FU/BEST Program

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Course title: Migration: Dynamics and Controversies in Europe and Berlin

Course number: FU-BEST 34

Language of instruction: English

Contact hours: 45

ECTS-Credits: 5  U.S. semester credits: 3

Course description

The European Union consists of pluralist nation-states. This is official policy up to the highest levels of the EU-bureaucracy, in which “any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, color, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age, or sexual orientation shall be prohibited.” Although this is the norm, in the factual every-day power relations between state-actors, citizens and newcomers, diverse forms of discrimination are steadily reproduced. In this course, we will encounter some of these differences between the normative and the factual as we pursue a series of learning objectives.

In the lecture part of each session, migration dynamics, discourses and policies in the wake of the 2015 “refugee crisis” on the European, German, and local (Berlin) level will be introduced. Then we will ground our questioning of the respective topics in content-related as well as theory-oriented texts, which provide us with alternative viewpoints.

Based on constructivist approaches drawn from sociology, cultural and social anthropology and political science, we will question different forms of mobility, while being aware of their historical contexts in the rise of the (European) nation-state. We will especially examine more closely the often highly emotionalized and too often simplistic public debates, which take place mostly around the categories of ethnicity and religion, inasmuch as people do not come only as ethnicized or religionized subjects: They come with their own agency, their genders, professions, political viewpoints, personal tastes, ethics and aesthetics, subcultures and complex worldviews. In other words, they come as individual persons – like anybody else. Thereby we will look at diverse forms of multimedia-based representations of the highly complex and multidimensional dynamics and controversies involved in migration processes. Here we will also think about the consequences of the contemporary politics of fear and identity especially in populist discourse that are played out along the lines of the production and reproduction of fixed cultural boundaries.
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Student profile
Second-semester sophomore or above

Prerequisites
None

Learning Objectives
The course aims at developing differentiated viewpoints on migration matters in the EU/Europe, Germany and Berlin, with regard to the highly complex, often contradictory and contested nature of the field. A final objective will be to explore ways to conceptualize society from the perspective of migration.

Course Requirements
Class participation: 25%
(includes 1 Independent Project report 10%, 1 short input-presentation 15%)
Midterm exam: 25%
Term-Paper: 25%
Final exam: 25%

Literature
A complete reader will be provided, one external text is to be included in the term-paper

Course schedule

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Sessions</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, etc.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session 1</td>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong> Introduction</td>
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<td><strong>Learning Objectives:</strong> Gaining an overview of the course’s topics and major concepts.</td>
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<td><strong>Guest:</strong> Christiane Beckmann from the Welcome-Initiative “Moabit Hilft”</td>
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<td>Session 2</td>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong> The Social Construction of Migration in the EU: Human Rights and the Modern Nation-State</td>
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<td><strong>Learning Objectives:</strong> Outlining major human-rights and refugee-rights policies on the supranational EU-level, we will seek to understand the modern nation-state as a historically constructed reality, bordering, unifying and representing diverse forms of belonging. We will differentiate between the diverse forms of mobility in order to de- and reproblematize migration with regard to its timeless normalcy (The second text is to be read in preparation for the next session already).</td>
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### Session 3

**Topic:** Migration Policy on EU-Level and the (Mis-)Representation of Migration in Times of Globalization

**Learning Objectives:** After an introduction to historical and recent Migration Policy in Europe and Germany, we will learn about the differences and similarities of lifestyle migration vs. escape/economic migration.

**Reading:**

### Session 4

**Topic:** Current Migration Policy in Germany: Dynamics and Controversies I

**Learning Objectives:** How does Germany as a state tackle the highly increased number of people fleeing war, persecution but also economic deprivation in the last years? How are refugees represented in public discourse? We will also have a feedback-round on the independent-project experiences.

**Reading:**
### Session 5

**Topic:** Current Migrations Dynamics in Germany: Dynamics and Controversies II

**Learning Objectives:** Migrants come with their creeds – when and how or: Does this become a problem? What is the difference between exclusive and inclusive integration?

**Reading:**

### Session 6

**Midterm Exam**

### Session 7

**Topic:** Current Migration Dynamics in Germany: Dynamics and Controversies III

**Learning Objectives:** We will engage with some major debates surrounding migration and gender in Germany

**Reading:**

### Session 8

**Topic:** Is there a „Neo-Racism“? „Racism without races“?

**Learning Objectives:** Race is a social and historical construct, shaped by power relations. We are going to focus on the changes in the construction of racism in relation to migration since the end of the guest-worker program in Germany.
### Session 9

**Topic:** Spaces of migrant struggles in Berlin-Kreuzberg (Walking tour)

**Learning Objective:** We will make a walking tour in Kreuzberg visiting spaces of former migrant struggles. With the help of the texts below, we will be able to analyze these struggles from a new perspective, which does not depict migrants as threats or victims but rather focuses on migration as a constitutive power.


### Session 10

**Topic:** The Changing Figure of Migrant Labor

**Learning Objectives:** We will have a closer look on the transformation of the figure of migrant labor from the Fordist factory worker into migrant entrepreneurs and immigrant women care workers.

**Reading:**

### Session 11

**Topic:** The Politics of Fear and Identity: The “Populist Backlash”
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<tr>
<th>Session 12</th>
<th>Looking Forward: Global Migration in the Future</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Objectives:</strong></td>
<td>We will take a look into the future with the recent “Global Compact for Migration” and will wrap up the seminar</td>
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<tr>
<th>Session 13</th>
<th>Final Exam</th>
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