

Western University · Dept. of Political Science

The Politics of Immigration and Citizenship

Political Science 3540F
Fall 2026

Instructor: Dr. Zack Taylor
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Office Hours: Zoom by appointment
Class Time: Mondays, 11:30am–1:30pm
Class Location: Check Student Centre

We live in an era of extraordinary international mobility. Large numbers of people now move across national borders, temporarily or permanently, and voluntarily or unwillingly. These movements frequently generate domestic political conflict as countries decide how to respond to migration pressures while also being transformed by them. In this course, we will examine immigration policy, politics, and governance with a primary focus on Canada, but in comparison with other countries and with attention to international organizations and obligations. Topics include the ethics of national borders, immigration and settler colonialism, immigration policy, refugee resettlement and asylum claims, temporary foreign workers, access to citizenship, integration policy, and anti-immigrant sentiment.

This course is designed to be of interest to students interested in all Political Science subfields – Canadian Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, Political Theory, and Global Justice – as well as students in other programs.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course:

- You will become conversant with leading theories of migration politics, policy, and governance and their intersection with settler colonialism, gender, and race.
- You will become familiar with immigration policies in Canada and other countries, including the setting selection criteria for the admittance of permanent residents, temporary labour, refugees, and asylum claimants; multiculturalism and integration policies; and granting citizenship;
- You will become familiar with theories and empirical evidence regarding the evolution of public opinion toward immigrants.
- You will sharpen your analytic and argumentative skills through classroom activities and assignments.

PREREQUISITES

Any of:

- Political Science 2530 Foundations of Canadian Government and Politics
- Political Science 2531 Foundations of International Relations
- Political Science 2537 Foundations of Political Theory
- Political Science 2545 Foundations of Comparative Politics

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

PART I: MIGRATION, BORDERS, AND THE NATION-STATE

Class 1	Sep 14	Introduction: Human Mobility in a World of Nation States
Class 2	Sep 21	Admission, Exclusion, and Justice
Class 3	Sep 28	Rights and Obligations
Class 4	Oct 5	<i>In-Class Essays (Makeup: Oct 9, 3-5pm)</i>
	Oct 12	<i>No Class – Reading Week</i>

PART II: MIGRATION POLICY: CANADA IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Class 5	Oct 19	Dilemmas of Migration States
Class 6	Oct 26	Canadian Immigration Policy: From Racial Exclusion to Human Capital
Class 7	Nov 2	Canadian Immigration Policy: Where Are We Now?
Class 8	Nov 9	Temporary Foreign Labour: Workers and Students
Class 9	Nov 16	Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Forced Migration

PART III: THE POLITICS OF IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Class 10	Nov 23	Citizenship, the State, and Statelessness <i>Migration Policy Country Briefing Due</i>
Class 11	Nov 30	Citizenship and Indigenous Peoples in ‘Nations of Immigrants’
Class 12	Dec 7	Multiculturalism, Welfare Chauvinism, and Anti-Immigrant Backlash
	Dec 10	<i>On-Line Drop-in Session for Exam Review (time TBA)</i>
		<i>Final Exam Held During Exam Period</i>

COURSE WEBSITE

This course makes use of OWL Brightspace. Please refer to the course website regularly for announcements and course information.

COURSE FORMAT

This is a lecture course in which regular interaction by students is expected. Reading the required texts in advance is a necessary prerequisite for doing well in this course and will make for more exciting and insightful discussion.

COURSE MATERIALS

We will read substantial portions of the following book, which is available for purchase in the University Bookstore:

Elrick, Jennifer and Mireille Paquet. 2026. *Immigration and Canada: Sixteen Questions*. Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.

See: https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=UWO&term=W2026A&courses%5B0%5D=001_UW/POL3540F. Beyond the assigned chapters, this book is good, up-to-date reference book for many of the themes we will discuss. All required readings not available through links provided in the reading list will be posted on OWL Brightspace.

METHODS OF EVALUATION

Assignment due dates are noted in the schedule on page 2. Per Faculty of Social Science policy, students are entitled to one makeup assessment opportunity; no additional makeup opportunities will be provided.

Attendance, Participation, and Discussion Questions (15%): Students are expected to attend all classes and to participate regularly and constructively in class discussion. Participation will be evaluated based on the following considerations: relevance, responsiveness to the material laid out in assigned readings and lecture segments, and insightfulness.

Prior to each class, students will submit two discussion questions based on the assigned readings for classes 2, 3, and 5 through 12. Read the material, reflect on it, and then raise two questions that point to areas of confusion or difficulty in your view. Full marks will go to questions that are insightful and seriously engage with the material. *Simply restating the author's research question will result in a grade of zero.* Please submit on OWL by 11:59pm Saturday before class.

In-Class Argumentative Essays (20%): Students will write two short argumentative essays in which they will argue for or against a position regarding an ethical dilemma to do with migration and borders. These closed-book essays will be written in-class by hand. Select two of the following essay statements. In each essay, argue *for* or *against* the statement, backing up your arguments using course readings.

1. "Non-citizen residents should have the right to vote in national elections."
2. "Countries should not be able to select or refuse prospective immigrants based on personal characteristics, including educational attainment and language proficiency."

3. “Temporarily admitting non-citizens with limited rights to fill gaps in the national labour market is morally justifiable.”
4. “Developed countries are obligated to compensate less developed countries for human capital lost through emigration.”

Due to the availability of a makeup session, this assignment is not eligible for an undocumented absence request.

Migration Policy Country Briefing Note (25%): Students will work in groups of four to research and write a policy briefing note that evaluates a selected country’s immigration policy priorities in light of the political pressures they face using Hollifield et al.’s (2022) “dilemmas” – trade-offs between *markets*, *security*, *culture*, and *rights* (see reading in Class 5). Length: 20 double-spaced pages, not including title page, bibliography, and AI appendix. The imagined audience is the deputy minister of immigration of Canada. A detailed description of the assignment will be provided separately.

Final Exam (40%): A study guide will be provided in advance. The exam date will be determined by the registrar. The final exam will cover material from throughout the course. Taking the final exam, and receiving a grader of 50% or more on it, is a prerequisite for passing the course.

COURSE POLICIES

E-mail Policy: All Western University students are required to have an @uwo.ca e-mail account. The instructor will *only* respond to e-mails sent from a Western University account, that clearly identify the sender, and have “POL3540” in the subject line. The instructor will **not** accept assignments by e-mail.

Late Assignments: Students may face unanticipated challenges. To support your learning, flexibility in assessment is built into the evaluation framework. The Migration Policy Country Briefing Note may be submitted up to four days after the due date without penalty (Nov. 27). After this, the penalty is 5 percentage points per day. If you foresee problems meeting the original submission deadline please consult the instructor early; accommodations can always be made with adequate advance notice. This means *at least one week before the deadline*, not the night before the work is due!

Use of AI tools: Our goal in this course is learn about ideas and public policies and form evidence-based opinions about their implications. While if used carefully and effectively AI models such as Gemini, Claude, and ChatGPT can perform many useful tasks, they are no substitute for genuine thinking by human brains. For this reason, the instructor, along with other Political Science course instructor, has emphasized in-person evaluation in this course. The smart use of AI and as a research tool *is* permitted for the Migration Policy Country Briefing Note assignment. Details regarding this assignment will be provided separately. When using AI, reliance on false citations (i.e., AI hallucinations) will also be considered as an academic offense. Although this doesn’t involve plagiarizing from a specific author, it does involve inclusion of AI-generated material without proper attribution, and which simply may not exist to properly attribute.

Statement on Academic Offences: Scholastic offences are taken very seriously, and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences_26SEP.pdf

Plagiarism: Plagiarism involves reliance on the work of another author without attribution. Students must compose their own essays and assignments, in their own words. Whenever students incorporate an idea, or a passage, or data from another author, they must fully acknowledge this by using quotation marks where appropriate and by properly citing the borrowed material. Plagiarism can be direct,

involving straightforward copying of an author's work without providing both attribution and quotation marks. It can be less direct, involving lightly paraphrasing an author's work, rearranging their sentences while maintaining the same general structure and meaning, or stitching together material from two or more sources – these would count as plagiarism even with the source or sources identified, as they rely too heavily upon the way the author or authors chose to present their ideas. Take note that students may satisfactorily write up an author's ideas in their own words, but then neglect to cite the source or sources of the ideas, which also counts as plagiarism. And students may plagiarize themselves by submitting work they have previously submitted in other courses. Plagiarism is a major academic offence, one which is taken seriously at Western. See Scholastic Offence Policy (above) and Procedures in the Western Academic Calendar for more detail:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/undergrad_scholastic_offence_procedure.pdf

Plagiarism Checking: All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Security and Confidentiality of Student Work: All student assignments, tests and exams will be handled in a secure and confidential manner.

Duplication of Work: Undergraduate students who submit similar assignments on closely related topics in two different courses must obtain the consent of both instructors prior to the submission of the assignment. If prior approval is not obtained, each instructor reserves the right not to accept the assignment.

Grading and Grade Adjustments: The Department of Political Science has a policy that undergraduate final course grades will only be rounded to the next whole grade if they end at 0.5 or higher; otherwise, they will be rounded down. In order to ensure that comparable standards are applied in political science courses, the Department may require instructors to adjust final marks to conform to Departmental guidelines.

NON-MEDICAL AND MEDICAL ACCOMMODATION

If you are having trouble with the course material or are falling behind in your work, please contact the course instructor as soon as possible. We can only help you if the lines of communication are open.

Academic Consideration: Please review the Office of the Registrar's policy on academic consideration: https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/index.html. Per Faculty of Social Science policy, students are entitled to *one makeup assessment opportunity* for a missed test/quiz, mid-term, or final exam supported by approved academic consideration. *No additional makeup opportunities will be provided.* Makeup assessments represent the final opportunity to complete a missed course assessment.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Writing Assistance: Learning to express ideas clearly is a central goal of the university experience. If academic writing does not come easily to you, you are strongly encouraged to make use of the Writing Support Centre: <https://writing.uwo.ca>.

Health/Wellness Services: Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

<https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental-health/index.html>

Gender-Based and Sexual Violence: Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts on the Wellness and Wellbeing website <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/index.html>. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Accessible Education Western: Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective graduate program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with Accessible Education Western (AEW), a confidential service designed to support students through their academic program, to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction. Students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are encouraged to register with AEW at: http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html.

READING LIST

All documents should become available if you access them while on the campus network or using Western's EZ-Proxy service: <https://www.lib.uwo.ca/offcampus/remote.html>.
If a link to a journal article doesn't work properly, search through the library website directly.

Note: The instructor will distribute a package of immigration-related statistics derived from Canadian government and other sources. These will update some of the graphs and charts that appear in the assigned readings.

PART I: MIGRATION, BORDERS, AND THE NATION-STATE

Class 1: Introduction – Human Migration in a World of Nation States

- Elrick & Paquet, Ch. 1, "What is International Migration?", pp. 7–14.
- De Haas, Hein. 2023. *How Migration Really Works: 22 Things You Need to Know about the Most Divisive Issue in Politics*. Milton Keynes, UK: Penguin.

Read:

- "Myth 1: Migration is at an all-time high", pp. 15–30
- "Myth 2: Borders are beyond control", pp. 31–44

Class 2: Admission, Exclusion, and Justice

On what basis – in theory – can nation-states selectively admit or exclude migrants? What rights should excluded non-citizens have with respect to deportation?

- Joseph Carens. 1987. "Aliens and Citizens: The Case for Open Borders," *Review of Politics* 49:251–73. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0034670500033817> or <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1407506>
- Miller, David. 2015. "Justice in immigration." *European Journal of Political Theory* 14 (4):391–408. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474885115584833>
- Lenard, Patti Tamara. 2015. "The ethics of deportation in liberal democratic states." *European Journal of Political Theory* 14 (4):464–480. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474885115584834>

Class 3: Rights and Obligations

This week we approach some important dilemmas: Should non-citizens be allowed to vote? What obligations do nation-states have to temporary foreign workers? Do wealthy migrant-receiving states have obligations to poor migrant-sending states?

- Beckman, Ludvig. 2006. "Citizenship and Voting Rights: Should Resident Aliens Vote?" *Citizenship Studies* 10 (2):153–165. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13621020600633093>
- Ruhs, Martin, and Philip Martin. 2008. "Numbers vs. Rights: Trade-Offs and Guest Worker Programs." *International Migration Review* 42 (1):249–265. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764212443815>
- Ferracioli, Luara. 2015. "Immigration, self-determination, and the brain drain." *Review of International Studies* 41 (1):99–115. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210514000084>

Class 4: In-Class Argumentative Essays

PART II: MIGRATION POLICY: **CANADA IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE**

Class 5: Dilemmas of Migration States

What are the major dilemmas of immigration policy in the Global North – principally Europe, North America, and Australia? What different dilemmas do Global South migration states face?

- Hollifield, James F., Martin, Philip L., Orrenius, Pia M. and Hérán, François. 2022. “The Dilemmas of Immigration Control in Liberal Democracies,” Ch. 1 in *Controlling Immigration: A Comparative Perspective*, 4th ed., edited by James F. Hollifield, Philip L. Martin, Pia M. Orrenius, and François Hérán, 3–51. Redwood City: Stanford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781503631670-003>
- Joppke, Christian. 2021. “Immigration Policy in the Crossfire of Neoliberalism and Neonationalism.” *Swiss Journal of Sociology* 47 (1):71–92. <https://doi.org/10.2478/sjs-2021-0007>
- Adamson, Fiona B. and Gerasimos Tsourapas G. 2020. “The Migration State in the Global South: Nationalizing, Developmental, and Neoliberal Models of Migration Management.” *International Migration Review* 54(3) 853–882. <https://doi.org/10.1177/019791831987905>

Class 6: Canadian Immigration Policy I: From Racial Exclusion to Human Capital

How did Canada’s immigration policy regime change in the 19th and 20th centuries? What ideas and external events informed immigration policy? What is the

- Elrick & Paquet, ch. 4 “How Has Canada’s Immigration Policy Changed Over Time?”, pp. 42–54.
- Triadafilopoulos, Triadafilos. 2013. “Dismantling White Canada: Race, Rights, and the Origins of the Points System.” Ch. 2 in *Wanted and Welcome? Policies for Highly Skilled Immigrants in Comparative Perspective*, edited by Triadafilos Triadafilopoulos, 15–37. New York: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-0082-0_2

Class 7: Canadian Immigration Policy II: Where Are We Now?

Canada’s immigration system has changed a lot over the past 15 years dirty work. What happened?

- Elrick & Paquet, ch. 2 “How Does Immigration Work in Canada?”, pp. 15–27
- Elrick & Paquet, ch. 3 “Who Decides About Immigration in Canada?”, pp. 28–41
- Triadafilopoulos, Triadafilos and Zack Taylor. 2024. “The Domestic Politics of Selective Permeability: Disaggregating the Canadian Migration State.” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 50(3), 702–725. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2023.2269785>
- Keller, Tony. 2025. *Borderline Chaos: How Canada Got Immigration Right, and Then Wrong*. The McGill Max Bell Lectures No. 3. Toronto: Sutherland Books.

Read:

- Introduction: “Getting it Right, Then Wrong”, pp. ix–xviii
- Ch. 1, “The Minister Has Some Questions”, pp. 1–12
- Ch. 7, “The Biggest Immigration Surge and the Problems it Brought”, pp. 53–76.

Supplementary:

- Elrick & Paquet, ch. 5: “How Many Immigrants Come to Canada Every Year?”, pp. 55–66.
- Elrick & Paquet, ch. 12: “Where Does Canada Stand in Global Migration Trends?”, pp. 134–140.

Class 8: Temporary Migration: Workers and Students

How do nation-states use temporary foreign labour to fill labour market gaps? What has happened

- Brunner, Lisa Rith and Dhriti Mehta. 2026. "Pathway promises and policy realities: Lessons from the International Student Reset of Canada." *Migration Policy Practice* XV:1 (April), 43–50. <https://doi.org/10.14288/1.0452544>
- Chartrand, Tyler, and Leah F. Vosko. 2021. "Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker and International Mobility Programs: Charting Change and Continuity Among Source Countries." *International Migration* 59(2): 89–109. <https://doi.org/10.1111/imig.12762>
- Lozanski, Kristin. 2026. *Rotten at the Root: Local Agriculture, Jamaican Labour, and Canadian Exceptionalism*. Vancouver: UBC Press. **Excerpt TBD.**

Class 9: Refugees, Asylum-Seekers, and Forced Migration

What is the difference between a refugee and an asylum seeker? How are refugees and asylum-seekers governed in Canada and elsewhere? What obligations do nation-states have to refugees and asylum-seekers?

- Barnett, Laura. 2002. "Global governance and the evolution of the international refugee regime." *International Journal of Refugee Law* 14(2–3), 238–262. https://doi.org/10.1093/ijrl/14.2_and_3.238
- Ostrand, Nicole. 2015. "The Syrian refugee crisis: A comparison of responses by Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States." *Journal on Migration and Human Security* 3(3): 255–279. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23315024150030030>
- Boyd, Monica and Nathan T.B. Ly. 2021. "Unwanted and Uninvited: Canadian Exceptionalism in Migration and the 2017–2020 Irregular Border Crossings." *American Review of Canadian Studies* 51(1): 95–121. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02722011.2021.1899743>

PART III: CITIZENSHIP, STATE, AND SOCIETY

Class 10: Citizenship, the State, and Statelessness

On what basis is citizenship acquired in different countries? What are the pathways to citizenship for migrants? What does it mean to be stateless? What obligations are the stateless owed?

- Shachar, Ayelet. 2009. *The Birthright Lottery: Citizenship and Global Inequality*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Chapter 1, pp. 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674054592>
- Mignot, Jean-François. 2019. "By soil and blood: Citizenship laws in the world." *La vie des idées*, 1–10. <https://shs.hal.science/halshs-02334206>
- Bloemraad, Irene, Korteweg, Anna, & Yurdakul, Gökçe. 2008. "Citizenship and immigration: Multiculturalism, assimilation, and challenges to the nation-state." *Annual Review of Sociology* 34: 153–179. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.34.040507.134608>
- Elrick & Paquet, ch. 11: "Are Immigrants Becoming Canadian Citizens, and Does It Matter?", pp. 124–133.
- Belton, Kristy A. 2011. "The neglected non-citizen: Statelessness and liberal political theory," *Journal of Global Ethics* 7 (1): 59–71. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449626.2011.558733>

Class 11: Citizenship and Indigenous Peoples in ‘Nations of Immigrants’

How should we think about citizenship in immigrant-accepting settler countries?

- Ellermann, Antje and Ben O’Heran. 2021. “Unsettling Migration Studies: Indigeneity and Immigration in Settler Colonial States.” Ch. 3 in Catherine Dauvergne, ed., *Research Handbook on the Law and Politics of Migration*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar. 21–34. https://cenes-narratives-2020.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2022/08/Day-3_Ellerman-and-OHeran-Unsettling-migration-studies.pdf
- Bohaker, Heidi & Franca Iacovetta. 2009. “Making Aboriginal People ‘Immigrants Too’: A Comparison of Citizenship Programs for Newcomers and Indigenous Peoples in Postwar Canada, 1940s–1960s.” *The Canadian Historical Review* 9(3) 427–461. <https://doi.org/10.3138/chr.90.3.427>
- Spoonley, Paul. 2017. “Renegotiating Citizenship: Indigeneity and Superdiversity in Contemporary Aotearoa/New Zealand,” Ch. 11 in Jatinder Mann, ed., *Citizenship in Transnational Perspective: Australia, Canada, and New Zealand*, 209–222. Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing AG. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/west/reader.action?docID=4878128&ppg=215>

Class 12: Multicultural Citizenship, Welfare Chauvinism, and Anti-Immigrant Backlash

What is multiculturalism and how might it facilitate immigrant integration? What drives anti-immigration sentiment? Is there a “progressive’s dilemma” – that is, is there a tension between multiculturalism and the welfare state? Where is Canada headed?

- Bloemraad, Irene. 2022. “Multiculturalism and Inclusive Democracy.” Ch. 2 in Yasmeen Abu-Laban, Alain-G Gagnon, Arjun Tremblay, eds., *Assessing Multiculturalism in Global Comparative Perspective: A New Politics of Diversity for the 21st Century?* New York, NY: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003197485>
- Banting, Keith, Daniel Westlake, and Will Kymlicka. 2022. “The politics of multiculturalism and redistribution: Immigration, accommodation, and solidarity in diverse democracies.” Ch. 11 in Markus Crepaz, ed., *Handbook on Migration and Welfare*, 210–229. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/west/reader.action?docID=6869386&ppg=224>
- Westlake, Daniel. 2018. “Multiculturalism, Political Parties, and the Conflicting Pressures of Ethnic Minorities and Far-right Parties.” *Party Politics* 24(4) 421–43. <https://doi.org/10.1177/135406881667888>
- Besco, Randy. 2021. “From Stability to Polarization: The Transformation of Canadian Public Opinion on Immigration, 1975–2019.” *American Review of Canadian Studies* 51(1): 143–165. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02722011.2021.1902169>

Supplementary:

- Elrick & Paquet, ch. 15: “Are Canadian Attitudes Towards Immigration Hardening?”, pp. 164–170.
- Elrick & Paquet, ch. 16: “Is Multiculturalism Good or Bad for Immigrants and Canada?”, pp. 171–184.