Purpose:

In recent years, scholars, policy-makers, and activists have engaged in a series of debates that revolve around critiques of the modernist conceptions of the nation-state in relation to globalization/transnationalism, and empire. The emergence of these critical perspectives in transnational migration studies has coincided with a reinvigorated interest in "critical" approaches to geographic research more broadly. This course is centrally concerned with understanding how difference and inequality are produced through gender, "race," ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, and class, among other social differentiators, and the ramifications of these inequalities for transnational migration in theory and practice. A core goal of the seminar is to de-naturalize that which appears common-sensical, and to ask questions about what is hidden, excluded, and produced through widely shared social science assumptions about migration. The seminar examines critical approaches to migration in order to evaluate what they have to offer our analyses of the global political economy, and to explore how they might inform geographic research more broadly.

Three interwoven themes will guide this seminar. First, we will explore the notion of reworking migration theory with attention to recent debates about geographies of neoliberalism and empire. We will read post-colonial, post-structural, and feminist research to explore conceptual and grounded questions about “globalization” and “development” as articulated from these perspectives. Second, we will examine the implications for geographic theory and method of the critiques, paying particular attention to recent theoretical literature on the role of “the state.” Third, we will investigate the problematic and limited ways in which marginalized issues and groups of people have been incorporated into geographic research and theories of migration. As a whole, our readings and seminar discussions will be directed towards both investigating the empirical and conceptual issues raised for migration studies by critical theory, and exploring the potential opened up by these questions for rethinking global political economy and the production of geographies of inequality.

Course Requirements:

i) Completing all assigned readings prior to class meetings, and participating in critical discussions of those readings.
ii) **Reading Responses.** Three times during the term, all seminar participants will submit a page of reactions and questions raised by the week's readings. These responses (3 total, 1-2 page responses) are due the day prior to the seminar meeting. (30% of final grade)

iii) Leading a class discussion of the readings at least once during the semester. This involves introducing the week's readings and themes, guiding the discussion, and providing an overview/conclusion at the end of the session. The seminar leadership in conjunction with general participation and preparation for seminar discussions will = 10% of final grade.

iv) Completing a research paper (approximately 20 pages) prompted by themes raised in the seminar. This paper (60% of final mark) will be the focus of group discussion in the final weeks of the seminar. Students will be asked to choose a journal outlet early in the semester and plan to submit their seminar paper to that journal by the end of the semester. The goals of this assignment are thus twofold: i) to develop research skills and analysis of a topic of your choosing; and ii) to learn about the process of publication in professional scholarly journals.

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**REQUIRED READINGS**

**Outline of Topics and Readings**

**Session 1 (8 January): Course Introduction**

No assigned reading. Getting to know one another and introduction to the seminar and key concepts

**Session 2 (15 January): Migration Research and Neoliberalizing Space**


**Session 3 (22 January): Neoliberalism and Gender: Definitions and Ramifications**


**Session 4 (29 January): Transnationalism and Migration**


**Session 5 (5 February): Diaspora and Social Reproduction**


**Session 6 (12 February): Intimate Labor and Embodiment**


Silvey, R. and Bisonnette, J.F. “Bodies” in Pratt, positions intro,


**READING WEEK (19 February) NO CLASS**

**Session 7 (26 February): Feminist Geopolitics and Mobility**


**Session 8 (5 March): Migration and Securitization Debates**

Gilmer, Brittany. 2013. “Securitizing the Coast of Somalia: Political Geographies of Piracy.” PhD Dissertation. University of Toronto. (Read intro and Chapter 4)


Session 9 (12 March): Diasporic Futures
No reading assigned; Films

Session 10 (19 March): No reading assigned
*PAPER DRAFTS DUE FOR CIRCULATION AT SEMINAR MEETING TIME.*
Please make 4 copies of your draft to circulate.
Peer meetings to introduce one another to paper topics & research goals.

Session 11 (26 March)
Reading: Peer reviews of final papers.

Session 12 (2 April): Pot-luck gathering, location to be announced.
Brief presentation of final papers. Course wrap-up and evaluations.

Final papers due during finals week: TBD