European borders, this course firstly tasks itself with understanding EU migration policies and the dynamics of the European border regime. It considers pro-migrant activism as a direct consequence of policy frames and measures carried out by state authorities that deal with migration and integration issues. In this sense, the course explores simultaneously pro-migrant activism and states’ processes and practices of migration in order to offer a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of a border regime.
Bearing this in mind, this course provides a linear approach that goes from EU migration policies to border studies, integration and activism. This approach is structured to get students think critically not only about migration and integration regimes, but also about the cooperative actions, collective acts and social expressions articulated by humanitarian activists and migrants across Europe. In doing so, this course introduces students to critical observations that can be applied in analyses that transcend states’ migration policies and border practices as well as different forms of pro-migrant activism.

Given the interdisciplinarity of its topic, the course introduces students to issues concerning politics, nationalism, public policy, communication and, most importantly, migration studies. Students will learn from academics specializing in these fields as this university-wide course is offered on the basis of cooperation of CEU faculty members from different departments and guest lecturers from universities and NGOs around Europe. The course centers on interactive teaching techniques to fully involve students in this learning experience. In addition to this, two roundtable discussions are planned to open up debates about the different ways of capturing and contextualizing the key topics addressed during the sessions.

**Learning objectives**

The course offers students a unique learning experience on migration, borders and integration coupled with civil society activism that will enable students to:

- Understand the dynamics and processes that characterize the EU migration policies and border practices.

- Observe how European borders became a complex interactional space, where non-state actors counter state actors by creating a fundamental arena of politics through acts of solidarity and advocacy that overstep the boundaries of states’ policies.

- Identify inherent migration struggles along the European borders to gain a more comprehensive picture of the different social movements and civic activities articulated by activists.

- Connect social and political theory to practices associated with migration, borders, integration and different forms of activism, in order to reflect on issues involving social responsibility, assistance, protection, and rights.

**Requirements and Assessments**

The course focuses on active participation and critical thinking. Student assessment is divided among course activity, two short position papers to be prepared on topics addressed in the classes, two roundtable discussions and a final project that should discuss state and civil society interactions in Europe’s border regime.

*Class activity and participation 10%*

To participate effectively, students should read the mandatory readings and not be late for class. The mandatory readings will be available on the e-learning site.
Two group position papers (max 500 words) as preparation for the roundtables 20%

Considering that two roundtable discussions will take place throughout the course, the students are expected to submit in groups of max 3 members a short position paper as preparation for each one of these occasions. In these position papers, students are free to choose the topic for their position paper, as long as the topic relates to the themes covered by the previous class sessions. During the course sessions, students should make notes about their views, concerns and questions on topics addressed by the lecturers. These notes will form the basis for the position papers, which are expected to have creative thinking, concise academic writing and an ability to raise critical arguments and questions able to generate an open discussion with a larger group of people. For the position papers, students can also choose a controversial topic related to migration which can then be debated in the later organized roundtables. Students must ‘adopt a position’, meaning they should present arguments and/or evidence that support the views they want to sustain. The position papers should not only describe the issue but clearly present the students position. We are not in favor of any position; the students are free to argue even against migration. What matters is how the students present the issue and how well sustained the points made in the paper are. If a group decides to write on a controversial issue, it may be a smart strategy to discuss both arguments pro- and anti- the position adopted. The main goal of the papers is to make a valuable contribution to the roundtables by offering relevant viewpoints that will lead to healthy conversations within other students and moderators. The papers are to be handed in via the e-learning site five days before each roundtable. Requirements regarding the expected structure of the papers will be provided during the classes.

Roundtables 20%

The roundtables will touch upon the contributions provided by the position papers. The course leader and his assistant will select the most interesting positions for further consideration and discussion in the roundtables. Regarding the conduction of the roundtables, the course leader and the teaching assistant will moderate the discussion. However, depending on the students level of engagement during the discussions, the moderators may eventually propose other questions, as students should be encouraged to tailor their arguments and viewpoints in line with the selected topics. The moderators also have the right to end any discussion if it strays away from the subject at hand. The students will be evaluated according to their performances in the discussions. That is why it is important that all students participate on equal foot in the roundtables, by expressing critical arguments and ideas with supporting evidence. Therefore, the moderators will make sure to provide students the same influence to come forward with their opinions uncensored.

Final project 50%

The final assignment for the class will be an approximately 3,000-word paper that should discuss state and civil society interactions in Europe’s border regime. The project requires creative thinking, concise academic writing and an ability to link theories to empirical research while taking stock of what the students learnt in the course. The requirements regarding the expected structure and content will be provided via the e-learning site. The final project will be graded 'as it is'. Therefore it is essential that students leave some time to consult the Academic Writing instructors regarding the full draft of the project before submitting it.
Course Schedule

20 September – Session 1

Course Introduction
Robert Sata and Lucien Vilhalva de Campos.

Required reading: course dictionary.

27 September – Session 2

Forced Migration, Violence and Enforcement
Lucien Vilhalva de Campos.


4 October – Session 3

Migration Critical Policy Analysis
Lucien Vilhalva de Campos and Manuela da Rosa Jorge (online participation).


11 October – Session 4

Infrastructures of border control
Lucien Vilhalva de Campos.


18 October – Session 5

First Roundtable.
25 October – Session 6

**Borders, Gender and Race**  
*Saskia Stachowitsch and Julia Sachseder.*


8 November – Session 7

**Critical Theory and Migration**  
*Marcos Farias Ferreira.*


15 November – Session 8

**Refugee Integration**  
*Ana Mijic.*


22 November – Session 9

**Anti-Migrant Prejudice from a Socio-Psychological Perspective**  
*Luca Varadi.*


29 November – Session 10

**Second Roundtable.**
6 December – Session 11

**Introducing different forms of activism**
*Lucien Vilhalva de Campos and Natalia Dziadyk.*


13 December – Session 12

**Digital Migration**
*Javier Toscano, Koen Leurs and Amanda Alencar.*


20 December – Session 13

**Now You See Me Moria**
*Lucien Vilhalva de Campos and Noémi (online participation).*

Required reading: Poster campaign in pdf.