

**COMPARATIVE POLITICS CAPSTONE:
MULTICULTURALISM & INTEGRATION (PS 1381)**

Professor Aala Abdelgadir
Fall 2025

Class Hours: Monday 1PM - 3:30PM

Classroom: 4801 Wesley W Posvar Hall

Office Hours: Wednesday 2 – 4 p.m. or by appointment

Office Hour Sign-up: <https://calendly.com/aabdelg>

Office: 4815 Wesley W Posvar Hall

Email: aala.abdelgadir@pitt.edu

COURSE SUMMARY

Questions of immigration, multiculturalism, and integration have had a recent resurgence in the public discourse and policymaking circles. This course is designed to investigate such questions from a social science perspective. Over the course of the semester, we will investigate questions such as: What policies work for managing diversity and multiculturalism? What drives native attitudes towards immigrants? Under what conditions do immigrants assimilate into local culture? What works for reducing prejudice against immigrants? We will address these and similar questions by examining theoretical approaches and synthesizing the conclusions of a number of empirical studies focused on the United States and Europe.

In addition to answering these substantive questions, a major goal of this course is to develop a research proposal by each student on a topic related to multiculturalism and integration. The course will guide students to create an extensive, carefully-written and revised final paper of “writing sample” quality. In working toward this goal, the course will deepen student familiarity with the writing methods of political science including practice giving feedback and revising written work.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Seminar participation (20%)

A seminar course is only successful if everyone comes fully prepared. We are all expected to attend having carefully and critically read all the assigned reading. The reading load is relatively heavy but reasonable, and on most weeks requires you to read three texts and to skim one or two more. For all the readings, you should pay special attention to the question(s) asked, the key arguments, the methods, and the empirical evidence. Remember to read with an eye toward what the broader debate in the field is and where future research – including your own – might take us. Importantly, even (and especially) if you agree with the conclusions of the text, make sure to come up with potential theoretical, empirical, or normative challenges to the author’s arguments. The purpose of our readings and discussions is not only to learn something about the week’s topic but also to hone our analytical skills. If students do not appear to be completing the readings ahead of class, I

reserve the right to require posting one critical comment on the canvas class website before class each week, by 5 p.m. Sunday.

Critical Analysis Responses (30%)

Learning how to constructively criticize in writing is key to being part of a scholarly community. Each student will write three critical reviews (one-page single-space, 12 pt Times New Roman, one-inch margins) of assigned texts. You may choose the texts that you will be presenting from the first twelve weeks of the course. You may not select more than one text per week. In Week 1, each of you will pick these readings. I reserve the right to recommend you choose a different text. You must submit this short response by Sunday at 5 p.m. of the week your respective text will be discussed in class.

Research proposal (50%)

Each student will submit a final research proposal on a topic of their choosing relating to immigration and multiculturalism. You should meet with me during office hours early in the semester to discuss your ideas for this proposal. The proposal should be between 12-15 pages (double-spaced, one-inch margins). It will be by 5 p.m. on December 11, 2025.

- **Research topic** (10%): This is a 2-page (double-spaced, one-inch margins) description of your project. It should introduce your research question and situate your research question in the literature. At the end of the document, include an annotated bibliography of the literature you are engaging with. It will be due before class in Week 6, by 9 a.m. on September 29, 2025.
- **Prospectus** (10%): This is a 4-page (double-spaced, one-inch margins) pitch of your final research proposal. The prospectus should describe your topic, your research question, your current working hypothesis, and the data/case studies you will be looking into to test your hypotheses. It will be due before class in Week 9, by 9 a.m. on Sunday October 20, 2025.
- **Draft paper** (10%): This is an 8-10 page draft of your final paper (double-spaced, one-inch margins). You will receive instructor feedback as well as peer feedback in class. It will be due before class in Week 13, by 9 a.m. on Sunday November 17, 2025.
- **Final paper** (20%): The proposal should identify a gap in the literature, articulate a clear research question to address this gap, survey the relevant literature, and propose a set of hypotheses. It should then articulate the empirical tests the student would hypothetically carry out to test their theoretical expectations. If you wish, you may include preliminary empirical evidence, though this is not required. It will be due 5 p.m. on December 11, 2025.

COURSE POLICIES

Office hours sign-up

Please sign up to office hours using <https://calendly.com/aabdelg>. I recommend you make use of office hours to get clarification about course materials and support on class assignments.

Communication

I will primarily communicate with the class via Canvas. In general, if you have questions about assignments or reading, try to use Canvas so your classmates can benefit from the question. If you

have personal questions, email me privately. I respond to emails during normal university work hours, and students can expect my response within 1-2 working days.

Reading materials

There is no required textbook to purchase for the class. Assigned papers and book chapters will be available on Canvas.

Grade policy

Your grade in this course is determined as per the following scale. Grades will be weighted according to the course expectations laid out above.

97-100=A+	94-96=A	90-93=A-	87-89=B+	84-86=B
80-83=B-	77-79=C+	74-76=C	70-73=C-	67-69=D+
64-66=D	60-63=D-	59 and below=F		

Late assignments

Late assignments will be penalized 10% for every day beyond the designated due date and time. Assignments more than 3 days late will not be accepted.

Regrading requests

Grades will be based on student performance. Grades are not negotiable. Every effort will be made to grade your work fairly. If you have a **serious reservation** about how you have been graded, you must submit a one-page comprehensive description of the mistake you perceive took place. Such requests will only be accepted within a week after graded work has been returned to students.

Absences

I will take attendance each time we meet. You are allowed one unexcused absence during the semester. You do not need to tell me why you will be absent or bring any sort of documentation to justify your absence. Each additional unexcused attendance will generate a 1% reduction in your participation grade (for a maximum of 15% reduction in your participation grade). To have any additional absence excused, you will need to provide documentation within one week of your absence. For any excused absence, you are required to submit a 2-page response paper (double-spaced, one-inch margins) that discusses your thoughts on the assigned texts of the week you missed. This response paper be submitted within one week of the missed seminar. Separately, Pitt accommodates students whose religious obligations conflict with attendance. Please inform me in Week 1 if you will require any such accommodation.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services, 140 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890 as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course. For more information, please see <https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/drs/>.

Academic integrity

Students in this course are expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, and other acts of dishonesty (including using words or ideas produced by ChatGPT) will not be tolerated. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated by the instructor, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. More information and the complete policy can be found at <http://www.provost.pitt.edu/info/ai1.html>.

Collaboration

Collaboration is a key part of academic research, and you are encouraged to help each other develop your ideas and improve your writing. However, all written work you submit must be your own.

Technology

Laptops or tablets will only be allowed to take notes and review class materials. If you are using technology for another purpose, I may not allow you to continue using it. Use of cellphones in class will not be accepted; please turn off your cellphone while in class.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 (August 25): Introduction

We will discuss why each of you wishes to take this class as well as your learning goals for the semester. Please come having read the syllabus carefully and having picked the top 5 papers you are interested in presenting. Finally, I will provide an overview of how to evaluate empirical work in the social sciences, with a special focus on the fundamental problem of causal inference.

Kahloon, Idrees. "Economists Love Immigration. Why Do So Many Americans Hate It?" *The New Yorker* June 5, 2023. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2023/06/12/immigration-economy-book-reviews>

Week 2 (September 1): LABOR DAY – NO CLASS

Week 3 (September 8): Theoretical debates about immigrant inclusion

Kymlicka, Will. Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights. Clarendon Press, 1995. Read chapters 3, 6, and 9.

Koopmans, Ruud, ed. Contested citizenship: Immigration and cultural diversity in Europe. Vol. 25. U of Minnesota Press, 2005. Read chapter 1.

In case you need background: Song, Sarah. 2010. Multiculturalism. In The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, edited by E. N. Zalta, at <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/multiculturalism/>

Week 4 (September 15): PROFESSOR TRAVELING – NO CLASS

Week 5 (September 22): Theoretical debates about immigrant inclusion – part 2

Berry, John W. 2005. "Acculturation: Living Successfully in Two Cultures." International Journal of Intercultural Relations 29 (6): 697–712.

Alba, Richard, and Victor Nee. 2003. Remaking the American Mainstream. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Read chapter 2.

Harder, Niklas, et al. "Multidimensional measure of immigrant integration." Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences 115.45 (2018): 11483-11488.

Week 6 (September 29): Incorporation policies and effects

*** Research topic due ***

Hainmueller, Jens, Dominik Hangartner, and Giuseppe Pietrantonio. "Catalyst or crown: Does naturalization promote the long-term social integration of immigrants?" American Political Science Review 111.2 (2017): 256-276.

Goodman SW, Wright M. 2015. Does mandatory integration matter? Effects of civic requirements on immigrant socio-economic and political outcomes. *J. Ethnic Migr. Stud.* 41(12):1885–908.

Week 7 (October 6): Discrimination

Adida, Claire L., David D. Laitin, and Marie-Anne Valfort. "Identifying barriers to Muslim integration in France." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 107.52 (2010): 22384-22390.

Abdelgadir, Aala, and Vasiliki Fouka. "Political secularism and Muslim integration in the West: Assessing the effects of the French headscarf ban." *American Political Science Review* 114.3 (2020): 707-723.

Dancygier, Rafaela, et al. "Candidate supply is not a barrier to immigrant representation: A case-control study." *American Journal of Political Science* 65.3 (2021): 683-698.

Week 8 (October 13): Origins of Anti-immigration attitudes – Economic

Dancygier, Rafaela M. *Immigration and conflict in Europe*. Cambridge University Press, 2010. Read chapter 2.

Hainmueller, Jens, and Daniel J. Hopkins. "The hidden American immigration consensus: A conjoint analysis of attitudes toward immigrants." *American journal of political science* 59.3 (2015): 529-548.

Week 9 (October 20): Origins of Anti-immigration attitudes – Identity and cultural threat

** Prospectus due **

Hardin, Russell. *One for all: The logic of group conflict*. Princeton University Press, 1997. Read chapter 3.

Gest, Justin. *The new minority: White working-class politics in an age of immigration and inequality*. Oxford University Press, 2016. Read chapter 3.

Week 10 (October 27): Factors contributing to nativism: threat frames

Hopkins, Daniel J. "Politicized places: Explaining where and when immigrants provoke local opposition." *American political science review* 104.1 (2010): 40-60.

Goodman, Sara Wallace. "Immigration threat, partisanship, and democratic citizenship: Evidence from the US, UK, and Germany." *Comparative Political Studies* 54.11 (2021).

Week 11 (November 3): Effects of nativism

Dinas, Elias, Konstantinos Matakos, Dimitrios Xeferis, and Dominik Hangartner. 2019. "Waking up the golden dawn: does exposure to the refugee crisis increase support for extreme-right parties?" *Political Analysis* 27 (2): 244–254.

McLaren, Lauren M. "The cultural divide in Europe: Migration, multiculturalism, and political trust." *World politics* 64.2 (2012): 199-241.

Week 12 (November 10): Prejudice reduction – part 1: information

Hopkins, Daniel J., John Sides, and Jack Citrin. "The muted consequences of correct information about immigration." *The Journal of Politics* 81.1 (2019): 315-320.

Alesina, Alberto, Armando Miano, and Stefanie Stantcheva. "Immigration and redistribution." *The Review of Economic Studies* 90.1 (2023): 1-39.

Week 13 (November 17): Prejudice reduction – part 2: contact

** First draft due **

Enos, Ryan D. "Causal effect of intergroup contact on exclusionary attitudes." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 111.10 (2014): 3699-3704.

Alrababa'h, Ala', William Marble, Salma Mousa, and Alexandra A. Siegel. "Can Exposure to Celebrities Reduce Prejudice? The Effect of Mohamed Salah on Islamophobic Behaviors and Attitudes." *American Political Science Review* 115.4 (2021): 1111–28.

Adida, Claire L., Adeline Lo, and Melina R. Platas. "Perspective Taking Can Promote Short-term Inclusionary Behavior toward Syrian Refugees." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 115.38 (2018): 9521–26.

Week 14 (November 24): NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 15 (December 1): Prejudice reduction – part 3: shared values

Choi, Donghyun Danny, Mathias Poertner, and Nicholas Sambanis. "Parochialism, social norms, and discrimination against immigrants." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 116.33 (2019): 16274-16279.

Fouka, Vasiliki, Soumyajit Mazumder, and Marco Tabellini. "From immigrants to Americans: Race and assimilation during the Great Migration." *The Review of Economic Studies* 89.2 (2022): 811-842.

Kustov, Alexander. *In Our Interest: How Democracies Can Make Immigration Popular*. Columbia University Press, 2025. Read chapter 5.

** Research proposal due December 11 **