

Labour migration in a global and regional perspective
Course GRAD 7056
African Centre for Migration & Society, University of the Witwatersrand

Coordinator: Zaheera Jinnah
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Mon and Wed 09h00-12h00
Venue: Solomon House **SH3120C**
Consultations by appointment with coordinator zaheera.jinnah@wits.ac.za

While the vast majority of international migration is motivated by economic reasons, and mostly for work related purposes, recent scholarship and public interest for migration in developing countries have often inadequately accounted for this dimension of mobility. Yet, labour migration remains a key component of contemporary mobilities, particularly as it intersects with a range of development issues: political economy, regional integration, governance, statecraft, dependency, etc. This course will help students understand the origins, scope and current dynamics associated with labour migration globally and with more specific empirical material in the Southern African region. The course is structured around 4 key themes destined to equip students with a robust theoretical, conceptual, historical, and contemporary understanding of labour migration globally and in Africa. While the content of the course will be essentially academic, it is intended to allow students to understand the key orientations of and appraise critically global and regional policy positions and responses from organised labour and civil society.

Objectives:

The objectives of the course objectives are:

- To explore key aspects of current theoretical and empirical knowledge of labour migration, historically and in the contemporary period;
- To equip students to envisage these critically and assess contemporary situations autonomously;
- For some, to assist structuring an analytical framework or ensure that a robust LM dimension is built into an analytical framework.

Thematic areas:

The course will be organised around the following 5 sub-themes:

- Global theories and concepts of labour migration;
- Regional and national perspectives on labour migration in south (ern) Africa;
- Precarious and informal work and migration;
- Global, regional and national policy frameworks and debates on labour migration; and
- Responses to migrant workers

Week 1: 25 and 27 July 2016

Concepts, theories and trends of labour migration

From Marxist and World Systems theory to neo-classical, NELM and critical realist approaches; the first two sessions interrogate how scholars have theorised what labour migration is and what role it plays in economies.

Required readings:

- De Haas, H. (2010). Migration and development: a theoretical perspective. *International migration review*, 44(1), 227-264.

- Taylor, E. J. (1999). The new economics of labour migration and the role of remittances in the migration process. *International migration*, 37(1), 63-88.
- Goss, J., & Lindquist, B. (1995). Conceptualizing international labor migration: a structuration perspective. *International Migration Review*, 317-351.
- United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). 2013. Trends in International Migrant Stock: Migrants by Destination and Origin (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/ Rev.2013)

Week 2: 1 and 3 August 2016

The Southern African migrant labour system: historical and contemporary perspectives

What forms and outcomes of labour migration can you identify? How have these been theorised? What is driving the transformation of the LM regime in the region?

- Burawoy, M. (1976). The functions and reproduction of migrant labor: comparative material from Southern Africa and the United States. *American journal of Sociology*, 1050-1087.
- Crush, J. (1984). Uneven labour migration in southern Africa: conceptions and misconceptions. *South African Geographical Journal*, 66(2), 115-132.
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03736245.1984.10559694>
- African Centre for Migration & Society. (2014) *MiWORC Policy Brief No.2 Migration and employment in South Africa. Statistical and econometric analyses of internal and international migrants in Statistics South Africa's labour market data*. Johannesburg: African Centre for Migration & Society, University of the Witwatersrand.
- Schierup, C. U. (2016). Under the Rainbow: Migration, Precarity and People Power in Post-Apartheid South Africa. *Critical Sociology*, 0896920515621118.
- Fine, J. (2014). Migration and Migrant Workers in the Post-Apartheid Era. *Global Labour Journal*, 5(3).

Week 3: 8 and 10 August 2016

Informal work, and precarious migration

Guest Lecture: Dr Pragna Rugunanan, University of Johannesburg

Is the nature of work changing? How does migration intersect with (precarious) work? What challenges does this pose to theoretical and policy approaches that explain and respond to labour migration?

- Chen, M. A. (2012). The informal economy: Definitions, theories and policies. *Women in informal economy globalizing and organizing: WIEGO Working Paper*, 1.
- Hart, K. (1973). Informal income opportunities and urban employment in Ghana. *The journal of modern African studies*, 11(01), 61-89.
- Anderson, B. (2010). Migration, immigration controls and the fashioning of precarious workers. *Work, employment & society*, 24(2), 300-317.
- McDowell, L., Batnitzky, A., & Dyer, S. (2009). Precarious work and economic migration: emerging immigrant divisions of labour in Greater London's service sector. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 33(1), 3-25.

WEEK 4: 15 and 17 August 2016

Policy responses to labour migration

Policy approaches: how has labour migration been regulated across the world? What does this suggest about the underlying premises of labour migration? Can specific systems and regimes globally be identified?

- http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_446454.pdf
- Africa: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_423494.pdf
- http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_436343.pdf

Week 5: 22 and 24 August 2016

Responses and challenges to labour migration: organised labour, atypical work and health

Guest Lecturers: Prof Jo Vearey and Dr Rebecca Walker

- von Holdt, K., & Webster, E. (2008). Organising on the periphery: new sources of power in the South African workplace. *Employee Relations*, 30(4), 333-354.

Additional readings to be announced

Week 6: 29 and 31 August 2016

Conclusions

- Bauder, H. (2008). Citizenship as capital: The distinction of migrant labor. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, 33(3), 315-333.
- **The Price of Rights: Regulating International Labor Migration**
Martin Ruhs. Chapter 1 <http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/s10140.pdf>

Course structure:

- Available as an elective in the 2nd semester
- Twice a week sessions of 3 hours each
- Mandatory student attendance at all seminars.
- Mandatory readings required
- Short lectures providing students with syntheses of the literatures and analytical tools; and seminars based on readings related to each sub-theme.

Evaluation:

- One sit-in written examination (75%);
- One written response paper to be presented in class based on readings (15%);
- One group project consisting of a mini-research report and group presentation (10%).