

GRINNELL COLLEGE
Department of History

The Promised Land: U.S. Immigration History

“Once I thought to write a history of the immigrants in America. Then I discovered that the immigrants were American history.”
Oscar Handlin, Introduction to The Uprooted, 1951

This course will use the standard chronological narrative of U.S. history to trace the story U.S. immigration, focusing especially on public policy regarding immigration. The design of the course is rooted in the incontrovertible fact that the population of the United States is comprised almost entirely of immigrants and the descendants of immigrants. Proceeding from that fact, we will explore how U.S. policy on immigration and U.S. attitudes toward immigrants reflect core debates in American life and are integral to every era’s political and social history.

Conceptually, the course centers around the link between American ideals of citizenship, freedom, and independence and American realities of class and race. To ground that linkage solidly in the historical record, we will be looking specifically at how economic and racial considerations shaped the American debates about “fitness” for citizenship, freedom, and independence — and how those considerations and debates, in turn, shaped different immigrants’ experiences. At the same time, we will be looking at how immigrants have participated in the creation of American ideals and have influenced debates about inclusion of newcomers into the Promised Land.

The syllabus for this course does not pretend that we will fully explore all aspects of the “immigrant experience” because there was no single immigrant experience. Rather, the syllabus seeks to provide a coherent narrative on national immigration policy and to explore racial, ethnic, religious, and gender attitudes that aid in understanding the diversity of immigrant experiences. The syllabus intends to demonstrate that the story of immigration is entwined with every aspect of American history as well as to disrupt assumptions about immigrants as either helpless victims or self-determining agents. Finally, the syllabus seeks to introduce students to the wealth of primary documents and secondary literature on U.S. immigration history and to sharpen students’ skills at reading, understanding, and interpreting both types of historical sources. There is, at its base, a fourth course goal: to enhance each participant’s ability to think historically, which means to treat any document or event as a product of its moment in time and place. To achieve that goal and enhance comprehension, we will engage in a series of reading, writing, and speaking exercises meant to strengthen your confidence as lifelong students of history and as citizens who will draw on history to make important policy choices about the human fact of migration.

Victoria Brown's Office: Mears 317
(top floor, southeast corner)

Victoria Brown's Office Hours — Fall, 2008

Mondays: 1:15 - 4:00 p.m.
Tuesdays: 10:00 a.m. - Noon; 2:15 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Wednesdays: 2:05 - 3:00 p.m.; 4:15-5:30
Thursdays: 10:00 a.m. - 10:50; 2:15 p.m.- 5:00 p.m.
and by appointment

I am teaching a Tutorial this fall and chairing the History Department. I do not anticipate that chairing the department this fall will be a burden for you, but I have learned that the job makes unpredictable demands on my time and can, on occasion, require me to cancel office hours. Should that occur, I will e-mail you if you have an appointment during a suddenly-cancelled time.

I am happy to have you drop by during office hours, but if you want to be assured of time with me, I advise making an office-hours appointment beforehand.

Office Phone: ext 3087
Home Phone in Iowa City: 319-354-8867
E-mail: brownv@grinnell.edu

****I live in Iowa City and will work in Iowa City on Fridays this fall semester. I will be staying over in Grinnell on Monday and Wednesday nights. I get my Grinnell e-mail at home and check it regularly. But I will be the first to concede that the information superhighway does not stretch seamlessly between Grinnell and Iowa City. If you really need to reach me, don't depend on e-mail; use the phone. I have an answering machine at home, as well as in my campus office. If you need to reach me on a Monday or Wednesday evening, call my campus office. On other evenings, call my home.*

Be warned: I will growl unattractively if you utter these words: "I couldn't reach you." Thanks to the wonders of modern technology you can ALWAYS reach me, if only to leave a message.

Attached you will find a copy of a **Class Contract**. If you decide to enroll in this course, you must sign the contract that will circulate in class next week. The purpose of this contract is twofold: (1) to make clear the expectations that each individual student must meet for successful completion of this course; (2) to emphasize that learning in a class setting is a community experience which bears community responsibilities. By enrolling in this course, you are not only making certain promises to yourself and to me about your performance, you are also promising your fellow students that you will contribute to their learning by giving them your time, your thoughts, your questions, your interest, and your attention.

Required Texts

Aristide R. Zolberg, A Nation by Design: Immigration Policy on the Fashioning of America (2006)

Thomas Dublin, Immigrant Voices: New Lives in America, 1773-1986 (1993)

“Brown Docs” will be distributed in class

Additional course readings will be on the History 228 Blackboard

Writing Assignments

1. **Short assignments:** There are ***nine short writing assignments this semester***; six of them are due before Fall Break. Though they differ in level of difficulty, each is worth 10 points. So there are a total of 90 possible points on these, but your overall score will be computed from a base of 80 points. This allows you to skip an assignment or drop a low score. I don’t advise skipping the first three assignments as they get you settled into the course and into my grading standards as well as letting me get to know you. As well, you cannot skip the Paper Proposal or the Data Summary for the 1924 speeches as those are both vital to the paper assignment.

Unless otherwise indicated on syllabus, your writing assignments are due in class on the day of the assignment. The purpose of these assignments is to focus your reading and facilitate the day’s discussion. It is pointless to turn in a short writing after the relevant class discussion is over. Please do not ask to do so.

2. **Team presentations:** Each of you will have one opportunity in the first half of the semester to work with several other students, and with me, in preparing to present some aspect of the day’s reading assignment to the class. You will sign up for these team presentations on September 4. Your work on this presentation will be assessed both in terms of your participation in the small meeting with me, before the class meeting, and your presentation in class. 20 points possible.

3. **Take-home exams:** You will have two take-home exams, due on Tuesday, September 23; and Wednesday, December 17 (i.e. Finals Week). You will receive the questions for each of these exams the week before they are due. You will write two essays, selecting from three prompts. See Class Contract for extensions policy on these exams. 100 points possible/exam.

4. **In-class exam:** You will have one in-class exam on Tuesday, November 25. For this exam, you will receive study questions the week before and you will have the option to take the exam on Monday night if holiday plans make that necessary. Again, two essays based on three prompts. 100 points possible.

5. **Documents analysis:** You will write a 7-8 page analysis of the Congressional debate over passage of the 1924 Immigration Act. It will be due on October 16 – the Friday before Fall Break. You will have a choice of what documents you analyze from this Congressional debate. Guidelines for the paper will be distributed in class on September 22 and the documents will be on Reserve in Burling. Every student will have the opportunity to write a revision of this paper. See Class Contract for extensions policy on this paper. 200 points possible.

In all the writing you do for this class, you will be evaluated on the clarity of your argument, the logical organization of your points, the precision of your language, the effectiveness and accuracy of your use of evidence, and the “correctness” of your grammar and punctuation.

Evaluation Policy

Short writing assignments	=	80 points
Team presentation	=	20 points
3 take-home essay exams	=	300 points (100 points each)
1 documents analysis	=	200 points
Participation/contribution	=	<u>200 points</u>
Total points possible	=	800 total points possible

In my experience, those who earn 90% or more of these points will receive an A or A-; those who earn between 80% and 89% will receive some sort of B grade; and those who earn between 70% and 79% will receive a C grade. I do not mention the grades of D or F here because I do not expect anyone in this class to get into that situation. If I see you headed there, we will talk about how you can change direction.

Also, in my experience, students often focus on their points on exams and fail to appreciate the importance of the points they can continually amass with short writings and consistent contributions to class discussion.

If you do the math, you’ll realize it’s silly to fret over getting an “80” instead of an “85” on an exam and then miss the opportunity to get a “7” or an “8” on a short writing by simply not turning it in. If your final grade is important to you, then I strongly advise that you do the short writings and be a regular contributor to class discussion and debates. Attending to *that* part of the work will both prepare you to do well on exams and will give you a solid base of course points.

Take note: “class participation” amounts to one-quarter of your grade. That’s a hefty chunk of my assessment of your performance. What criteria do I use to evaluate your participation?

1. Did you adhere to the SIX points on the Class Contract, which you signed?
2. Did your presence in the class, over the course of the semester, improve the quality of our collective experience? Did you, on a weekly basis, raise a question, add a bit of information, make an observation, engage with a class member on a point, venture an idea? At the end of the term, can I look back and say, “yes, that student contributed to the value of the class”????

3. Participation involves questions, answers, theories, speculations, connections to other classes or earlier readings, jokes, expressions of amazement or anger or curiosity or confusion or dismay or delight. It means bringing your reactions to this material to the room and contributing those reactions in a way that enhances everyone's learning.

4. An observation: students are sometimes shy about floating speculative theories in class. They are quiet in class and then float the speculative theory in an essay exam. This is a poor strategy! Class is the place to put forth a new idea and see what we all make of it. Exams are the place to develop those ideas that you feel confident are sustainable.

5. "C" in participation (140-159 pts.) = you attended regularly and were reliable about assignments but seldom if ever spoke. In short, you did not *demonstrate* engagement with the day's readings.

"B" (160 -179 pts.) = you were regular & reliable about attendance and assignments, and you sometimes contributed in class . . . or you contributed regularly when you were in class, but you were not reliable about attendance and assignments.

"A"(180-200 pts.) = you were regular & reliable writings about attendance and assignments, and you were a regular, reliable participant in discussion. You demonstrated (every week if not every day) an engagement with the readings and a commitment to making the classroom a lively, interesting place to be.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND CLASS ACTIVITIES

Week One: Introduction to Course Goals and Themes

August 28: Reading: Class syllabus; United States Naturalization Laws (1790,1795)

You will receive, in class, a Study Guide for next week's work.

Week Two: Key Concepts and Colonial Beginnings

September 2: Overview of immigration policy history

Reading: Zolberg, Chapter 1; Blackboard: Tichenor, Dividing Lines, Chapter One/
Introduction and Chapter Two

Writing assignment: Respond to the three questions posed on Study Guide.

Note: this assignment is DUE, via e-mail, by 2:00 p.m., Sunday, Aug. 31.

September 4: From Empire to Republic

Reading: Zolberg, Chapter 2; VBDocs: Morgan re: Benjamin Franklin and
Benjamin Franklin, "Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind," 1754 and
letter from Franklin to Peter Collinson, 1753

*Recommended film: "Africans in America, Part I: 1450-1750, The Terrible Transformation" will be
on Reserve in A-V. This 90-minute film is an effective introduction to both the story of
slavery and arguments about the connection between slavery and racism in America.*

Week Three: Americanability

September 9: Slaves, Servants, and "Free" settlers

Reading: Blackboard: Menard, "From Servants to Slaves"; Breen, "Creative Adaptations";
Dublin, Immigrant Voices, Chapter 1, John Harrower Diary

Writing assignment: As you did for Zolberg and Tichenor, identify your nominees for the
most "critical" paragraph in the Menard article and in the Breen article. "Critical"
here means the most important, the most crucial, the KEY paragraph. Identify the
paragraph which you think that each author would point to as the place where he
makes the central point that he wants you, the reader, to carry away from the article.
(Identify your nominees by page number and opening words).

DUE, via e-mail, by 8:00 p.m., Monday, September 8.

September 11/"Patriot Day": What Is An American?

Reading: Blackboard: Kettner, "The Creation of Citizenship"; Fogelman, "From Slaves,
Convicts, and Servants to Free Passengers;" VBDocs: J. Hector St. John
deCrevecoeur, 1782; Ben Franklin, 1784

Writing assignment: One-paragraph statement of Kettner's thesis in "The Creation of
Citizenship."

Week Four: Immigration in the New Republic

September 16: Defining a Nation by Defining Membership

Reading: Zolberg, Chapters 3-5; VBDocs: review U.S. Naturalization Laws (1790, 1795)

Oral assignment: Three, 2-student teams will present their analyses of different Zolberg chapters and the class will respond by summing the parts.

Exam questions will be distributed in class on Tuesday.

September 18: The Irish Case: Race, Religion and Contested Membership

Reading: Blackboard: Roediger, Chapter 7, Wages of Whiteness; Knobel, "Portrayal of Irish Americans;" VBDocs: Population figures; Know-Nothing documents

Writing assignment: One-paragraph statement of Roediger's thesis.

Week Five: Chinese Exclusion: Race, Money, and Law

September 23: Film: "Ancestors in America, Part 2"

Take-home exam DUE at the start of class.

****On Wednesday, Sept. 24, at 4:15 p.m. Linda Keenan ('65) will discuss her work with Minoru Kiyota on his memoir of World War II internment. Students who attend this event may turn a paragraph on Keenan's main point for extra credit up to 10 points. Due September 25.*

September 25: The Debate over Chinese Exclusion

Reading: Zolberg, Chapter 6; VBDocs: Chinese Exclusion: The 1892 Debate

Oral assignment: Two, 3-student teams will present the arguments for and against Chinese exclusion and the class will respond by analyzing the assumptions and motives underlying the arguments.

Guidelines & Data Summary Sheet for paper on congressional debate over 1924 immigration legislation will be distributed.

Week Six: European Immigrants, "Old" and "New"

September 30: Global Changes in Demography and Economy

Reading: Blackboard: Bodnar, Chapter One & Conclusion to The Transplanted; Dublin, Chapter Three: Seyffardt Letters & Chapter 4, Rosa Cassettari; VBDocs: Census material re: "What Changed in the U.S. Between 1880 & 1920?"

Oral assignment: Two, 3-student teams will summarize different portions of Bodnar's chapter and the class will respond by comparing his narrative structure to the alternate structure presented in class.

Wednesday evening film: "Hester Street" will be shown on October 1 at 8:30 p.m. in ARH 301. It is 90 minutes long. Recommended reading on Blackboard, Rob Schorman, "Clothing and Citizenship" in Selling Style

October 2: The "New" Immigration and the New Restrictionism

Reading: Zolberg, Chapter 7 & pp. 243-270; VBDocs: Dillingham Commission Description/Contents and Recommendations; Woodrow Wilson/U.S. History text; President Wilson veto of literacy test bill; Jane Addams on Immigration Restriction; E.A. Ross, "Racial Consequences of Immigration"; Madison Grant excerpts; Lothrop Stoddard excerpts; Laughlin testimony; *Thind v. United States*, 1923; World's Work articles; "A Nation of None or All of the Above".

Week Seven: The Debate over Assimilation, Pluralism, and Restriction, 1890-1924

October 7: Analyzing the 1924 Congressional Debate: Concepts and Methods

Reading: 1924 Congressional Debate on Reserve in Burling; review September 2 readings; Blackboard: Reisler, "Always the Laborer, Never the Citizen"; VBDocs: "Eugenics and the Mexican Immigrant"; Immigration Act of 1924; "A Plan to Keep out Illegal Immigrants;" "Who Was Shut Out?" "Major Sources of Immigrants"

Writing assignment: Complete the Data Summary Sheet re: the congressional speeches you are assigned on that week's Study Guide.

Oral assignment: A team of six students will present their Data Summary Sheets and will lead small groups in discussion re: ways of analyzing this data.

October 9: Pluralist/Cosmopolitan Allies

Reading: Dublin, Chapter 5, Rose Gollup; VBDocs: Abbott, Kallen, Steiner, Speranza

Writing assignment: One-paragraph proposal of your paper topic and list of the speeches you intend to analyze. In assessing your proposal, I will consider the clarity of the question you propose to address, the strength of your logic in explaining why this is a useful question, and the relevance of the speeches you propose to analyze.

****Roger Shimomura will deliver the Convocation at 11:00 as part of the Falconer Galley exhibit, "Return of the Yellow Peril." Students who attend this Convocation and view the exhibit can write up a statement of Shimomura's "thesis" and turn it in for extra credit of up to 10 points. Due via e-mail October 10. You will find a description of the exhibit and activities in VBDocs after the Speranza document.*

******On Friday, October 10 and Sunday, October 12, I will meet with each of you to discuss your paper proposals and your plans for executing your proposal***

Week Eight: The Debate over Assimilation, Prosperity, and Restriction, 1890-1924

October 14: Work, the Labor Movement, and Immigration

Reading: Blackboard: Barrett, “Americanization From the Bottom Up”; Dublin, Immigrant Voices, Chapter 6, Mary Paik and Chapter 7, Ernesto Galarza; VBDocs: Stewart, “Influence of Trade Unions on Immigrants;” Kellogg, “Immigration and the Minimum Wage”; Iowa City Press Citizen editorial, 2008; WTUL, “New World Lessons for Old World Peoples”; “What Should the Worker’s Child Become?”

October 16: All-class reflections on the 1924 Immigration Act

***Paper on 1924 congressional debate due at Mears Cottage by 4:00 p.m.
Turn in printed copies, not electronic.***

Fall Break — Time to lie on a couch and read some memoirs in the Dublin reader, Immigrant Voices. If you did not have time to read the Paik and Galarza chapters last week, take this moment to read them, along with the Itoi memoir/Chapter 8. These memoirs, combined with the Corona memoir on Blackboard, provide a human context for discussing Mexican and Asian immigration in the 20th century. If you want to prepare for Tuesday’s class and won’t have computer access over break, be sure to print off the Sanchez and Corona chapters from Blackboard before leaving campus.

Week Nine: Depression, War, and Immigration

October 28: Mexican Immigrants and the Great Depression

Reading: Zolberg, pp. 267-270; Blackboard: review Reisler, “Always the Laborer, Never the Citizen”; Sanchez, Becoming Mexican American, Chapters 10 & 11; Corona, Memories of Chicano History, Chapters 3 & 4

***Everyone will sign up for a consultation with me THIS week re: paper revisions.
Your revision is due exactly one week after your meeting with me.***

October 30: Film: “America and the Holocaust: Deceit and Indifference”

Reading: Zolberg, pp. 270-292; VBDocs: Kirchwey, “While the Jews Die”
Get started on November 6 reading/Gutierrez, Chapter 4

Week Ten: Impact of World War II

REVISIONS DUE THIS WEEK

November 4: Film: “The Rabbit in the Moon”

This excellent film is 90 minutes long and deserves some discussion alongside Friday’s film, so we will gather at noon. There will be a class decision about how to manage lunch.

Reading: Dublin, Immigrant Voices, Chapter 8, Kazuko Itoi, “Nisei Daughter”

November 6: World War II, Mexican Americans and the Bracero Program

Reading: Blackboard: Gutierrez, Walls and Mirrors, Chapters 4 & 5; Ngai, Impossible Subjects, Chapter 4; VBDocs: Hart Stillwell Warns of the Problem; American G.I. Forum and Texas State Federation of Labor Condemn Undocumented Mexican Immigration

Week Eleven: The Cold War, Civil Rights & Immigration Reform

November 11: The Cold War and American Identity

Reading: Zolberg, Chapter 9; VBDocs: Truman, “Whom Shall We Welcome”; JFK, A Nation of Immigrants

November 13: The 1965 Immigration Law & “Liberal Nationalism”

Reading: Blackboard: Ngai, Chapter 7: “The Liberal Critique;” VBDocs: LBJ Remarks; news articles re: 1965 law; Provisions of 1965 law and Family Preference Chart; Writing assignment: One-paragraph statement of Ngai’s thesis

Week Twelve: U.S. Immigration post-1965

November 18: The Law of Unintended Consequences

Reading: Zolberg, Chapter 10 and Appendix, “Immigration Graphs;” VBDocs: “Changing Profile of America”

November 20: The Immigration Politics of “La Raza”

Reading: Blackboard: Gutierrez, *Sin Fronteras?*; Corona, Memories of Chicano History, Chapter 15

Study questions for in-class exam will be distributed.

Week Thirteen: Reflection and Thanksgiving

November 25: In-class exam: a time to reflect

November 27: THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week Fourteen: Immigration Policy in the Reagan Revolution

December 2: Reaction to Reform

Reading: Zolberg, Chapter 11

Writing assignment: One-paragraph statement of Zolberg’s thesis in Chapter 11.

December 4: Immigration Reform in the Bush II Years

Reading: Blackboard: G. Hanson, Chapter 2; "Illegal Immigration," in CQ Researcher, May, 2007; VBDocs: Bush, Calavita, Portes on Guest Worker plan; news articles on congressional efforts at reform legislation & grass-roots activism

Week Fifteen: The Immigration Debate at the Start of the 21st Century

December 9: The Terms of the Debate: Economics, National Culture, and Security

Reading: Blackboard: Lowenstein, "The Immigration Equation;" Huntington, "The Hispanic Challenge;" Hutchison, "Strong Objections;" Flynn, "The False Conundrum"

December 11: Immigration Policy Prospects

Reading: Zolberg, Conclusion; Blackboard: Isbister, "Are Immigration Controls Ethical?"; Study Guide will provide URL's for FAIR, Immigrant Rights Foundation, National Immigration Law Center, ACLU, SEIU, McCain, Obama, and Tancredo

Oral assignment: Students will report out on what they found in searching immigration policy sites on the web.

Comprehensive exam questions will be distributed in class

Finals Week:

Wednesday, December 17, 4:00 p.m.: Take-home exam due in my mailbox in Mears Cottage or via e-mail.

Memo to: V. Brown Students
From: V. Brown
Re: Class Contract

On the back of this sheet you will find a copy of a Class Contract. If you decide to enroll in this course, you must sign the copy of the contract that will circulate in class next week. The purpose of this contract is twofold: (1) to make clear the expectations that each individual student must meet for successful completion of this course; (2) to emphasize that learning in a class setting is a community experience which bears community responsibilities. By enrolling in this course, you are not only making certain promises to yourself and to me about your performance, you are also — just as importantly — promising your fellow students that you will contribute to their learning by giving them your time, your thoughts, your questions, your interest, and your attention.

Implicit in this contract is my promise that I will come to class prepared and ready to focus solely on the material for this course, AND that I will:

- provide, at the appropriate time, hand-outs noted on syllabus
- make assignments clear and (cheerfully) repeat instructions if they are not clear
- hand out exam questions or paper guidelines when noted on syllabus
- return written work within 14 days or explain any delay to the class
- be available to students during office hours and when special appointments are made
- return phone calls when students leave messages on either one of my phone answering machines and return e-mails ASAP.

CLASS CONTRACT: HISTORY 228

As a class member, I agree to:

1. Regular attendance at class meetings and at any special meetings held outside of class to prepare for class activities.

In addition, I understand that it is **my** responsibility to get hold of any hand-outs, assignments, and/or notes missed due to absence from class.

2. Completion of the day's readings and sufficient review of those readings to allow for my active participation in discussion.

3. Consistent, responsible participation in class discussion.

I understand that successful class discussion depends on my participation, my willingness to jump in early, and my responsiveness to what others in the room are saying. I agree to play an active role in the classroom by asking as well as answering questions, by sharing thoughts I had while preparing for class, and by interacting with the readings/authors, Prof. Brown, and my fellow students — even if that means respectfully disagreeing in order to enhance our deliberations.

4. Respectful regard for others' viewpoints.

Out of respect for all those in the past who have been labeled, dismissed, and denigrated because of their opinions, I promise to listen to each member of the class, to work at understanding their views, and to practice ways of responding which invite dialogue.

5. Completion of written work by the due date.

I understand that short writing assignments are meant to enhance class discussion. Therefore, handing them in after class not only defeats the purpose but borders on "getting the answers" from my classmates. I agree not to ask for "extensions" on daily assignments.

I understand that I have the unconditional right to ask for **one** 48-hour extension on either my research paper or on one of the two take-home exams. No reason for the extension need be offered. But, I understand that if I wish to invoke my 48-hour extension, I **must** inform Prof. Brown of that fact, via e-mail, at least 24 hours before the due date. Failure to declare ahead of time that I am "invoking my extension option" will cost me 10 points for every day the work is late.

(Note that the research paper is due on the Thursday before Fall Break, so if you take an extension you must be able to e-mail the paper by 1:00 p.m., Saturday, October 18.)

6. Careful attention to the quality and appearance of my written work.

Understanding that Prof. Brown will be devoting significant time and energy to addressing students' genuine writing problems, I realize it is crucial that she not waste any time correcting grammar, spelling, or punctuation errors that I know how to correct myself. Therefore, I agree to proofread my written work so that I do not misrepresent my command of mechanics. I understand that these types of errors will definitely lower my grades on written work.