



Venice International University
VIU Summer School
Migration and Gender: Legal, Sociolinguistic and Literary Perspectives
September 16-20, 2024

Faculty

Sara De Vido, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy
Laurie Shepard, Boston College, USA
Francesco Goglia, University of Exeter, UK

Preliminary Assignments:

Read two short novels: *Adua* by Igiaba Scego, and *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* by Ocean Vuong (PDFs are available)

Read the brief critical essay: Bell Hooks, "Choosing the Margin as a Space of Radical Openness" (PDF provided)

Watch *Io sono Li* directed by Andrea Segre and *Bangla* directed by Phaim Bhuiyan

Preview the following two articles which will be reviewed in further detail as a class on the first day:

1. UN Human Rights Committee (HRC), *Ioane Teitiota v New Zealand*, UN Doc CCPR/C/127/D/2728/2016 (7 January 2020)
2. Otto, D. Feminist Judging in Action: Reflecting on the Feminist Judgments in International Law Project. *Fem Leg Stud* 28, 205–216 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10691-020-09421-7>

Prepare a brief introductory presentation answering "Who am I? How do I understand the culture (the imaginary) of my country?" (One slide and 2-3 minutes in length, please.)

Optional: Watch *Il Vegetariano* directed by Roberto San Pietro

2024 Course outline

- M1 – Introduction to the Questions of the Course: Law, Socio-Linguistics, Literature
- M2 – Migration and Human Rights
- M3 – Intersectionality
- M4 – Migration, Gender and Questions of Language
- M5 – Assimilation, Acculturation and Vulnerability
- M6 – Migration, Gender and Sexual Exploitation
- M7 – Migration, Human Rights and the Environment
- M8 – Citizenship, Self-Actualization and Language
- M9 – Migration and Media
- M10 – Class Symposium: How is Gender Shaped by Migration?

Program



Morning breaks: 10:45-11:00

Afternoon breaks: 15:30-16:00

End of the day: 17:30

Monday, September 16, 2024

9:00 **Registration and Welcome**

Student presentations: "Who am I? How do I understand the culture (the imaginary) of my country?"

9:30 **Module 1 – Introduction to the Questions of the Course: Law, Socio-Linguistics, Literature**

Sara De Vido, Laurie Shepard & Francesco Goglia

12:30 Lunch

14:00 **Module 2 – Migration and Human Rights**

Sara De Vido

The legal framework defining migration and human rights will be presented, which was established by the United Nations Convention Refugee Status of 1951. The United Nations Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) will be also taken into consideration along with regional legal instruments to better grasp the complexity of the protection of refugees' human rights. Other topics:

- the legal rights of refugees pertaining to language: the persecution of language, culture and identity as a reason to be granted asylum, and the right to maintain language/culture/identity in the destination country
- the context of an individual's human rights as defined by international law, and the demands of family law rooted in local cultures

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

9:30 **Module 3 – Intersectionality**

Sara De Vido & Laurie Shepard

The title of the course, "migration and gender," recognizes migration as a complex nexus of multiple phenomena. "Gender" is a fundamental optic to explore the inseparability and irreducibility of many considerations implicit in any single migration-related decision or act. Topics to be discussed are:

- intersectionality as a concept fundamental to contemporary legal interpretation
- the importance of intersectionality to the expression of language, identity and culture, and to understanding the limitations of that expression in minority cultures
- the ways in which the novel models the idea of intersectionality (*On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*)

12:00 Lunch



13:20 **Module 4 – Migration, Gender and Questions of Language**

Francesco Goglia

Questions of language maintenance and revitalization, as well as language loss from a transnational perspective will be introduced.

Other topics to be discussed are:

- language as a right
- how language in the migration/diaspora context is often linked to issues of language and culture in the country of origin
- the interface between the conditions attendant on gender and language as a right in the literature of migration

*The waterbus leaves San Servolo at 13:20 to visit the island of San Lazzaro as an example of a diaspora working for the preservation of a language/culture. The tour will be from 13:30-15:15. The waterbus leaves San Lazzaro at 15:25.

Wednesday, September 18, 2024

9:30 **Module 5 – Assimilation, Acculturation and Vulnerability**

Francesco Goglia & Laurie Shepard

Definitions

Topics to be discussed:

- linguistic acculturation and linguistic and cultural differences between first and second generations, and the role of cultural contacts
- how assimilation, in the films and novels, both empowers and makes the subject vulnerable through loss of linguistic and cultural identity (*Io sono Li, Bangla, Adua, On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*)

12:30 *Lunch*

14:00 **Module 6 – Migration, Gender and Sexual Exploitation**

Sara De Vido & Sabrina Marchetti (guest speaker), Ca' Foscari University of Venice

The class will focus on the concept of human trafficking and sexual exploitation, also reflecting on the Istanbul Convention (2011) on preventing violence against women and domestic abuse and its definitions.

Session for students to prepare for the final presentation.

Thursday, September 19, 2024

9:30 **Module 7 – Migration, Human Rights and the Environment**

Sara De Vido

The class will focus on migration and the environment.

Other topics:

- reasons why people are migrating that pertain to the environment and climate change
- the UN proposal for climate refugee asylum status

12:30 *Lunch*

14:00 **Module 8 – Citizenship, Self-Actualization and Language**

Sara De Vido, Laurie Shepard & Francesco Goglia

The class will address disparities in the law for migrants to attain citizenship; *ius sanguinis, ius soli, ius culturae*.

Other topics:

- questions of migratory trajectories including return migration, onward migration (newly naturalized Italian citizens who decide to leave Italy, or Latin Americans who acquire Italian citizenship and migrate to Europe, not Italy)
- the acquisition of language in destination country implies a loss of the linguistic and cultural heritage of country the migrant (family) has left
- the destination country's failure to recognize an individual's accomplishments and expertise because of linguistic obstacles
- the migrant's autonomous process of self-actualization in *Adua* and *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*

Friday, September 20, 2024

9:30 **Module 9 – Migration and Media**

Francesco Goglia, Laurie Shepard & Students

- Students will present and comment on a brief, pertinent documentary or advertisement from their own countries.

12:30 *Lunch*

14:00 **Module 10 – Class Symposium: How is Gender Shaped by Migration?**

Students, in teams of two, will present their ideas of how Gender is informed by migration. Each group will speak for approximately 10 minutes, presenting arguments based on a critical analysis of the material of the course.