INTRODUCTION
This course aims to inquire into some of the most challenging political and normative issues related to human rights by focusing on international migration. Today around 200 million people are estimated to be living outside their country of birth. In conjunction with this massive human migration, there is an unprecedented increase in the number of people who lack the rights associated with citizenship and become vulnerable to various forms of violence, discrimination and abuse. To what extent can these problems be addressed and remedied by appeals to human rights? In what ways does the contemporary condition of asylum-seekers, refugees and undocumented immigrants reveal the limits, paradoxes, and promises of human rights? What are some of the most illuminating theoretical frameworks that can help us grapple with the problems encountered by various categories of migrants and assess the existing norms of human rights? These are among the questions that will guide our critical inquiry of human rights in this course.

The first section of the course addresses the political and normative implications of understanding rights and citizenship within the boundaries of the sovereign nation-state. We are particularly interested in the limits and problems of debating migrants’ rights within the conventional framework of the nation-state. The second section is centered on the question of whether and how this framework is undergoing change due to the ascendancy of human rights norms. More specifically, we will assess the extent to which international developments regarding human rights have inaugurated a post-national era detaching rights and citizenship from the nation-state. The third section of the course aims to scrutinize some of the pervasive problems encountered by asylum-seekers, refugees and undocumented immigrants in claiming and exercising fundamental rights—e.g. detention, deportation, protracted encampment. Taking these problems as a starting point, we will engage in a critical analysis of the existing norms, practices and institutions of human rights to understand their limits, problems and exclusions. The fourth section looks into some of the contemporary rights struggles waged by migrants. We will address how these struggles, drawing on, contesting, and reinventing the languages of citizenship and human rights, urge us to rethink these two crucial concepts of our political vocabulary.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
This course has three main objectives: (1) to develop a theoretically informed understanding of the complex relationship between human rights, citizenship, nation-state and sovereignty; (2) to acquire a critical, analytical understanding of the underlying assumptions and political effects of human rights; (3) to develop skills of close reading, critical thinking, analytical writing, and public speaking.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
Upon the completion of this course, students should be able to: (1) explain the historical connections between human rights, citizenship and the nation-state; (2) identify the main human rights norms and institutions, including those related to the rights of asylum-seekers, refugees and undocumented immigrants; (3) develop theoretically informed understanding of the challenging problems related to the human rights of these various categories of migrants; (4) critically assess the merits and strengths of
alternative scholarly explanations of these problems; (5) write cogent, persuasive, polished papers on the
topic; (6) articulate their critical assessments of the works on this topic.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Participation and Commentaries:
The success of this class depends on the intensive participation of each and every student. For this reason,
regular class participation and thoughtful contribution to our discussion based on a thorough analysis of
the readings are crucial. If you must miss a particular class meeting because of illness, family emergency,
or a religious holiday that forbids work, you are expected to inform me beforehand and turn in a 2 pp.
double-spaced essay responding to the assigned reading(s) of that week to make up for your missed class
participation. Regular participation in class discussion will constitute 10% of your grade.

Throughout the semester you are expected to submit 5 brief commentaries (2 paragraphs; no more than
400 words in total) on course readings of your choice. These commentaries will give you time to develop
and organize your thoughts about the readings prior to class so that our discussions are as lively as
possible. The first paragraph of each commentary should focus on an issue addressed by the reading(s) of
that particular week; try to choose an issue or a point that is striking or perplexing and demands close
attention. Work with the assigned reading(s) and cite relevant pages to provide textual evidence. The
second paragraph should list two questions related to this issue and a brief explanation of why these
questions are important. Commentaries must be posted on the Discussion Board on Courseworks by 5 pm
on the day before the class. Students are expected to have looked at these postings before class to be
prepared to talk about the issues that are raised in them. These commentaries will constitute 5% of your
grade.

Short Essay:
This assignment (approximately 3-4 pages, 12-point standard font, double spaced) aims to develop skills
of close reading, interpretive analysis, argumentation and critical thinking. You are expected to write an
analytical essay that develops a well-supported argument in response to the questions/topics that will be
provided to you in advance. Your essay should closely engage with the relevant readings, oftentimes
comparing the arguments of different authors and critically assessing their relative strengths and
weaknesses. This assignment is 20% of your grade. It is due at the beginning of class on March 4, and
you will have the questions/topics and additional guidelines a week before this deadline.

Book Review:
You will write one book review (approximately 6-7 pages, 12-point standard font, double spaced). Please
select one book from the following list for this assignment:

- Michel Agier, Managing the Undesirables: Refugee Camps and Humanitarian Government
- Carol Bohmer and Amy Shuman, Rejecting Refugees: Political Asylum in the 21st
- Bonnie Honig, Democracy and the Foreigner (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press,
  2001).
- Anne McNevin, Contesting Citizenship: Irregular Migrants and New Frontiers of the Political
Book review is 30% of your grade. It is due at the beginning of class on April 10, and you will have additional guidelines by early March.

Analytical Paper:
For this final assignment (~6-7 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt. font), you will choose a specific problem or issue related to human rights and immigration (e.g. legitimacy of border controls, exclusions of national and/or postnational membership, limits of the right to asylum, tensions between human rights and humanitarianism, normalization of detention and deportation, protracted encampment of refugees, new rights claims of undocumented immigrants). You are expected to examine this problem or issue by drawing on a wide range of course readings. As part of this final assignment, you will first submit a brief topic statement (1/2-1 page, double-spaced) and a short annotated bibliography (5-6 entries) due April 8 (not graded). I will give you specific feedback about how to approach your question and which readings to consult on the basis of your topic statement and bibliography.

There will be no final exam for this course; instead, the final paper will be due the day of the final examination (35% of the final grade).

Please submit hard copies of each writing assignment.

GRADING
• Class participation: 10%
• 5 brief commentaries: 5% (1% each)
• 1 short essay: 20%
• 1 book review: 30%
• 1 analytical paper: 35%

POLICY ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS
Late turn-ins will be significantly penalized (one-third of a letter grade per day after the deadline). For example, a “B” paper due Monday but submitted on Wednesday will receive a “C+”. Papers submitted more than four days after the due date will not be accepted. Extensions will be given only in the case of documented illness, family emergency, or other crisis situation; please bring any form of documentation available.

Commentaries must be posted on Courseworks by 5 pm on the day before the class. Late commentaries will not be taken into consideration in grading.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS
1. Read the syllabus thoroughly; you are responsible for all of its contents.
2. Complete all the assignments to qualify for a passing grade.
3. Read assigned texts in time before their discussion in class; come prepared with questions or issues to discuss.
4. Regular class participation is imperative. Attend class and participate actively in ways that are constructive and respectful of your peers and the instructor. If you must miss a particular class meeting because of illness, family emergency, or a religious holiday that forbids work, you are expected to inform me beforehand and turn in a 2 pp. double-spaced essay responding to the assigned readings of that week to make up for your missed class participation.
5. Each class session will begin promptly at 10:10 am; as a matter of respect for your peers and the instructor, please come to class on time and remain for the entire session. If for some reason you have to be late one day or must leave early, please tell me in advance (at least 24 hours in advance), and then arrive/depart as unobtrusively as possible.
6. Please turn all communication devices to silent before the class starts. Because of extreme potential for distraction, no laptops are allowed in class. Exceptions can be made only if you have notified me of an individual need to be accommodated due to a disability.
7. Please do not bring food to class; water and beverages in sealed containers are fine.

ACCESSIBILITY
Students with disabilities who will be taking this course and may need disability-related accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to see me as soon as possible. Disabled students who need accommodations related to assignments and/or classroom must be registered in advance with the Office of Disability Services in 008 Milbank Hall.

ACADEMIC HONESTY
Students affirm that all work turned in is their own, and that they have fully and accurately cited every written source, including web-based sources, used in their writing. All students taking this course must adhere to the Barnard College honor code. The honor code considers it “dishonest to ask for, give, or receive help in examinations or quizzes, to use any papers or books not authorized by the instructor in examinations, or to present oral work or written work which is not entirely our own, unless otherwise approved by the instructor.” If in doubt about any of these provisions or you would like to discuss these matters further, please seek guidance from the instructor.

For more information on academic integrity, please see
http://firstyear.barnard.edu/plagiarism/introduction
https://library.barnard.edu/find-books-guides/plagiarism
http://www.college.columbia.edu/academics/integrity

READINGS
The required readings, marked as “CW” in the Course Calendar, will be available for download on Courseworks; please check the “Files and Resources” tab on the menubar to access the readings and a copy of this syllabus.

I highly recommend that you purchase a copy of the book that you decide to review; having your own copy would allow you to work more closely on the book at your own pace. Please notify me by the end of January if you have problems finding a copy of any of the books on the list.

COURSE CALENDAR AND SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

January 23: Introduction to POLS 3002 (No reading)

I. Rights, Citizenship, and the Nation-state

January 28: Entangled Histories of the Modern Nation-state and Human Rights


- 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen – Available online at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/rightsof.asp
• The Universal Declaration of Human Rights – Available online at http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html

January 30: Exclusions of Membership in the Nation-state


February 4: Nation-states, Sovereignty and Borders


February 6: Problems of Rightlessness in a Nation-state Framework

II. Age of Human Rights: Beyond Sovereignty and Citizenship?

February 11: Political and Normative Ascendancy of Human Rights

February 13: Human Rights of Migrants
• David Weissbrodt, The Human Rights of Non-citizens (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), Chapter 2, pp. 18-44. CW


February 18: Beyond National Citizenship and State Sovereignty?

February 20: Beyond National Citizenship and State Sovereignty? (cont.)


February 25: Resilience of Citizen/Non-Citizen Distinction


III. Limits and Problems of the Human Rights Framework

February 27: Human Rights: Critical Assessments

- Wendy Brown, “‘The Most We Can Hope For…’: Human Rights and the Politics of Fatalism,” *South Atlantic Quarterly*, vol. 103, no. 2/3 (Spring/Summer 2004): 451-463. CW

March 4: Human Rights: Critical Assessments (cont.)


March 6: Asylum-seekers and Human Rights

- Carol Bohmer and Amy Shuman, “Producing Epistemologies of Ignorance in the Political Asylum Application Process,” *Identities*, vol. 14, no. 5 (October 2007): 603-629. CW

March 11: Undocumented Immigrants and Human Rights


March 13: Refugees and Human Rights

NO CLASS ON MARCH 18 AND 20 – SPRING HOLIDAYS

March 25: Tensions Between Humanitarianism and Human Rights

March 27: CLASS CANCELLED
• I will be attending a conference; office hours for this week will be held on March 25, Monday, 2-4 pm.

April 1: Human Rights and Detention

April 3: Immigration Detention
• Saadi v. United Kingdom (European Court of Human Rights; case on arbitrary detention of an asylum-seeker) CW

April 8: Deportation

April 10: Deportation (cont.)
• N v. United Kingdom (European Court of Human Rights; deportation case) CW

April 15: Human Rights and Zones of Exception
IV. Rethinking the Politics of Human Rights

April 17: Human Rights: Democratic Possibilities?


April 22: Human Rights: Democratic Possibilities? (cont.)

April 24: Human Rights: Democratic Possibilities? (cont.)
• Jacques Rancière, “Who is the Subject of the Rights of Man?” The South Atlantic Quarterly, vol. 103, no. 2/3 (Spring/Summer 2004), pp. 297-310. CW

April 29: Reinventing Human Rights and Citizenship: Beyond the Nation-State?


May 1: Reinventing Human Rights and Citizenship: Beyond the Nation-State? (cont.)


May 6: Last Day of Class: Conclusion – No reading