



## **Ethical Considerations in Advising Students Interested in Working with Refugees**

### Context

We are finding that many UVM students are interested in working with, or conducting research on, refugee populations in Chittenden County. Our students are rightly concerned and eager to engage; we want to support them in doing so. However, many non-profit and service organizations in Chittenden County and the state are struggling, and have been suffering cuts since the recession of 2007/2008. This is true of organizations serving refugee and immigrant populations as well. Those of us engaged in service-learning and community-engaged research recognize that the needs of our students for learning, growth and development must be considered in the broader context of the needs of our community. We want our students to be as fully prepared as they can before working with vulnerable populations and within overtaxed organizations.

This document was created by the Office of Community-University Partnerships & Service-Learning (CUPS) and the UVM Refugee Research Network to support all who advise and mentor students interested in working with refugees and immigrants. It identifies courses and structured learning opportunities where students can be mentored by faculty, incorporated into established programs and can explore existing research - and learn to reflect on these experiences to deepen their learning. This will benefit students' capacity for life-long learning, and it will prepare them to more effectively serve in communities.

In the current political climate, we more than ever encourage thoughtful engagement with difference and applaud students who wish to work for the safety and respect of all. At the same time, we recognize that preparation and self-education are necessary precursors to off-campus engagement.

### Initial Considerations

- Advisors may wish to help students **consider why** they wish to work with refugees, in particular. There are a range of disadvantaged populations in Chittenden County, and issues such as affordable housing, transportation, food access and health care affect these populations as well as refugees and immigrants.

- Advisors should encourage students to recognize that **preparation** is important for any endeavor. This document outlines ways students can strategically prepare for community engagement and work.
- Advisors of students wishing to pursue **research** should point students towards faculty already conducting research in the area of immigration, migration and refugee resettlement (list below). These faculty are aware of existing research, the needs of Burlington refugee communities, and can help students find out if their research interests are appropriate. Immigrant communities are experiencing fear and targeting in this political climate; research done thoughtlessly may cause unnecessary fear.

### Relevant Coursework for Students

Students who are thinking ahead may be able to choose courses to fulfill graduation or distribution requirements that will also support their interest in working with refugees.

- D1 and D2 courses (see below). *A number of D1 and F2 courses cover material relevant to refugees; **please see list below**. These recommendations emphasize race/racism in US, migration, and history/politics/culture of regions from which refugees have come to Burlington.*
- Research Methods courses, such as Qualitative Methods in CAS and Community-Based Participatory Action Research in CALS (if offered) are absolutely necessary if students wish to engage in research projects; they are helpful regardless.
- Courses in social work, human development & family studies (HDFS), psychology, anthropology and geography may also be appropriate.

### Coursework with Service-Learning Opportunities

- SWSS 4: Working with Refugees - Suzy Comerford
  - *Spring semesters; learn about the history and condition of multiple refugee groups in Vermont and work on service-learning projects, supporting organizations that work with refugees. **Open to students in all schools/colleges, no prerequisites***
- EDSC 055: Citizenship & Education in the United States - Gabe McGann/ Barri Tinkler
  - *Fall semesters; students study history of education/citizenship and work directly with refugees in Winooski who are studying for their US citizenship tests. **Open to all students.***
- EDSC 215: Reading in the Content Area
  - *Students work with young people at King St. Youth Center in the afterschool program. **Secondary Ed majors only.***
- SPAN 101: Composition & Conversation
  - *Students in the service-learning version of this course (taught by Rachael Montesano) gain some exposure to the issues facing migrant dairy farm*

*workers, usually from Mexico, in Vermont. Projects are small-scale, but provide an excellent introduction to organizations serving this population.*

### Internships

- AS 195: Internship in Social Science
  - *If taught by Pablo Bose, students interview to be in this class, and are placed in organizations service refugees. Course is also taught by other faculty members with different emphases. **Open to Arts & Sciences students by instructor permission.***

### Structured Research Opportunities

Students who have taken some of the above courses can reach out to the following faculty who maintain research agendas connected to refugees. Even taking a class with these faculty members could be helpful for students.

- CALS: Linda Berlin (Extension / Nutrition and Food Sciences), Farryl Bertmann (Nutrition and Food Sciences)
- CAS: Pablo Bose (Geography), Karen Fondacaro (Psychological Sciences), Jonah Steinberg (Anthropology)
- CESS: Shana Haines (Education), Jennifer Hurley (Education), Cynthia Reyes (Education), Barri Tinkler (Education), Alan Tinkler (Education).
- RSEN: Rachelle Gould (ENVS)
- BSAD: Srinivas Venugopal
- COM: Andrea Green (Pediatrics)

## **Appendix: Related D1 and D2 courses**

### D1 courses

*(Note: this list focuses on courses with no pre-reqs; it would be good to check for upper-level options within a student's major.)*

ANTH 187/ SOC 119 - Race & Ethnicity in the US (prereq: 1 course in ANTH or SOC)

EC 053 - Political Economy of Race

EDFS 001 - Race & Racism in the US

GEOG 060 - Geography/Race/Ethnicity in the US

POLS 028 - Race & Ethnicity in the United States

SOC 019 - Race Relations in the US

SWSS 060 - Racism & Contemporary Issues

D2 courses.

*(Note: Courses without pre-reqs are bolded; this list is based solely on the posted course description and its relevance to cultural diversity, histories of regions that have experienced sending refugees to the United States, or global processes. Encourage students to review the course catalogue for additional possibilities.)*

**ANTH 21 - Cultural Anthropology**

**ANTH 23 - Anthro Global Development**

ANTH 162 - Cultures of Africa

ANTH 166 - Peoples of the Middle East

ANTH 174 - Culture Health & Healing (*often SL, not with refugees*)

ANTH 189 - Aging in Cross-Cultural Perspective (*often SL, not with refugees*)

**EC 40 - Economics of Globalization**

**GEOG 50 - World Regional Geography**

GEOG 151 - Geography of Africa

GEOG 154 - Geography of Development

**GRS 001 - Intro to Global Studies**

HDFS 031 - Undoing Identity

HDFS 242 - Development of Prejudice

HDFS 243 - Cross-Cultural Human Development

HST 041 - African History 1870 to present

HST 046 - Hist Islam & Middle East Since 1258

SOC 212 - International Migration & US Society

Questions?

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