

**Economics 232 S**  
**The Economics of Migration**

**Dr. Gouri Suresh**  
**Spring 2016**

Meetings: MWF 10:30 am – 11:20 am in Chambers 2187

Office Hours: MW 1:00 pm – 3:30 pm, TR 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm, and by appointment

Office (Phone): Chambers 2286 (x2755)

Email: [shgourisuresh@davidson.edu](mailto:shgourisuresh@ davidson.edu)

**Brief Course Description (for College Catalog)**

Types of migration, economic basis for migration, aggregate and distributional consequences on migrant sending and receiving countries, fiscal and other effects of migration, ‘brain-drain’ and ‘brain-gain’, remittances, migration policy.

Satisfies the Social-Scientific Thought distribution requirement.

Counts as an *Economics* x30 elective.

Counts as an *Economics* ‘S’ course (contains a significant writing component).

Course Ceiling: 16 students.

Justification: The economics of migration is an important and thought-provoking topic of study.

**Prerequisites**

Economics 101

**Course Description**

The objective of this course is to examine the causes and consequences of international migration on the residents of migrant-sending and migrant-receiving countries as well as on migrants themselves. We will study economic models of individual and family migration decisions in the context of recent and historical trends in migration worldwide. Next, we will explore the labor market consequences of migration on migrant-sending and migrant-receiving countries. We will also investigate fiscal and other effects of migration, study models of remittances, and consider issues related to ‘brain-drain’ and ‘brain-gain’. Finally, we will analyze arguments and motives for various migration policies and consider the welfare effects of such policies in terms of short-run growth, long-run growth, and inequality.

**Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this course, successful students will be able to:

- Explain, apply, and analyze major economic theories related to international migration.
- Describe the consequences of migration on labor markets across various skill levels.
- Discuss economic arguments related to remittances, ‘brain-drain’/‘brain-gain,’ and the fiscal effects of migration.
- Assess migration policy implications in terms of distributional and aggregate effects, national and international effects, and short-term and long-term effects.
- Apply theory and data to support various migration policy recommendations.
- Write economics papers that incorporate economic models, data, and policy analysis.

### **Statement on Inclusion**

Your success in this class is important to me. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to help you better understand the materials in this course, and I will try to do it if I can. Having trouble with the concepts discussed in class? Come talk to me! Not sure about solving problem sets? Come talk to me!

Davidson College is committed to insuring full access for all qualified students in its programs. If you have a documented disability (or believe you may have a disability) that might affect your work in this class, please contact the Academic Access and Disability Resources Office (Nance Longworth, [nalongworth@davidson.edu](mailto:nalongworth@davidson.edu)) as soon as possible. Speak with me as well so that we can collaborate on your success in the course.

### **Textbooks**

One copy of each of the textbooks listed below will be placed on reserve at the library. The last item on the list is freely available online from The World Bank.

- Bansak, Cynthia, Nicole B. Simpson, and Madeline Zavodny. 2015. *The Economics of Immigration*. Routledge.
- Borjas, George J. 2011. *Heaven's Door: Immigration Policy and the American Economy*. Princeton University Press.
- Collier, Paul. 2013. *Exodus: How Migration Is Changing Our World*. Oxford University Press.
- Legrain, Philippe. 2014. *Immigrants: Your Country Needs Them*. Princeton University Press.
- Schiff, Maurice, and Çağlar Özden, eds. 2007. *International Migration and Economic Development*. World Bank Publications.

### **Supplemental Readings**

I will assign numerous supplemental readings that will either be in the form of documents uploaded on Moodle or handouts distributed one week prior to the related in-class discussion. The following list includes a sample selection of papers and books you will be expected to read in part of full.

- Borjas, George J. 1995. "The Economic Benefits from Immigration." *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 9 (2): 3–22.
- Carens, Joseph. 2013. *The Ethics of Immigration*. Oxford University Press.
- Chami, Ralph, Adolfo Barajas, Thomas Cosimano, Connel Fullenkamp, Michael Gapen, and Peter Montiel. 2008. *Macroeconomic Consequences of Remittances*. International Monetary Fund Occasional Papers 259. International Monetary Fund Publishing Services.
- Clemens, Michael A. 2011. "Economics and Emigration: Trillion-Dollar Bills on the Sidewalk?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 25 (3): 83–106. doi:10.1257/jep.25.3.83.
- Gouri Suresh, Shyam. 2015. "The Aggregate and Distributional Effects of Migration Policies: A Multifaceted Analysis." Working Paper 15-01. Davidson College, Department of Economics.
- The World Bank. 2009. *World Development Report 2009*. World Bank Publications.

### **Grading**

*Response Papers (12% of the course grade)*

Over the semester, I will assign eight readings for discussion (only the top six will count towards your grade). For each of those readings, you will need to write a response paper. These papers need to be done independently and pledged. A response paper should be concise (no longer than 500 words) and should successfully:

- a) Summarize three main points from the article. Each of the three points should be a complete sentence (underlined or in bold) in your own words, directly followed by a brief discussion or elaboration of that point (two or three sentences only), (no more than 300 words)
- b) Analyze/critique/apply one aspect of the article further, (no more than 120 words) and
- c) List four open-ended questions suitable for class discussion (no more than 80 words).

*Class Participation and Moodle Discussion (8% of the course grade)*

Course meetings will be a combination of lectures and discussion. Participating in these discussions is an important part of the course. You will also have the opportunity to contribute your thoughts and respond to others through a forum in Moodle. To initiate a discussion, you could either discuss some topic covered in class or talk about how some article that you read on a blog, journal, or newspaper connects to material presented in class.

*Research Paper (22% of the course grade)*

You will be required to write a research paper for this course. Your research paper could either be a migration policy proposal or a careful evaluation of an existing migration policy. The paper should be no longer than 2500 words (excluding the bibliography) and should include references to theory and data as well as discuss distributional and aggregate consequences of the policy under consideration. The grade for the research paper will be based on the following submissions:

- a) **Completed Paper (8% of the course grade):** Submit a completed version of your paper to me and two designated peers who will act as referees for your paper. **Due on Friday, April 15.**
- b) **Peer Review Referee Report (6% of the course grade):** you will be designated as a peer reviewer for two papers and you need to submit a referee report for each of those papers. Your report for each paper should include a brief summary of the paper as well as helpful and detailed suggestions for improvement, both in terms of content and presentation. Each report should be between 400 and 600 words. **Due on Monday, April 25.**
- c) **Revised Paper and Response to Referees (8% of the course grade):** your final draft should incorporate any changes you see fit based on my comments and the comments from your peers. In addition, you need to write a brief response to your referees (no more than 250 words devoted to each referee) explaining how you have addressed their concerns or why you have chosen to ignore them. **Due on Wednesday, May 4.**

*Research Paper Presentations (3% of the course grade)*

During the last week of classes, you will be required to do a brief presentation of your research paper to the class. You will be allotted four minutes to present your paper which will be followed by two minutes of questions and answers. **Monday, May 2 and Wednesday, May 4.**

*Problem Sets (12% of the course grade)*

Six problem sets will be assigned over the semester. The questions will test your understanding of concepts and may require some math. The problem sets are designed to help prepare you for reviews.

*Reviews and Exams (43% of the course grade)*

- a) **Midterm Review (18% of the course grade): Friday, March 18.**
- b) **Final Exam (25% of the course grade): Self-scheduled during finals.**

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