

Refugees and Displaced Populations

MDES 3000 (3 credits)

Jordan: Field Course on Refugees and Displaced Populations

This syllabus is representative of a typical semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Description

This seminar provides students with the opportunity to analyze and appraise the refugee crisis in the context of Jordan. In particular, this seminar is focused on the factors behind the flux of refugees to Jordan and the social and economic impact of refugees on the host country, including the strain on housing, water, education, municipal services and health, and the rising tensions between refugees and host communities due to competition for overstretched resources. The seminar also grapples with the issues of refugee social identity and gender and displaced populations in the context of Jordan. The seminar uses an experiential learning model that integrates theory and field-based learning to refugee camps, refugees living in host communities, public institutions, NGOs, UN agencies, and international relief organizations. The lecturers are drawn from national universities, UN agencies, local and international organizations, and research centers such as the Refugees, Displaced Persons and Forced Migration Studies Center and Women's Center at Yarmouk University.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the political and socio-political factors leading to the creation of a refugee crisis in the Middle East;
- Show awareness of the socioeconomic effects of the influx of refugees on local host communities;
- Demonstrate understanding of gender-related risks facing refugee/displaced women and girls in refugee camps and host communities;
- Demonstrate knowledge of theories of social identity formation and models of identity reformation and reconstruction in refugees and displaced populations;
- Produce critical papers analyzing the impact of displacement on refugee identity formation and reconstruction.

Language of Instruction

This course is taught in English. Students will be exposed to vocabulary related to course content as well as the nuances of health, environmental issues, and community change and development through in-country expert lectures and field visits in a wide range of venues and regional locales.

Course Schedule

*Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.

Module 1: Status of Refugees and Displaced Populations in the MENA Region

This module will examine the root causes of exodus and displacement in the MENA region including regional conflicts, political instability, and the post-Arab Spring uprisings. The module will also explore the legal status of refugees and potential long-term solutions to the crises of refugees and displaced populations.

Session 1: Causes of Refugees and Displaced Populations in the Middle East and Jordan

This session will explore the history, causes, and status of refugees in the Middle East, with special focus on Jordan.

Required Readings:

- Farah, R. (2013). Palestinian refugees, the nation, and the shifting political landscape. *Social Alternatives*, 32(3), 41 - 47.
- Seeberg, P., & Eyadat, Z. (Eds.). (2013). *Migration, security, and citizenship in the Middle East: new perspectives*. Springer.
- Hammerstad, A. (2014). *The rise and decline of a global security actor: UNHCR, refugee protection, and security*. *Journal of Refugee Studies* (2015) 28 (1): 137-138
- Barah, M. (2013). Refugees in the MENA region: what geopolitical consequences? *Policy Brief*, 162 - JULY 2013

Session 2: International Refugee Protection

This session grapples with the definition, guidelines, and laws related to refugee status, treatment, and protection and the legal obligation of states. The session also focuses on the legal standards and principles that guide protection of refugees and outlines the different roles, responsibilities, and commitments of states and other actors, including UNHCR and other UN agencies.

Required Readings:

- Peters, M.A. and Besley, T. (2015). The Refugee Crisis and The Right to Political Asylum, *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 47:13-14, 1367-1374.
- Nicholson, F. & Kumin, J. (2017). The International Legal Framework Protecting Refugees. In: *A Guide to International Refugee Protection & Building State Asylum Systems*. UNHCR and Inter-Parliamentary Union.
- Betts, A., Loescher, G. and Milner, J. (2012) The Origins of International Concern for Refugees. In: *UNHCR: The Politics and Practice of Refugee Protection*. (Chapter 1). Routledge Global Institutions Series. Weiss, T (Ed). Routledge.
- Bastaki, J. (2017). The Legacy of the 1951 Refugee Convention and Palestinian Refugees: Multiple Displacements, Multiple Exclusions. *Berkley Journal of Middle Eastern & Islamic Studies*, Vol. 8, Article 1.

- Akram, S. et al. (2015). "Protecting Syrian Refugees: Laws, Policies, and Global Responsibility Sharing," 7 Middle East Law and Governance 287.
- Arsenijević, J., Schillberg, E., Ponthieu, A., et al. (2017). A crisis of protection and safe passage: violence experienced by migrants/refugees travelling along the Western Balkan corridor to Northern Europe. *Conflict and Health*, Vol.11, No.6,
- Orchard, C. And Miller, A. (2014). Forced Migration Policy Briefing 10: Protection in Europe for Refugees from Syria. Refugee Studies Centre Oxford Department of International Development University of Oxford
- Human Rights Watch. (2015). Europe's Refugee Crisis: An Agenda for Action.

Session 3: The Dynamics and Implications of the Protracted Palestinian Refugee Situation in Jordan

This lecture will provide a historical background of the Palestinian refugee population in Jordan, their legal status, and the search for a durable solution to their plight.

Required Readings:

- Farah, R. (2013). Palestinian Refugees, the Nation, and the Shifting Political Landscape. *Social Alternatives*. 2013, Vol. 32 Issue 3, 41-47.
- Gunnarsdóttir, G. (2006). UNRWA: assisting Palestine refugees in a challenging environment. *Forced Migration Review*. Issue 26, 10-12.
- Schiff, B. (2014). "UNRWA and Palestinian Refugees: From Relief and Works to Human Development." *Journal of Palestine Studies* (0377-919X), 44 (1), 154.
- Akram, S. M. (2002). Palestinian refugees and their legal status: rights, politics, and implications for a just solution. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 31(3), 36-51.

Session 4: Refugee Politics: The Geopolitics of the Syrian Conflict and Ensuing Refugee Crisis

This session will explore the political and social background to the ongoing conflict in Syria and the ensuing regional refugee crisis. The session also addresses security implications on Jordan.

Required Readings:

- Karim, S. (2016). Syrian Crisis: Geopolitics and Implications. *BISS JOURNAL*, vol. 37, no. 2, April 2016: 107-132.
- Couldrey, M. and Herson, M. Eds. (2014). The Syria Crisis, Displacement, and Protection. *Forced Migration Review*, 47. Retrieved from:
<http://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en/syria/syria.pdf>
- Couldrey, M. and Peebles, J. Eds. (2018). Syrians in Displacement. *Forced Migration Review*, 57. Retrieved from:
<https://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en/syria2018/syria2018.pdf>

Module 2: The Socio-Economic Impact of Refugees on Jordan

This module provides insight into the socio-economic effects of refugees on local host communities, including the strain on housing, water, education, municipal services and health, and the rising tensions between refugees and host communities due to competition for overstretched resources. The module also addresses potential impact on the stability and security of host countries, including radicalization of refugees and local groups.

Session 1: The Challenges of Hosting Syrian Refugees in Jordan

This session will address the impact of Syrian refugees on local host communities, especially in the North of Jordan, including the strain on local resources and services such as housing, water, education, municipal services, and health.

Required Reading:

Khatib, A. (2012). Jordanian thirst for water grows. Agence France-Presse. Retrieved from: <http://reliefweb.int/report/jordan/jordanian-thirst-water-grows>

Session 2: The Challenges of Hosting Syrian Refugees—Field Visit

This session consists of a field visit to a community-based organization providing services and assistance to Syrian refugees living with host communities in the governorate of Irbid in Northern Jordan. We will visit health care facilities providing health care to Syrian refugees in addition to housing projects hosting Syrian refugee single-women households, orphans, and unaccompanied children.

Required Reading:

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. (2014). Jordan Response Plan for Hosting Syrian Refugees.

Session 3: Syrian Refugee Crisis and Jordanian Vulnerable Host Communities

This session consists of a field visit to a community development project aimed to help both refugee and host communities to cope with the refugee crises in the North of Jordan. During the session, students will have the opportunity to interact with aid workers, host communities benefitting from the community development project, and refugees living in host communities.

Required Reading:

UNDP. (2014). Municipal Needs Assessment Report: Mitigating the Impact of the Syrian Refugee Crisis on Jordanian Vulnerable Host Communities.

Module 3: Refugees and Social Identity: The Challenges of Relocation

This module examines the theories of social identity formation and models of identity reformation and reconstruction in refugee populations settling in host communities. The module also explores social identity issues for refugees and displaced populations in Jordan as they seek to establish new lives, including the potential impact of the cultural-contextual change and the new social structure and policies of Jordanian society on their healthy adaptation.

Session 1: Social Identity Challenges of Syrian Refugees

This session will address the impact of the cultural-contextual new social structure and policies of the Jordanian society on the healthy adaptation of Syrian refugees.

Required Readings:

- Montgomery, E. (2008). Discrimination, mental problems and social adaptation in young refugees. *European Journal of Public Health*: (1101-1262), 18 (2), 156-161.
- Ager, A., and Strang A. (2008). Understanding Integration: A Conceptual Framework. *Journal of Refugee Studies*: 21(2): 166-191.
- Smyth, G., Stewart, E., and Da Lomba, S. (2010). Introduction: Critical Reflections on Refugee Integration: Lessons from International Perspectives. *Journal of Refugee Studies*: 23 (4): 411-414.
- Secil, S.E. (2014). Managing Identity in the Face of Resettlement, Identity. *An International Journal of Theory and Research*, 14:4, 268-285.
- Liebling, H., Burke, S , Goodman, S. Zasada , D. (2014). Understanding the experiences of asylum seekers. *International Journal of Migration, Health and Social Care*,10: 4, pp.207–219.

Session 2: Integration and Social Identity of Palestinian Refugees

This session will explore the integration of Palestinian refugees in diaspora and the role of governmental policies in this integration. The role played by the cultural background and social norms of Palestinian refugees in facilitating their integration in Jordan will be addressed.

Required Readings:

- Strang, A., and Ager, A. (2010). Refugee Integration: Emerging Trends & Remaining Agendas. *Journal of Refugee Studies* 23(4): 589-607.
- Leone, G., Siag, M., & Sarrica, M. (2014). What Does It Mean To Be Muslim/Arab/Young/Palestinian/Palestinian Refugee? Self-Definitions and Emotional Reactions to Social Identity Complexity among Young Palestinian Refugees Living in the Diaspora. *Papers on Social Representations*, 23.

Module 4: Gender and Displaced Populations

This module addresses gender specific vulnerabilities of refugee women and girls living in refugee camps and host communities, as well as protection measures and risk prevention and response to risks faced by refugee/displaced women and girls in Jordan.

Session 1: The Impact of Displacement on Women and Girls

This session examines human rights violations and risk factors facing displaced women and girls with particular attention to issues of safety and security problems exposing them to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) or other forms of violence, discrimination, and exploitation. The session will also look into the challenges and barriers women and girls confront in accessing and enjoying their rights during displacement.

Required Readings:

- Child Protection and Gender-Based Violence Sub-Working Group Jordan. (2013). Findings from the Inter-Agency Child Protection and Gender-Based Violence Assessment in the Za'atari Refugee Camp, Jordan. 3.

UNICEF. (2014). A Study on Early Marriage in Jordan 2014. Retrieved from:
https://www.unicef.at/fileadmin/media/Infos_und_Medien/Aktuelle_Studien_und_Berichte/Early_Marriage_in_Jordan_2014/UNICEFJordan_EarlyMarriageStudy2014.pdf
Al-Modallal, H. (2012). Patterns of coping with partner violence: Experiences of refugee women in Jordan. *Public Health Nursing*, 29(5), 403-411

Session 2: Prevention and Response to Risks and Violations Faced by Refugee Women

This session will examine the available protection initiatives, mechanisms and response to risk and violations faced by local and refugee women and girls in Jordan. The session includes a visit to a local human rights advocacy organization based in Amman which provides free legal aid, legal awareness and empowerment to learn about the mechanisms and barriers to protection and redress.

Required Reading:

The World Bank. (2014). Women in Jordan – Limited Economic Participation and Continued Inequality.
Intragency Standing Committee (IASC). (2017). Intragency Gender-Based Violence Case Management Guidelines: Providing Care and Case Management Services to Gender-Based Violence Survivors in Humanitarian Setting.
Megevand, M. (2014). Women's protection and empowerment programming for Syrian refugees in urban Jordan: challenges and lesson learned., IRC. Retrieved from:
<https://www.enonline.net/fex/48/womens>

Session 3: Refugee Women Support and Empowerment—Field Visit

This session combines a presentation and a field visit to examine first-hand the work of local NGOs offering services to Syrian refugees in under-serviced areas. The project offers gender-based violence protection through the provision of psychosocial services and referrals, recreational and social interactions, and income-generating activities.

Required Reading:

Inter-Agency Standing Committee. (2006). IASC Gender handbook in humanitarian action. Women, girls, boys and men: Different needs, equal opportunities. In *IASC Gender handbook in humanitarian action. Women, girls, boys and men: Different needs, equal opportunities*. IASC.

Session 4: Child Protection During Emergencies

This session combines a lecture and a field visit to the Save the Children office. In Amman, Save the Children is recognized as an authoritative voice for children, with extensive experience based on its decades of securing real change for children around the world. During the session, students will learn about Save the Children's child advocacy and recent humanitarian operations to improve child survival and health in emergencies.

Required Reading:

Save the Children. (2014). *A Devastating Toll: The Impact of Three Years of War on the Health of Syria's Children*. Retrieved from:

[http://www.savethechildren.org/atf/cf/%7B9def2ebe-10ae-432c-9bd0-df91d2eba74a%7D/SAVE THE CHILDREN A DEVASTATING TOLL.PDF](http://www.savethechildren.org/atf/cf/%7B9def2ebe-10ae-432c-9bd0-df91d2eba74a%7D/SAVE_THE_CHILDREN_A_DEVASTATING_TOLL.PDF)

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Timely completion of all assignments is expected. Late hand-ins will be penalized. All assignments are evaluated according to organization, analytical quality, depth of understanding, argumentation, and presentation of evidence.

Description of Assignments:

Critical Analysis

Students will be expected to respond to the question relating to social identity of refugees and hand in the assignment during the first week of the semester (first week is orientation).

Synthesis Session

Students will also be required to lead one synthesis session. Leading a synthesis session requires that the student prepare a summary of the assigned lectures and readings, make comments, and prepare questions for class discussion.

Field Visit Report

Following a field site visit assigned by the AD, students will be expected to prepare a three- to four-page analytical paper focusing on observations made during the visit, issues raised by presentations given by health professionals during the visit, and answering the question(s) requested by the AD.

Class Attendance and Participation

Attendance during the thematic seminar is mandatory and your grade will reflect your involvement in class and during other activities and excursions.

Assessment:

Critical Analysis	40%
Synthesis Session	25%
Field Visit Report	25%
Class Attendance and Participation	10%

Grading Scale:

94-100%	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

below 64%

F

Expectations and Policies

- Show up prepared. Be on time. Have your Reading completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done according to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (those of classmates, lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the visits, etc.). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment, and the academic appeals process.

Disability Services: Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services at disabilityservices@sit.edu for information and support in facilitating an accessible educational experience. Additional information regarding SIT Disability Services, including a link to the online request form, can be found on the Disability Services website at <http://studyabroad.sit.edu/disabilityservices>.