



ICIR 325 Migration, Diaspora and the Politics of Space

Course Description & Aims:

Spatial issues like territory, connection, isolation and identity are central to international relations and global affairs. How is space produced, experienced and politicized? How do the movements of people and goods challenge our understandings of state sovereignty, territory and citizenship? Why do people move across borders and where do they go? How do and how should local communities, national governments and international institutions respond? What is the role of ‘place’ in community-building and how can it be achieved? By examining the dialectical relationship between social and spatial processes in contemporary Asia, students will understand the motives underlying migration and assess migration policies in the region.

Lecturer:

Dr. Hardina Ohlendorf
Office 2117
E-mail: hardina.ohl@mahidol.ac.th

Assessment

Class participation	10%
Group debate	20%
Presentation	30%
Essay	40%

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Students can analyze issues of space and mobility by combining different theoretical and methodological approaches
2. Students can relate spatial issues and migration to the wider field of international relations and global affairs
3. Students can develop and propose solutions to spatial problems and migration crises

Topic No.	Topic
1	Introduction: Approaches to space, place and identity
2	Understanding migration and mobility
3	Society, migrant labour and politics
4	Refugees and displaced communities
5	Diaspora cultures
6	Group presentations
7	Nation and transnationalism
8	Maps, power and representation
9	Surveillance and public space
10	Community and place-making
11	Student presentations
12	Review and concluding discussion

Assessment Methods and Criteria:

1. Classroom Participation 10%

Classroom participation is based on attendance, preparation for class and the quality of students' participation in class discussions and in-class exercises.

2. Group Debate 20%

In week 8, students will form two groups and debate on a set question. After individual preparation at home, they have about 30 minutes in class to prepare a position as a team before engaging in a debate for about 45 minutes. Afterwards, they will critically evaluate the debate and assess the different arguments proposed.

3. Presentation 30%

Students are expected to identify a relevant research question and conduct independent academic research on their chosen topic. They will then present their findings and argument to the class within 20 minutes. Afterwards, the presenters are expected to answer questions from the audience and to trigger and moderate a discussion about their presentation topic.

4. Essay 40%

The final essay is a response of 4000 to 5000 words to one of several proposed essay questions. Students can come up with individual essay questions but need to seek approval from the instructor first. The paper should be well-organised, make a clear and compelling argument, contain a thesis statement, and fully cite all sources. Students should incorporate course readings as sources and adhere to academic conventions when writing their paper.

Introduction: Approaches to space, place and identity

Topic description: This week introduces the course and familiarizes students with key concepts such as space, place and identity.

Key questions: Why are space and place meaningful concepts for the study of migration? How does place matter for identity constructions?

Expected learning outcomes: Students will grasp important concepts used to explain migration and community constructions and relate those concepts to the analysis of migration and diasporas.

Readings and activities:

- Jody Berland. 2005. 'Place' and 'Space'. In Tony Bennett, Lawrence Grossberg and Meaghan Morris (eds.). *New Keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. Oxford: Blackwell. pp. 256-258; 331-334.
- Dolores Hayden. 'Urban Landscape History: The Sense of Place and the Politics of Space.' In Jen Jack Giesecking, William Mangold, Cindi Katz, Setha Low and Susan Saegert (eds.).
- Harold M. Proshansky, Abbe K. Fabian, and Robert Kaminoff. 1983. 'Place-identity: Physical world socialization of the self.' *Journal of Environmental Psychology*. Vol. 3. No. 1. pp. 57-83.

Student activity: Students will brainstorm about the concepts of space, place, and identity

Understanding migration and mobility

Topic description: This week's class looks at the notion of migration and analyzes how increased migration flows have given rise to the new so-called mobilities paradigm in the social sciences. It will examine technical terms such as enculturation, socialization, adaptation and globalization in the context of migration.

Key questions: What are the connections between migration and social, economic and political development? To what extent may migration and mobility transform the international political and economic order? How may migration affect bilateral and regional relations, security, and national identities?

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to describe the key features of migration and to interpret modern migration flows. Students will be able to critically think about the economic, social and cultural implications of migration.

Readings and activities:

- S. Castles and M.J. Miller. 2003. *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- **Kevin Hannam, Mimi Sheller and John Urry. 2006. 'Editorial: Mobilities, Immobilities and Moorings. *Mobilities*. Vol. 1. No. 1. pp. 1-22.**

Student activity: Students will examine and interpret different graphs indicating migration patterns around the globe.

Society, migrant labour and politics

Topic description: This week's class takes a close look at labour migration as one part of migration and examines how dynamics of labour migration are linked to issues such as poverty, development and governance.

Key questions: How is labour migration related to the changing nature of work and employment? What are the effects of labour migration on development, in both origin and destination countries?

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to understand, interpret and manipulate migration data and key concepts. Students will be able to assess the potential impacts of labour migration on receiving and sending populations.

Readings and activities:

- H. De Haas. 2010. 'The migration and development pendulum: A critical view on research and policy.' *International Migration*. Vol. 50. No. 3. pp. 8-25.
- A. L. Kalleberg and K. Hewison. 2013. 'Precarious work and the challenge for Asia.' *American Behavioral Scientist*. Vol. 57. No. 3. pp. 271-288.
- **E.J. Taylor. 1999. 'The new economics of labour migration and the role of remittances in the migration process.' *International Migration*. Vol. 37. No. 1. pp. 63-88.**

Student activity: Students will identify key patterns of labour migration in the context of Thailand and analyze its impacts on Thai society, politics and economics.

Refugees and displaced communities

Topic description: This week looks at forced migration and introduces the categories of internally displaced persons, refugees and asylum seekers. It will then turn to the representation of forced migrants and displaced people by state agencies and other organizations and critically assess the significance of categorization for political representation.

Key questions: In what forms can displacement of people occur? How do political and legal definitions of migrant categories influence the lived experience of people?

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to critically discuss the distinction between internally displaced persons and refugees and analyze processes and patterns of forced relocation. They will be able to critically evaluate laws and policies related to displacement.

Readings and activities:

- Carl Grundy-Warr and Elaine Wong Siew Yin. 2002. 'Geographies of Displacement: The Karenni and the Shan Across the Myanmar-Thailand Border.' *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*. Vol. 23. No. 1.
- Lachlan McNamee and Anna Zhang. 2019. 'Demographic Engineering and International Conflict: Evidence from China and the Former USSR.' *International Organization*. Vol. 73. No. 2. pp. 291-327.
- **Alison Mountz. 2011. 'Refugees: Performing Distinction. Paradoxical Positionings of the Displaced.' In Tim Cresswell and Peter Merriman (eds.). *Geographies of Mobilities: Practices, Spaces, Subjects*. Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate. pp. 255-271.**

Student activity: Small groups of students will analyze and critically discuss a selected feature story of the United Nations Refugee Agency in a short presentation to the class.

Concepts of diaspora

Topic description: This week examines diaspora communities and the processes of adaptation, hybridization, and insulation in the context diaspora.

Key questions: What is the difference between migration and diaspora? What are positive outcomes of diasporas and what kind of problems do diasporic identities face? How do diasporas connect to notions of citizenship?

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to discuss the dynamics between diasporic communities, identity, nationalism and transnationalism. They will be able to analyze issues of identity, adaptation, and social consequences of different diaspora communities.

Readings and activities:

- James Clifford. 1994. 'Diasporas.' *Cultural Anthropology*. Vol. 9. No. 2. pp. 302-338.
- Robbie B. H. Goh. 2004. 'Introduction: The Culture of Asian Diasporas: Integrating/Interrogating (Im)migration, Habitus, Textuality.' In Robbie B.H. Goh and Shawn Wong (eds.). *Asian Diasporas: Cultures, Identity, Representation. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press. pp. 1-14.*
- Evelyn Hu-DeHart. 2012. 'Chinatowns and Borderlands: Inter-Asian Encounters in the Diaspora.' *Modern Asian Studies*. Vol. 46. No. 2. pp. 425-451.

Student activity: Students will brainstorm about different diaspora communities in their home country and reflect on how those diaspora communities influence and in turn are influenced by the majority group in the country.

Review and Presentations

Topic description: This week offers an opportunity for review and student presentations.

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to communicate complex ideas in an oral presentation. Students will be able to learn and work collaboratively and demonstrate interpersonal and intercultural skills.

Readings and activities:

- To be confirmed by the presenters

Nation and transnationalism

Topic description: This week turns to the ways in which migration has challenged concepts of national citizenship and governance. It will discuss multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism and hybridization forms of belonging that can reconfigure identity constructions and notions of citizenship.

Key questions: How do migration and transnationalism interrelate? How does increased mobility and migration change concepts of citizenship?

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to analyze how border crossings and border cultures may reconfigure identity constructions. They will be able to reflect on how increased mobility leads to the formation of transnational spaces and changing institutions.

Readings and activities:

- Stephen Castles and Alastair Davidson. 2000. 'The crisis of citizenship.' In *Citizenship and migration: Globalization and the politics of belonging*. New York: Routledge. pp. 1-25.
- Nina Glick Schiller and Noel B. Salazar. 2013. 'Regimes of Mobility Across the Globe.' *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. Vol. 39. No. 2. pp. 183-200.
- Saskia Sassen. 2005. 'The Global City: Introducing a Concept.' *Brown Journal of World Affairs*. Vol. 11. No. 2. pp. 27-43.
- Brenda S. A. Yeoh and T. C. Chang. 2005. 'Globalising Singapore: Debating Transnational Flows in the City.' In Jan Lin and Christopher Mele (eds.). 2005. *The Urban Sociology Reader*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge. pp. 316-322.

Student activity: Students will define transnationalism and give concrete examples.

Maps, power and representation

Topic description: This week explores maps as visualizations of space and territory. It will sensitivize students to the ways in which maps are imbued with power and show the potential and limitations of distinct forms of maps.

Key questions: Are maps representing space or are they producing space? Can a map ever adequately represent movement through space?

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to examine and challenge the limits of mapping spatial relations.

Readings and activities:

- John Brian Harley. 1989. 'Deconstructing the map.' *Cartographica*. Vol. 26. No. 2. pp. 1-20.
- Bill Hayton. 2018. 'The Modern Origins of China's South China Sea Claims: Maps, Misunderstandings and the Maritime Geobody.' *Modern China*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0097700418771678>.
- <https://persuasivemaps.library.cornell.edu/about>

Student activity: Students will think about a particular form of human migration and think about different ways in which this movement of people could be effectively visualized in a map.

Surveillance and Public Space

Topic description: This week's class will examine the notion of public space and analyze how technologies of surveillance such as biometric technologies and close-circuit television are changing social and public spaces.

Key questions: How are surveillance technologies altering social spaces? How do societies attempt to balance people's rights to use public space with competing demands for security? How is the governance of public space related to issues of social inequality?

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be familiar with basic ideas and problems related to the surveillance of public spaces.

Readings and activities:

- Darren Byler. 2019. 'China's hi-tech war on its Muslim minority'. *The Guardian*. 11 April 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2019/apr/11/china-hi-tech->

war-on-muslim-minority-xinjiang-ughurs-surveillance-face-recognition (23 April 2019).

- **Jason W. Patton. 2000. 'Protecting Privacy in Public? Surveillance Technologies and the Value of Public Places.'** *Ethnics and Information Technology*. Vol. 2. pp. 181-187.
- Li Zhang. 2001. 'Contesting Crime, Order and Migrant Spaces in Beijing.' In Nancy N. Chen and Constance D. Clark (eds.). *China Urban: Ethnographies of Contemporary Culture*. Durham: Duke University Press. pp. 201-222.

Student activity: Students will form two groups and debate whether citizens have a right of CCTV-free public spaces.

Community and place-making

Topic description: This week turns to the significance of places for urban development and social connections, by focusing on notions of community, attachment and neighbourhood. It will examine how urban planning has tried to contribute to place-making in different cases and assess the potential and limitations of such efforts.

Key questions: How do communities identify with meaningful places? How can urban planning contribute to place-making and community development?

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to approach the issue of place-making from inter-disciplinary perspectives. Students will be able to analyze the relationships between space, place and community.

Readings and activities:

- Winifred Gallagher. 1993. 'Introduction: The Science of Place.' In *The Power of Place: How Our Surroundings Shape Our Thoughts, Emotions, and Actions*. New York: Harper. pp. 11-26.
- **Jane Jacobs. 2005. 'The Uses of City Neighbourhoods.'** In Jan Lin and Christopher Mele (eds.). *The Urban Sociology Reader*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge. pp. 50-57.

Student activity: Students will critically analyze the project of building new creative zones in Bangkok with regard to community development and place-making.

Student presentations

Topic description: This week offers an opportunity for student presentations.

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to communicate complex ideas in an oral presentation. Students will be able to learn and work collaboratively and demonstrate interpersonal and intercultural skills.

Readings and activities:

- To be confirmed by the presenters

Review and Concluding Discussion

Topic description: This week ends the course with a general review and concluding discussion.

Expected learning outcomes: Students will be able to synthesize information and draw connections between different themes and subject areas. They will be able to communicate their ideas clearly and concisely and collaborate with others to formulate findings and ideas.

Readings and activities: TBA