



Sample Syllabus - *The Mexico-US Border*

Instructor: Edwin Hirschfeld
Meetings: Eight hours daily, over six consecutive days (dates tba)
Classroom: Various sites along both sides of the US-Mexico Border
Office Hours: Continuous throughout the course, or [by appointment](#)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This weeklong course created by the [Global Minds Institute](#) [registered 501(c)(3)] guides students and educators through key areas and communities along both sides of the US-Mexico border to examine and address problems associated with human migration. We will accompany the U.S. Border Patrol, consult legal experts, and engage meaningfully with community leaders, activists, local residents, and other communities directly affected by human migration and immigration policy.

As with all Global Minds Institute courses, *Migrating Americas* is strictly an academic endeavor which is firmly unaffiliated with any advocacy organizations, political agendas, or religious ideologies. If crossing the border becomes restricted, the group will shift to an alternate itinerary.

Discovering the *Baja California - Southern California* region and immersing ourselves in its diverse cultures are both sweet and essential to our mission. We will explore the border area and closely examine current policies and dynamics through the lenses of affected communities. A variety of recreational activities and very much fun are of course part of the experience. No background on the subject is necessary.

In order to relate and design effectively, this course will survey the region's history spanning from Native American tribes - First Nation to present day. Participants will become familiar with a comprehensive range of agendas and narratives regarding problems associated with human migration. As the course progresses, students will be encouraged to develop their own critical thought, progressively becoming more discerning consumers of current events.

Through direct engagement with the community, student inquiry, classroom sessions, and collaborative design, students will create a final project that effectively addresses problems associated with human migration while also respecting the communities involved. Successful completion of the course will translate to a comprehension of: (continued)

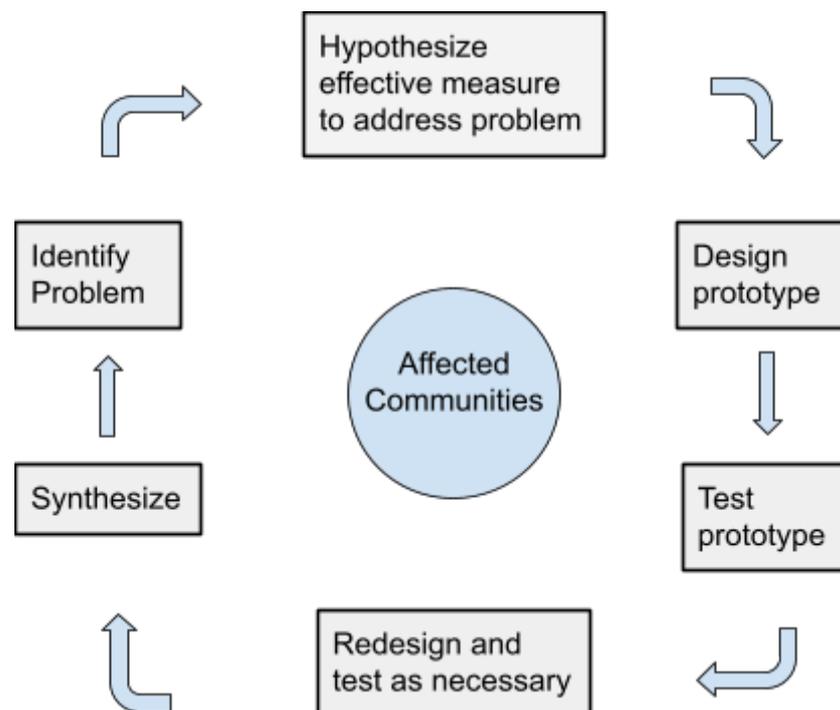
- Modern history of the U.S.- Mexico border area
- The complex dilemmas presented by human migration
- The "push and pull" factors motivating human migration
- The range of competing narratives and proposals for addressing related problems
- The collaborative design process

METHODOLOGY

Our group will be divided into teams, each assigned to a separate facet of the design

Collaborative design thinking will be our methodology. The design process requires the following sequential steps:

Identifying a problem → hypothesizing a solution → designing a prototype → testing the prototype → redesigning and testing as necessary → synthesizing the product.



The final project which will be proposed by the group and approved by the instructor, will be presented in finalized form to an outside audience.

SOURCES

Further readings and multimedia sources to be listed shortly.

International Organization for Migration, "[World Migration Report 2020](https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/wmr_2020.pdf)." *IOM Human Migration*, 2019, https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/wmr_2020.pdf.

BASIS OF EVALUATION

Participation (25%)

Frequent and thoughtful participation in group discussions and activities is not only expected and required, it is an indispensable resource which insists you elevate yourself and your colleagues by synthesizing and articulating thoughts based on sources we examine.

Respect and tolerance for all viewpoints will be our standard norm. Do not interrupt your colleagues during discussions. The instructor reserves the right to establish acceptable parameters in this regard, including asking individuals to leave the class or program in extreme cases of unacceptable behavior.

Homework (25%)

Everyone is expected to be conversant in assigned reading, and up to date on work assigned by instructors or team leaders.

Citizenship (25%)

Punctuality, respect, personal hygiene, general adherence to rules, not separating oneself from the group, overall attitude - all these social criteria have a direct bearing on the entire group's learning experience.

Final Project (25%)

Throughout the course, the group will collaboratively design an artifact of its choosing in any medium that meaningfully improves an aspect of human migration experienced by any of the affected communities. The collaboratively designed artifact may be an object, a system, an idea, or an artistic expression (or combination of all) presented to an outside audience.

Appeals

I strive to be accurate and fair in assessments, yet keep an open mind to my own (plentiful) imperfections. Students are encouraged to call any grading discrepancies to my attention. If persuaded, I will gladly adjust scores accordingly.

Cheating & Plagiarism

The discovery of cheating or plagiarism on any assignment in or outside the class will result in disciplinary action as per your school's regulations with no exceptions.

Respect

Projects and discussions mostly concern controversial and deeply contentious issues. Due respect and tolerance for all individuals and their opinions will be the standard norm regardless whether or not we agree with them. This also applies to meetings we will conduct with external parties who are not participants in the course.

Culture

The college-preparatory component of the program is one which I take to heart. One of the course objectives is for you to be able to enter an undergraduate, college-level political science or history course having already been acclimated to the pace, responsibilities, and level of discourse you can expect. We will carry ourselves accordingly.

This syllabus is subject to emendations at the discretion of the instructor. Any changes will be duly announced.