

## Refugees, Asylum Seekers and the American Experience

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Alternative Student Breaks Student Organized Seminar  
SESP 298-0, Winter 2006  
Monday 6:30-9:30, Annenberg G32

### Student Organizers:

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### Expectations:

Everyone is expected to participate in the ASB spring trip to Denver. If there happens a problem either now or during the quarter, please talk to us and we'll try to work something out. Since the course is a student-organized seminar, and we (the "organizers") are far from experts in the area, we will all be learning as we go, from one another. In order for this to work, attendance and participation is imperative. Whenever possible, contact us before class if you will be absent. If lack-of-attendance becomes a problem, we will address the issue individually and on a case-by-case basis. This is a Pass/No Credit course and we have no intention of *not* passing anyone as long as three expectations are met:

1. Attendance and Active participation- this includes coming to class with one topic/question/current event regarding the weekly reading to be discussed.
2. One "Academic" Presentation- For this you may work in groups or individually on presenting to us a current issue that interests you regarding policy, politics, economics, etc. Handouts and some form of group engagement would be great. The presentations will align with our weekly topics and presentation slots will be decided at the beginning of the quarter.
3. One "Creative" Presentation- For this, you could organize a field trip, present us with a slide show/somewhat academic discussion of a personal experience, organize a movie night, or organize one of our trips to heartland to be a college night for the youth they work with. Let the fun and creativity flow!

### Weekly Reading and Activities:

Week 1- January 9: Introductions and Definitions

- Guest Speaker
- Icebreakers, Goals and Objectives, "Secretarial Things"
- Definitions of terms and history
- **Reading:** Gibney, "The Ethics and Politics of Asylum;" Bernstein, "Refugees from Political Storms;" UNHCR "Protecting Refugees"

Week 2- January 16: Development of Policy

- Historical context
- Foreign policy influences
- Resettlement
- **Reading:** Tazreiter, "Asylum Seekers and the State" pg. 39-55; Gibney, "The United States: the making and breaking of a refugee consensus;" Gingrich,

“Anthropological Approaches to Understanding Refugees;” America’s Newcomers

- **Listen to:** <http://www.chicagopublicradio.org/programs/worldview>

October 20, 2004:

1. U.S. House Bill on Refugees- Doug Cassel
2. Local Integration as a Solution: Karen Jacobsen
3. Coming Home: Refugee Group Resettles in Minnesota, St. Paul Mayor Randy Kelly

Week 3- January 23: A Heartfelt Night

- Activities at the Heartland Alliance
  - Other Activities at Heartland Café
  - Debrief the role of organizations such as Heartland Alliance. Where does policy end and private organizations take over?
  - **Reading:** Tazreiter, pg. 57-81
  - **Listen to:** <http://www.chicagopublicradio.org/programs/worldview>
- October 19,2004:** Oral Histories of Chicago Immigrants, Jeff Libman

Week 4- January 30: The Everyday

- *Well-Founded Fear* viewing and discussion
- **Reading:** Poem by Diangitukwa Fweley; Callamard, “Refugee Women;” Ahearn, et al. “The Experience of Refugee Children

Week 5- February 6: Human Rights and Refugee Rights: a legal view

- Guest Speaker: Professor Reno
- Early Volunteering at Heartland
- **Reading:** Loescher, “Toward the Future: The UNHCR in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.” Weiss, “Policies of Humanitarian Intervention”

Week 6- February 13: Doing it for ourselves

- Paperwork, process and red tape
- **Readings/Activities TBA**

Week 7- February 20: Narrowing In

- African Refugee policy
- Cultural Event
- **Reading:** “America’s Policy in Africa”

Week 8- February 27: Bringing it all together and taking it to Denver

- **Reading:** Simmons, “African immigrants upset at service center closure;” Sorenson, “African Refugees: Development Aid and Repatriation;” Stein, “When Refugees Go Home”

Week 9- March 6: (Reading Week)

- Guest Speaker- Mary Fabri, Kovler Center
- The “ASB” Aspects- Trip final details, Carmen’s!

Week 10- March 13: (Finals Week)

- Lindsey and Emily make you dinner!

Week 11- March 18: And we're off to Denver!

**Course Material:**

The assigned readings are in a course packet available to you through the SESP Student Affairs Office. All other materials will be emailed or copied for you, with the exception of materials for your individual projects.