**IRCO: Refugee and Immigrant Support and Education**

**(A Portland State University Studies Capstone Course)**

**UNST 421, 6 credits**

**Spring Term 2015**

**Instructor: Colleen Kaleda, MS**

**Office: Cramer Hall 117**

**Phone: 503.869.3089**

**Office Hours: By appointment (flexible, Mondays preferred)**

**Email: kaleda@pdx.edu**

**TWO SECTIONS:**

**SECTION 1: Mondays, 9am-11:50am in Neuberger Hall Room 227**

**SECTION 2: Mondays, 1pm-3:50pm in Koinonia House Room 112**

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

* Establish familiarity with the global refugee situation
* Gain understanding of the factors that make refugee transition to life in the United States particularly challenging
* Gain understanding of the role global and U.S. policy plays in the refugee experience
* Gain understanding of the immigrant vs. refugee perspective and challenges through working with immigrant and refugee youth in Portland
* Learn and put into practice culturally-sensitive teaching methods

**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GENERAL INFO:**

This course will delve into the modern refugee and immigrant experience through direct contact with refugee and immigrant youth served by Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO), a Portland non-profit social service organization. Students will work as volunteer teaching assistants in a classroom setting in after-school tutoring programs (for youth grades K-12) at various Portland middle schools and/or a high school. **Students will be required to travel to the IRCO program schools (in outer SE and NE Portland) for 9 weeks during the course for two, 2-hour shifts at each site, for a total of 4 hours per week. Volunteer shifts will occur between 3pm and 6pm on weekdays.** Students will work under the direction of community partner staff. Students will also complete a special project for IRCO, under the guidance of the professor and the directors of IRCO. **Students should budget out-of-class time for final-product project work.** Other readings and assignments will help students better understand the experience of refugees in America today, and the global refugee situation.

**ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING:**

Specific requirements for out-of-class assignments will be discussed in class and written instructions will be handed out. Specific topics for in-class reflection essays will be announced immediately prior to the start of the in-class writing time.

Because this is a 400-level course, there will be no re-grading of your main paper assignment. It is the student’s responsibility to turn in a polished final draft by the deadline. Grammar and spelling errors will negatively affect all assignment grades. The professor encourages students to consult fellow students, other university resources, and the professor for writing and revision assistance. I am always happy to read, edit and discuss drafts in-person by appointment. Readings are required and the basis for class discussion. Students are expected to come prepared to class by keeping up on readings. Preparedness is an important factor in a quality discussion and participation is part of the final grade for each student.

**ATTENDANCE**

Regular class attendance is expected. Students are asked to notify the professor in advance if a class session will be missed for any reason. More than two absences will negatively affect the student’s grade in the course.

**STUDENT CONDUCT CODE**

It is strongly recommended that you read the Student Conduct Code (see <http://www.pdx.edu/dos/conduct.html>). It details your rights and responsibilities as a student and as a member of the Portland State Community.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

If you are a student with a documented disability and registered with the Disability Resource Center, please contact the instructor immediately to facilitate arranging academic accommodations.

**DEADLINES:**

There will be no late assignments accepted. Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the due date. Deadlines are strictly enforced and late assignments will receive a zero unless the student has an illness, emergency or other special circumstance and contacts the professor in advance about it. Printing problems do not constitute special circumstances or an emergency. Students are allowed only one “leniency allotment” per term for a late assignment for any other reason, in which case the assignment grade will drop one full letter grade for every 24 hours past the exact original due date and time.

**TEXTBOOK**:

*State of the World’s Refugees: A Synthesis*. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Oxford University Press, 2012. 31 pgs. Download and print (free) from www.unhcr.org/4fc5ceca9.html

**BREAKDOWN OF COURSE GRADING:**

CLASS ATTENDANCE, DISCUSSION, PARTICIPATION: 20% of grade

ISSUE PAPER: 10% of grade

IN-CLASS REFLECTION ESSAYS (3 @ 5% each): 15% of grade

PRESENTATION OF INDIVIDUAL BOOK: 10% of grade

VOLUNTEER ATTENDANCE/PERFORMANCE: 35% of grade

PROJECT FOR IRCO: 10% of grade

**COURSE CALENDAR**

**Monday, March 30**

Introduction to refugee issues, the course, assignments, the text, individual book list, and to each other. Guest Speakers: IRCO staffers will introduce their organization, overview the cultures their programs serve, and what to expect in your upcoming volunteer roles. You will need to fill out and turn in background check forms for IRCO.

**NOTE: By 6pm on Wednesday, April 1, e-mail** [**kaleda@pdx.edu**](mailto:kaleda@pdx.edu)**:**

1. **Your top three book choices, in order of preference. Wait for reply, then purchase your book immediately and begin reading.**
2. **Your top four volunteer-slot choices. Wait for reply, then clear your schedule for your commitment for the following 9 weeks.**

**Monday, April 6**

**1st volunteer week (4 hours @ community partner sites)**

The global refugee situation. Discussion on cross-cultural learning, advice on working with refugee and immigrant youth. Discussion of protracted refugee situations, assignment of the paper.

**Monday, April 13**

**2nd volunteer week (4 hours @ community partner sites)**

Discussion: refugees – how many are here, how many are there, and how many are “stuck.” IRCO project organization: form project teams, plan.

Film: “God Grew Tired of Us”

**Monday, April 20**

**3rd volunteer week (4 hours @ community partner sites)**

In-class activity and discussion: Refugees vs. Immigrants in the United States

Film: “My American Girls: A Dominican Story”

**Monday, April 27**

**4th volunteer week (4 hours @ community partner sites)**

**ISSUE PAPERS DUE on protracted refugee situation of your choice**

Project team meetings. Q&A: protracted refugee situations around the world, and a discussion-lecture on secondary immigrants as the result of refugee situations.

**Monday, May 4**

**5th volunteer week (4 hours @ community partner sites)**

All-class discussion: Oxford’s Multidimensional Poverty Index. Making connections between poverty factors and refugee situations.

**IN-CLASS ESSAY #1**

**Monday, May 11**

**6th volunteer week (4 hours @ community partner sites)**

**8-minute review-presentations of individual books scheduled today for all students. Expect a short Q&A at end of each student presentation.**

**Monday, May 18**

**7th volunteer week (4 hours @ community partner sites)**

Delivery of final product to IRCO.

**IN-CLASS ESSAY #2**

**Monday, May 25**

**8th volunteer week (4 hours @ community partner sites)**

**NO CLASS – HAPPY MEMORIAL DAY!**

**Monday, June 1**

**9th volunteer week (4 hours @community partner sites)**

**IN-CLASS REFLECTION ESSAY #3**

Discussion: Possible guest speakers TBA, wrap-up discussion, de-brief of the course as a whole, evaluations.