

Demography 260: Contemporary Research on Migration

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Contact information

Office hours: [day 1, time] and [day 2, time]. Please sign up for office hours in the following link: [placeholder for link]. For any additional comments, questions or suggestions please email me at andrea.mirgon@berkeley.edu.

Course overview

This course will focus on migration for applied research, particularly a quantitative lens. The readings come from a variety of fields, showing that migration is an incredibly interdisciplinary area. Overall, we will spend time on 1) understanding the assumptions and predictions from migration theories, 2) analyzing the different sizes and directions of migration flows, 3) reviewing data limitations, 4) looking at migration from a demographer's perspective, and 5) considering some areas of opportunity.

By the end of this course, the student will be able to think about a migratory process in terms of the underlying theory and the necessary data to study it. The student will also develop a research project related to migration. Although we will cover a lot of terrain across several disciplines, we will not look at assimilation and integration (i.e. the experience post migration). I include suggested readings in Week 8 for those interested in the area. We will also not have an exhaustive review of the history of migration. However, if interested in the historical perspective, I suggest reading:

De Haas, H., Castles, S., & Miller, M. J. (2019). *The age of migration: International population movements in the modern world*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Finally, the readings mostly focus on migration from the Americas, particularly between Mexico and U.S., but readings from other regions are welcome. Note that the articles are organized in chronological order but this does not mean articles should be read in that manner. For more resources on effective academic reading review this [link](#).

Course format

We will meet for 3 hours every week to discuss the readings. For the first hour, two students will lead the discussion of the articles (sign-up will be posted during week 1). They should come prepared with questions or activities for the class that will put the articles in conversation with each other. Make sure to allocate time for discussion on methods and models. We will

take a 5 minute break and then I will lead an hour-long lecture about the core concepts of the readings. Finally, the last portion of the class will be dedicated to brainstorming research ideas or challenging assumptions behind the week's readings. For extra credit, students may also sign up to present an additional related paper.

Course evaluation

- In-class participation and leading discussion (20%)
- Methods cheatsheet: Throughout the course, you will need to think about the methods used to study migration. For each reading, identify the method, note its limitations and advantages. Think about when the method would work and what type of data would be necessary, ie what is the unit of analysis that may be used. As you review the articles, you will need to update your document. **Please submit any methods notes for the week's readings before class to the Bcourses assignment.** By the end of the semester, you will present a 5-10 page document that synthesizes and organizes the methods. Feel free to add any additional methods that you would find useful. Consider a situation where a future student asks you for advice on a method to analyze a migration-related question. Borrowing from your knowledge from this class (and beyond) you point several options for the student. Since migration is interdisciplinary, so are the methods. Therefore, it's important to feel comfortable with knowing what approaches are available to us. This cheatsheet will be evaluated based on the completion of the methods review and you will be expected to review at least 5 additional articles that include interesting methods, results or theories. **(Weekly submissions 2%, final draft 11% , total worth :35%)**
- Annotated phase diagram on migration phases based on material from week 8 (instructions are in that week as well) (5%)
- Research project (40%)
 - Project proposal: 3-5 pages, 12pt, description of research question, relevance, available data and possible methods (10%) [due week 7]
 - Project draft: extended project proposal that also includes a working literature review and preliminary results. (10%) [due week 10]
 - Final draft (10%) [due week 12]
 - Presentation of project: does not need to be a powerpoint presentation, can also be a short podcast, a GIF, a poster, or a video. [due during RRR week]

Special accommodations

In the case of disability-related accommodations, emergency medical information that you wish to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building is being evacuated, please contact me as soon as possible. You can privately see me after class or during office hours.

For disability-related accommodations you also need to obtain an accommodations letter from DSP (<http://dsp.berkeley.edu>).

Limits to Confidentiality

As UC employees, all course instructors and tutors are Responsible Employees and are therefore required to report incidents of sexual violence, sexual harassment or other conduct prohibited by university policy to the Title IX officer. We cannot keep reports of sexual harassment or sexual violence confidential, but the Title IX officer will consider requests for confidentiality. There are confidential resources available to you, including the PATH to Care Center (<https://sa.berkeley.edu/dean/confidential-care-advocate>) which serves survivors of sexual violence and sexual harassment.

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1 Migration theories

1.1 Week 1: Early theories

We begin with one of the earliest publications of empirical research on migration: Ravenstein (1885). Focus on the patterns that he coins as “laws”. When can observations become a law? Are laws in the Social Sciences as clear as those in the Natural Sciences? Then read Stouffer (1940) and Sjaastad (1962) and consider what migration costs are. What metrics should we think of? Use Lee (1966) to start a list of important definitions on migration terms. Finally, where does Zelinsky (1971) fall relative the “laws”?

- Ravenstein, E. G. (1885). The Laws of Migration. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society of London*, 48(2), 197–235. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2979333>
- Stouffer, S. A. (1940). Intervening Opportunities: A Theory Relating Mobility and Distance. *American Sociological Review*, 5(6), 845. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2084520>
- Sjaastad, L. A. (1962). The Costs and Returns of Human Migration. *Journal of Political Economy*, 70(5, Part 2), 80–93. <https://doi.org/10.1086/258726>
- Lee, E. S. (1966). A Theory of Migration. *Demography*, 3(1), 47–57. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2060063>
- Zelinsky, W. (1971). The Hypothesis of the Mobility Transition. *Geographical Review*, 61(2), 219. <https://doi.org/10.2307/213996>

1.2 Week 2: Economic theories

Building on the concepts of the past week, we will focus on economic models of human migration behavior¹. Are economic models enough to understand a phenomenon? When can models in general be helpful? A helpful way to understand the models is to write down the basic assumptions and predictions, without any symbols, just text. **Choose between** Clemens (2014) or Dustmann and Görlach (2016). For Clemens (2014) consider the leap from aggregate patterns to inference at the individual level. For Dustmann and Görlach (2016), skip section 3 on the theoretical framework and think about the fluidity of being a migrant over the lifecycle.

- Harris, J. R., & Todaro, M. P. (1970). Migration, unemployment and development: a two-sector analysis. *The American Economic Review*, 60(1), 126–142.
- Stark, O., & Bloom, D. E. (1985). The New Economics of Labor Migration. *The American Economic Review*, 75(2), 173–178. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1805591>
- Stark, O., & Taylor, J. E. (1989). Relative deprivation and international migration. *Demography*, 26(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2061490>
- Chiswick, B. R. (1999). Are immigrants favorably self-selected? *American Economic Review*, 89(2), 181–185.

¹Many of the articles may assume having taken microeconomic or macroeconomic courses. Do not worry if there are concepts that you may not understand, make a note in the margin and continue with the reading. The most important aspect is that you understand the global idea of the model, rather than all the details. As a reading tip, I suggest reading and understanding the abstract, introduction and conclusion first before having a first pass of the article.

- Clemens, M. A. (2014). Does development reduce migration? *International Handbook on Migration and Economic Development*, 152–185. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781782548072.00010>
- Dustmann, C., & Görlach, J. S. (2016). The economics of temporary migrations. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 54(1), 98–136. <https://doi.org/10.1257/jel.54.1.98>

1.3 Week 3: Situating migration decisions within a larger structure

Please read Massey, Arango, et al. (1993) first as it provides a summary on migration theories of the time. Notice that they cover theories pertaining to larger systems or entities (world systems theory, dual labor market). Then read Zolberg (1999) and Torpey (1998). In which other areas does the state interact with migrants or immigration? Consider the role of economic development policies, how does the state from the sending country play a role in migration flows?

- Massey, D. S., Arango, J., Hugo, G., Kouaouci, A., Pellegrino, A., & Taylor, J. E. (1993). Theories of international migration: A review and appraisal. *Population & Development Review*, 19(3), 431–466. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2938462>
- Torpey, J. (1998). Coming and going: On the state monopolization of the legitimate "means of movement". *Sociological Theory*, 16(3), 239–259. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0735-2751.00055>
- Zolberg, A. R. (1999). Matters of State: Theorizing Immigration Policy. In Charles Hirschman Philip Kasinitz & J. DeWind (Eds.), *Handbook of international migration: The american experience* (pp. 71–93). Russell Sage Foundation.
- Fussell, E., & Massey, D. S. (2004). The limits to cumulative causation: International migration from Mexican urban areas. *Demography*, 41(1), 151–171. <https://doi.org/10.1353/dem.2004.0003>

2 Migration in the aggregate: empirical evidence

Throughout the following weeks, we will look at migration from the largest component to smaller geographic components.

2.1 Week 4: Global network and globalization

First read the chapter from the *World Migration Report 2022*. Make a note of the most striking graphs and statistics. Was the state of global migration what you expected it to be? As you read the other articles, think about what migration theories would've predicted certain flows. What does globalization mean for migration flows?

- Abel, G. J., & Sander, N. (2014). Migration Flows. *Science*, 343(March), 1520–1523.
- Czaika, M., & de Haas, H. (2014). The Globalization of Migration: Has the World Become More Migratory? *International Migration Review*, 48(2), 283–323. <https://doi.org/10.1111/imre.12095>

- Spyratos, S., Vespe, M., Natale, F., Weber, I., Zagheni, E., & Rango, M. (2019). Quantifying international human mobility patterns using Facebook Network data. *PLoS ONE*, *14*(10), e0224134. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0224134>
- International Organization for Migration (IOM). (2021). Migration and migrants: A global view. In M. McAuliffe & A. Triandafyllidou (Eds.), *World migration report 2022* (pp. 21–58). International Organization for Migration (IOM). <https://publications.iom.int/books/world-migration-report-2022>

2.2 Week 5: International migration

Although last week we looked at movements between borders, the discussion was focused on regions and systems of countries. Now, we will consider some determinants of international migration between pairs of countries. Read Willekens et al. (2016) for an overview of research questions regarding international migration. Then read Hanson and McIntosh (2010) and Donato and Armenta (2011). Consider how demographic trends affect the population at risk of being a migrant and then who may become a migrant with specific legal status. Then choose one article between Riosmena, Nawrotzki, et al. (2018), Alvarado and Massey (2010) and Schon (2019). Where would these papers fall within the classic migration theories?

- Alvarado, S. E., & Massey, D. S. (2010). In search of peace: Structural adjustment, violence, and international migration. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *630*(1), 137–161. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716210368107>
- Hanson, G. H., & McIntosh, C. (2010). The great Mexican emigration. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, *92*(November), 798–810. https://doi.org/10.1162/REST_a_00031
- Donato, K. M., & Armenta, A. (2011). What we know about unauthorized migration. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *37*, 529–543. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-081309-150216>
- Willekens, F., Massey, D. S., Raymer, J., & Beauchemin, C. (2016). International migration under the microscope. *Science*, *352*(6288), 897–899. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aaf6545>
- Riosmena, F., Nawrotzki, R., & Hunter, L. (2018). Climate Migration at the Height and End of the Great Mexican Emigration Era. *Population and Development Review*, *44*(3), 455–488. <https://doi.org/10.1111/padr.12158>
- Schon, J. (2019). Motivation and opportunity for conflict-induced migration: An analysis of Syrian migration timing. *Journal of Peace Research*, *56*(1), 12–27. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343318806044>

2.3 Week 6: Internal migration

This week we will dive in more within categories of aggregate flows that differ within country borders rather than across. To what extent are international and internal migration different? Why should we expect some flows to be larger than others? Bring the discussion from Torpey (1998) about how the State limits migration into the context of internal migration.

Read Bell et al. (2015) first and highlight the determinants of internal migration. To what extent are they different from what Ravenstein (1885) and Lee (1966) reported as “laws”? In addition, we will look at metrics on aggregate flows and the data limitations. Scarce data in migration research is a fundamental problem. Therefore, as you read write down specific issues

related to the temporal, spatial and granular availability of migration data. **Optional reading:** Molloy et al. (2011)

Molloy, R., Smith, C. L., & Wozniak, A. (2011). Internal migration in the United States. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 25(3), 173–196. <https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.25.3.173>

Blumenstock, J. E. (2012). Inferring patterns of internal migration from mobile phone call records: evidence from Rwanda. *Information Technology for Development*, 18(2), 107–125.

Bell, M., Charles-Edwards, E., Ueffing, P., Stillwell, J., Kupiszewski, M., & Kupiszewska, D. (2015). Internal Migration and Development: Comparing Migration Intensities Around the World. *Population and Development Review*, 41(1), 33–58. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1728-4457.2015.00025.x>

Johnson, K. M., Curtis, K. J., & Egan-Robertson, D. (2017). Frozen in Place: Net Migration in sub-National Areas of the United States in the Era of the Great Recession. *Population and Development Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/padr.12095>

3 Week 7: Data limitations and new opportunities

We will take a brief pause from the empirical results to consider the suitability of data for migration research. Throughout the readings, you have been exposed to several discussions on data limitations. Take a moment to make a list of the most prevalent issues with each data type.

First read Bose (2012) and then consider the advantages of qualitative and quantitative data in terms of analyzing individual phenomena or aggregate trends. Continue with Beauchemin (2014) and Riosmena (2016). How can data be comparable over time and countries? What types of tradeoffs should researchers be prepared to make in terms of available data? How can tradeoffs be overcome? Finally, read Cesare et al. (2018). Big Data and Digital traces are new areas of opportunity. Why should we be careful when using them?

Bose, P. S. (2012). Mapping movements: Interdisciplinary approaches to migration research. In C. Vargas-Silva (Ed.), *Handbook of research methods in migration*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Beauchemin, C. (2014). A manifesto for quantitative multi-sited approaches to international migration. *International Migration Review*, 48(4), 921–938. <https://doi.org/10.1111/imre.12157>

Riosmena, F. (2016). The Potential and Limitations of Cross-Context Comparative Research on Migration. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 666(1), 28–45. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716216650629>

Cesare, N., Lee, H., McCormick, T., Spiro, E., & Zagheni, E. (2018). Promises and Pitfalls of Using Digital Traces for Demographic Research. *Demography*, 55(5), 1979–1999. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13524-018-0715-2>

4 Week 8: Migration over the lifecourse

After talking about aggregate trend across geographies in the previous weeks, now we turn to migration within the life of an individual. We focus on how migration occurs along with fertility,

mortality and repeated migration. The assignment for this week is to draw a phase diagram on migration events over the lifetime. That is, at one specific moment in a person's life, they can be a migrant or not. If they are a migrant now, does that mean that they are one forever? If in the future they are not, can they be one again. Focus on the following conditions: non-migrant, migrant, return migrant, temporary migrant, permanent migrant. Is this diagram the same for refugees and asylum seekers?

Read Rogers and Castro (1981) and Bernard et al. (2014) together. Are age-specific migration schedules a law? Then read Parrado (2011) and Riosmena, Kuhn, et al. (2017) and consider how the act of migration impacts immediate and future life outcomes. **Optional readings:** Masferrer and Roberts (2012) and Constant and Zimmermann (2011)

Rogers, A., & Castro, L. J. (1981). *Model migration schedules* (Vol. 81-30).

Constant, A. F., & Zimmermann, K. F. (2011). Circular and repeat migration: Counts of exits and years away from the host country. *Population Research and Policy Review*, 30(4), 495–515.

Parrado, E. A. (2011). How High is Hispanic/Mexican Fertility in the United States? Immigration and Tempo Considerations. *Demography*, 48(3), 1059–1080. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13524-011-0045-0>

Masferrer, C., & Roberts, B. R. (2012). Going back home? changing demography and geography of mexican return migration. *Population Research and Policy Review*, 31(4), 465–496.

Bernard, A., Bell, M., & Charles-Edwards, E. (2014). Life-course transitions and the age profile of internal migration. *Population and Development Review*, 40(2), 213–239. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1728-4457.2014.00671.x>

Riosmena, F., Kuhn, R., & Jochem, W. C. (2017). Explaining the immigrant health advantage: Self-selection and protection in health-related factors among five major national-origin immigrant groups in the United States. *Demography*, 54(1), 175–200. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13524-016-0542-2>

Optional material: We will not dive into assimilation and integration theories, although they are key to understand the migrant experience in the host country. The resources below are just a start for anyone that is interested.

Portes, A., & Zhou, M. (1993). The New Second Generation: Segmented Assimilation and its Variants. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 530(1), 74–96. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716293530001006>

Brown, B. S. K., & Bean, F. D. (2006). Assimilation Models , Old and New : Explaining a Long-Term Process. *Migration information source*, (10), 1–7. <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/assimilation-models-old-and-new-explaining-long-term-process>

Portes, A., Fernández-Kelly, P., & Haller, W. (2009). The adaptation of the immigrant second generation in America: A theoretical overview and recent evidence. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 35(7), 1077–1104. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691830903006127>

Gonzales, R. G. (2011). Learning to be illegal: Undocumented youth and shifting legal contexts in the transition to adulthood. *American Sociological Review*, 76(4), 602–619. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122411411901>

Menjívar, C., & Abrego, L. J. (2012). Legal violence: Immigration law and the lives of central American immigrants. *American Journal of Sociology*, 117(5), 1380–1421. <https://doi.org/10.1086/663575>

5 Critical view of migration as a discipline

We will end the semester with readings that question the focus of migration research from the perspective of the available method, theory and specific subpopulations.

5.1 Week 9: Methods

The articles for this week will give an overview about the possible methods to use in the future. Some articles are more technical than others, so make sure that you understand the larger picture. This is not an exhaustive list. Are there any methods from your own field that should be applicable to migration research?

- Bijak, J., & Bryant, J. (2016). Bayesian demography 250 years after Bayes. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00324728.2015.1122826>
- Klabunde, A., & Willekens, F. (2016). Decision-making in agent-based models of migration: state of the art and challenges. *European Journal of Population*, 32(1), 73–97. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10680-015-9362-0>
- Courgeau, D., Bijak, J., Franck, R., & Silverman, E. (2017). Model-Based Demography: Towards a Research Agenda. In V. B. J. Grow A. (Ed.), *Agent-based modelling in population studies. the springer series on demographic methods and population analysis* (pp. 29–51). Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-32283-4_2
- Raymer, J., Willekens, F., & Rogers, A. (2019). Spatial demography: A unifying core and agenda for further research. *Population, Space and Place*, 25(4), e2179.
- Bloemraad, I., & Menjívar, C. (2022). Precarious Times, Professional Tensions: The Ethics of Migration Research and the Drive for Scientific Accountability. *International Migration Review*, 56(1), 4–32. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01979183211014455>

5.2 Week 10: Theory

Thinking back to the first 3 weeks, consider what areas of migration determinants were understudied. What theories were more problematic for you? Or, which assumptions do you consider should be harder to hold in reality? For this week, start with Massey (2018). In the scientific method, we should take into account the possible update of past theories.

- Curran, S. R. [Sara R], Shafer, S., & Donato, K. M. (2006). Mapping gender and migration in sociological scholarship: Is it segregation or integration? <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2006.00008.x>
- Massey, D. S. (2018). The perils of seeing twenty-first century migration through a twentieth-century lens. *International Social Science Journal*, 68(227-228), 101–104. <https://doi.org/10.1111/issj.12173>
- Schewel, K. (2020). Understanding Immobility: Moving Beyond the Mobility Bias in Migration Studies. *International Migration Review*, 54(2), 328–355. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0197918319831952>

de Haas, H. (2021). A theory of migration: the aspirations-capabilities framework. *Comparative Migration Studies*, 9(1), 1–35. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-020-00210-4>

5.3 Week 11: Gendered lens

As alluded by Sara R Curran et al. (2006), there has been a focus on male-centric migration research. Read the first 4 articles and then skim the last 3. For Oishi (2005), only read the introduction. The discussion between Hughes and Stark is important because it highlights the critical assumptions in the NELM theory that imply specific gendered behaviour of migrants. Make sure to understand the overall discussion between the authors.

Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. (2000). Feminism and migration. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 571(1), 107–120.

Kanaiaupuni, S. M. (2000). Reframing the migration question: An analysis of men, women, and gender in Mexico. *Social forces*, 78(4), 1311–1347. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/78.4.1311>

Oishi, N. (2005). *Women in motion: Globalization, state policies, and labor migration in asia*. Stanford University Press.

Donato, K. M., Alexander, J. T., Gabaccia, D. R., & Leinonen, J. (2011). Variations in the gender composition of immigrant populations: How they matter. *International Migration Review*, 45(3), 495–526. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2011.00856.x>

Hughes, C. (2019). Reexamining the Influence of Conditional Cash Transfers on Migration From a Gendered Lens. *Demography*, 56(5), 1573–1605. <https://doi.org/10.1007/S13524-019-00815-0>

Hughes, C. (2021). Conditional cash transfers and migration: Reconciling feminist theoretical approaches with the new economics of labor migration. *Demography*, 58(1), 383–391. <https://doi.org/10.1215/00703370-8928494>

Stark, O. (2021). “Reexamining the Influence of Conditional Cash Transfer on Migration From a Gendered Lens”: Comment. *Demography*, 58(1), 379–381. <https://doi.org/10.1215/00703370-8928518>

5.4 Week 12: Families left behind

For our last week, we will look at the implications of migration on the families that remain in the origin country. Which theories would be most relevant in the following articles? How can we think about agency within the household and in particular for children? How should we think about child migration?

Mincer, J. (1978). Family Migration Decisions. *Journal of political Economy*, 86(5), 749–773.

de Haas, H., & van Rooij, A. (2010). Migration as emancipation? The impact of internal and international migration on the position of women left behind in rural morocco. *Oxford Development Studies*, 38(1), 43–62. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13600810903551603>

Dreby, J. (2012). The Burden of Deportation on Children in Mexican Immigrant Families. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 74(4), 829–845. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2012.00989.x>

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Nobles, J. (2013). Migration and Father Absence: Shifting Family Structure in Mexico. *Demography*, 50(4), 1303–1314. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13524-012-0187-8>

