



# **VIU** summer SCHOOL **mIGRATION** **and Gender:** **Legal,** **SOCIOLINGUISTIC** **and LITerary** **persPECTIVES**

**Migration and Gender:  
Legal, Sociolinguistic and Literary Perspectives**

**September 16-20, 2024**

**Venice International University  
Isola di San Servolo, Venice**

# VIU Summer School

## Migration and Gender: Legal, Sociolinguistic and Literary Perspectives

September 16-20, 2024

Venice International  
University

Scientific Coordinators:

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Ca' Foscari University of  
Venice

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Boston College

Francesco Goglia  
University of Exeter

The Summer School on Migration and Gender offers an interdisciplinary approach to the ways in which migration intersects with gender. Gender is a constitutive element of migration. The course will discuss both this idea, and reversing the formula, it will examine the role of migration in shaping gender, understood as relational and performative. A particular focus will be on identity in relation to human rights and law, language, labor and culture. The course is an innovative exploration among three scholars in legal studies, literature and sociolinguistics, and the students.

Each discipline brings a unique perspective on the problem and set of instruments to analyze and deepen our understanding of migration and gender.

Law is a fundamental aspect in the analysis of migration. Women have always migrated, but what has changed is so not much the number but rather the reasons why they migrate. The course will endorse a gender intersectional perspective in international human rights law in order to grasp the complexities of migration flows. It will stress how violence can determine migration, but is also an element present during migration and in the country of destination. It will look into the concept of vulnerability, discrimination and persecution, and will take into consideration climate change-induced migration.

Literature offers the imagined experience of an individual and a community, and a micro-level examination of how migration shapes identity, fuels vulnerability and influences gender performance. Literature gives voice to the marginalized; it counters assumptions, imagines the unimaginable, expresses the taboo, and opens alternatives to normative discourse. We will discuss two short novels: *Adua* by Igiaba Scego and *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* by Ocean Vuong. *Adua* portrays the evolving self-awareness of a young Somali woman who is brought to Rome to star in a pornographic film. *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* vividly depicts the coming-of-age of a Vietnamese boy raised in the US by a mother and grandmother whose lives were shattered by the war.

Languages are key in the migration experience. Migrants bring with them complex sociolinguistic repertoires, including languages learned through different steps on their journey. We will explore

migrant trajectories, including return migration and onward migration, as well as issues of language acquisition in the destination country, and language maintenance/shift of linguistic and cultural heritage. Furthermore, we will discuss whether destination countries might fail to recognise individual accomplishments or expertise, and their attitudes towards the languages and cultures of migrants. We will explore these issues with examples from student experiences, a discussion on the movie *Io sono Li* (Shun Li and the Poet), a visit to a Refugee Residence in Venice, and a visit to the island of San Lazzaro, one of the most important cultural centres of the Armenian diaspora.

The program is particularly timely in this moment of history, in which migration is transforming societies and shaping gender. The course embraces both questions: migration and gender, and explores their intersection in a creative and dynamic way. Courts at all levels have started to delve into the legal question surrounding the conditions of recent migration with multiple cases of persecution, sexual exploitation, and vulnerability, and they have done so without always being able to encompass the complexity of intersectional grounds of discrimination.

The course will model the ways in which the humanities and the imagination as well as the social sciences might inform legal processes or contour legal decisions. This will play out in two ways: first in our class discussions, and second through the students' experiences of rewriting a legal decision from the perspective of what they have learned and discussed. In short, we hope that this course will educate a young generation of lawyers, academics and activists by raising awareness of many issues at the intersection of gender, migration and law.

VIU programs are characterized by interdisciplinarity and interculturalism. It is the perfect place for such an innovative project to start and develop. The course will introduce the gender rewriting for the first time as participatory exercise, combining literature, sociolinguistics and law.

#### **Faculty**

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

#### **Guest Speaker**

Sabrina Marchetti, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy

#### **Who is it for?**

Applications are welcome from current MA and PhD Students in Sociology, Anthropology, Gender studies, Literature, Human Rights, Law, Labor and Cultural studies.

#### **Methodology and structure**

The course will examine migration as a global phenomenon defined by gender, culture, socioeconomic conditions and climate, and focus on the international law which defines migration and the right to apply for asylum. The legal, sociological and sociolinguistic perspectives will be supplemented with the perspectives of two authors who examine the psychological and subjective dimensions of migration and gender in fiction.

The final session will focus on the question of how gender is shaped by migration. The class will be divided into groups to work on this idea, and the groups will present their theses in a symposium at the conclusion of the class.

#### **Learning outcomes for participants**

Students will learn:

- How to read and critically examine novels on the topic of gender and migration;
- How to connect the legal aspects to the literary ones, and how to draw them out from a reading, that is, which questions transcend the particular circumstances of plot or culture;
- How to analyze judgments and decisions from a legal point of view.

A list of materials, will be provided for students to read and prepare before the course starts.

#### **Credits**

A Certificate of attendance will be issued at the end of the course.

Number of ECTS credits allocated: **2**

The Program will admit 20 student participants.

#### **Fees**

Students of VIU member universities:

**€ 300 incl. VAT.**

Students of other universities:

**€ 600 incl. VAT.**

The fees will cover tuition, course materials, lunches in the VIU cafeteria and social events.

Student participants will be responsible for covering their own travel expenses to and from Venice, accommodation and local transportation.

VIU Alumni are eligible for a reduced fee.

PhD candidates and post-docs from universities in EU universities may be eligible for Erasmus+ mobility grant support. Candidates should consult the International Office in their own university for information about the calls for applications for funding. VIU will provide any supporting documentation requested for such applications. Contact VIU Erasmus office: [erasmus@univiu.org](mailto:erasmus@univiu.org)

#### **Accommodation on campus**

In shared rooms (triple/quadruple) with other participants: **€ 308 VAT included** for 6 nights with breakfast (municipal tax included). Further information will be available in the application form.

Please note that the facility is not managed by VIU and availability of accommodation cannot be guaranteed for **rolling admission** candidates.

#### **On-line application**

**Rolling admissions open until June 30, 2024**  
via the [VIU website](#)

Students will be notified of their application status shortly after receipt of their application and, if selected, asked to pay the tuition fee and accommodation fee (if requested) within seven days.

Applicants must submit the application form, a letter of motivation – which should include a brief description of the candidate's research interests, a curriculum vitae and a photo.

**Venice International University** is a consortium of 23 universities, representing 15 countries throughout the world.

The mission of VIU is to foster cooperation among VIU member institutions while facilitating the exchange of knowledge and ideas, by developing, promoting and organizing joint academic, research and training/capacity-building program. Students from non-member universities may participate in selected academic programs.

The academic programs at VIU are distinguished by a markedly interdisciplinary approach to the topics, and by the international perspectives that the participants contribute to the discussions. The VIU campus is on the island of San Servolo in Venice, Italy.

#### **Location**



#### **Venice International University**

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