SSW799-012
Winter, 2015
Immigration Enforcement at the Contested Border

Course Description:

What does the U.S. border enforcement policy look like at the fence (wall)? Why do people risk their lives to trek the Sonora desert to work in the United States? Is Operation Streamline, a zero tolerance federal court trial for undocumented immigrants, constitutionally valid? Questions of policy, migration strategies, and legal validity permeate my SSW classes on immigration. In these classes, we explore these issues by reading research, watching videos, questioning guest lecturers and discussing issues among ourselves.

Now we will travel to the U.S./Mexico border to witness, experience, record, and reflect on the repercussions of U.S. immigration and border enforcement policy in the Tucson/Nogales area.¹ The goal is to begin to understand the nuances of this immigration and our policy response by observing the day-to-day activities that constitute the minutiae of a policy's impact on both the people who migrate and the people who enforce the policy. This trip focuses on experiential learning rather than evaluating the research of others.

This class is principally for students who have already taken one of my masters level immigration classes, where national immigration policy and controversial issues of immigration are already discussed.

Significance of the class and its relationship to social work goals:

This class is based on current policy and current strategies for enforcement and the impact of those actions on people at the border. The problematic border requires social workers to consider the implications its contestation on social justice in the United States. Social work students will also gain a very practical view of the problems associated with being undocumented, which act as an overarching context to nearly every issue that social workers address. We will focus on the criminalization of people crossing the border and how the militarized immigration agencies (Border Patrol, ICE) collaborate with private prison corporations by apprehending border crossers. Further, the realities of detention and deportation are often overlooked or misunderstood by social workers as they work with people. One's status impacts the experience of people in every system that interfaces with social work including, the schools, child welfare system, criminal justice system, the health system, etc. This class adds knowledge of immigration enforcement and community and organizational responses to enforcement policy to the social worker toolkit.

¹ Students will not cross the border into Mexico.
By the end of this course, students will (Course Objectives):

- be able to translate the symbolism of patriotism and ownership at the border to uncover its impact on everyone
- be able to assess the language, intent, and extent of enforcement policies, the strategies and tactics of enforcement, and government entities related to enforcement
- be able to work with and create community organizations that counter the deadly effects of border enforcement activities
- be able to use immigrant rights information effectively in community organizing and other activism

Academic Credit Requirement:

1. Witnessing, recording, learning, and participating:

   a. Keep a daily recording of your thoughts and learning experiences during this trip. During our visits, take photos and videos or make sketches or something with the goal of telling a truth about the border area as you see it. Write about it—in any format.
   b. Consistently ask yourself “What is a role for a social worker in this environment”?
   c. While we’re at the border, look for graffiti and other work on the existing border wall and record it for use in our presentation.
   d. We will look at the situation through the eyes of different people. You may agree with the perspective of some and you may have arguments about others’ points of view. Can you look at this struggle through everyone’s eyes? What is the validity to their perspective? What can you learn from trying to understand them?
   e. The forms of your reflections and recordings are less important than the truthful (in your eyes) story you tell. Date your work to see how your thoughts change over time and use your daily reflections to prepare the public presentation.

2. Social Justice and the Contested Border (public presentation):

   We will present our experiences in McGregor Commons on Friday, March 13th between 11 and 5 (with lunchtime being the critical time for us to be there in person). Our goals are to reach out to educate and challenge as many people as possible about the border and to report back to the Social Work Global Learning Community (our funding group). Put this date in your calendar—we all need to be physically present during the lunchtime hour (oral presentations?).

   We will use posters, representations, poetry, videos? etc. on specific topics. Each presentation will be a group project (changing groups of 2-3 people, sometimes everyone). We will hold preparatory discussions during car rides (a lot—great time for planning), at a meeting on Wednesday, and at dinner on Friday.

Potential Presentation Topics:

a. Border wall graffiti. We will all create a representation of the border wall in the McGregor Commons.
b. Reflections on the border fence #1. Prepare reflections, essays, photos, videos, word charts, or any representation of your choosing to express your impression of the border fence when we first arrive.
c. Reflections on the desert experience for people with different perspectives
   i. If I were a migrant in the desert...........
   ii. If I were a border patrol agent in the desert........
   iii. If I were part of the Tahono O’odham nation...........
d. Community organizing at the contested border
e. Reflections on Operation Streamline as U.S. policy and as social justice
f. Final reflections on the contested border

Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Specifics</th>
<th>Time and Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday, March 1st</strong></td>
<td>Arrive in Phoenix, drive to Tucson</td>
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<td>Tucson Samaritans Desert training</td>
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<td>1:30—5:00 pm</td>
<td>Will arrive La Vita House about 6 to settle in</td>
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<td>520-909-9881</td>
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<td>pay attention to food for lunch (timing issues), dinner on your own</td>
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<td><strong>Monday, March 2nd</strong></td>
<td>Border/border patrol Reflections on the Fence</td>
<td>10:30 am—5:00 pm (approximate end time)</td>
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<td>Where does the border end? Border Patrol checkpoint witness</td>
<td>I-19 checkpoint, Arivaca checkpoint</td>
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<td>No More Deaths meeting (if interested)</td>
<td>7:15 pm at St. Marks Presbyterian Church, 3809</td>
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<td>E. Third Street, 85716, Knox Room. SW corner of</td>
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<td>church</td>
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<td>Breakfast—La Vita House 8:00—8:30</td>
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<td>5-7 hours</td>
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<td>lunch by the border or in Arivaca.....individual purchase.</td>
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<td>Dinner on your own</td>
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<td><strong>Tuesday, March 3rd</strong></td>
<td>Operation Streamline</td>
<td>11:30 am—3:30 pm</td>
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<td>Starts at 1:00 or 1:30 typically. We will arrive by the federal courthouse about noon</td>
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<td>Breakfast—La Vita House 8:00—8:30</td>
<td>4 hours</td>
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<td>Lunch on your own,??by</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<td>Wednesday, March 4th</td>
<td>Tucson Samaritans meeting (if interested) Group dinner, reflections</td>
<td>Southside Presbyterian Church, 7:00 PM</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
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<td><strong>Wednesday, March 4th</strong></td>
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<td>Derechos Humanos, Drop in others Student led community organization visits, optional</td>
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<td>Presentation preparation meeting, time TBD</td>
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<td>Thursday, March 5th</td>
<td>Desert Volunteers and Migrant Trails Samaritan patrol, supplies, witness, food and water and emergency medicine</td>
<td>7 AM at Southside Presbyterian Church, 317 W. 23rd Street, corner of 10th Avenue and 23rd Street. Meet at a shed at the back of the east parking lot. (There are two small parking lots.)</td>
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<td>Friday, March 6th</td>
<td>Hiking the border fence to investigate border technology with Scott Nicholson.</td>
<td>Meet at the Safeway in Nogales, AZ at 8:30. From I-19, take the Mariposa Rd. exit (exit 4) and turn left (east) onto Mariposa Rd. at the light. The Safeway store is in the large parking lot on the right just past I-19.</td>
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Antigone Books (411 N. 4th Ave. in Tucson), Margaret Regan will be discussing her new book, “Detained and Deported: Stories of Immigrant Families Under Fire.”

| Saturday, March 7th | leave | Breakfast—La Vita House 8:00—8:30 |

**Required Readings (it looks like a lot but most are really short):**

- **Life** Near the Mexican Border, [http://azcommunitypress.org/2014/03/16/life-near-the-mexican-border/](http://azcommunitypress.org/2014/03/16/life-near-the-mexican-border/)

- **Border Journey**: The Heart of Solidarity (blog), [http://www.borderjourney.blogspot.com/](http://www.borderjourney.blogspot.com/)


Recommended Videos/Films (from Tucson Samaritan's list):

_Crossing the Line: Border Stories._ 27 minutes.
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1PaWiYOH800](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1PaWiYOH800)
In this 2010 television news special, KPBS San Diego reporters explore the financial impact and personal toll of illegal immigration.

_Crossing the Line at the Border: Dying to Get Back._ 25 minutes.
PBS Need to Know 2013 documentary: While the number of illegal crossings at the border has plummeted dramatically — roughly half the number than during peak years — just as many people are dying. This means that for those coming into the country illegally, it is now more deadly, more lethal, than at any time in recent U.S. immigration history.

_Immigrant America: The High Cost of Deporting Parents_
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JOEn0iBWWx0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JOEn0iBWWx0)
Ray Jesus owned a business. He paid taxes. He has an American wife and 5 American kids. In 2011, he was deported to Guatemala. This is his story.

_Risking It All – Across Mexico: Chasing an Impossible Dream._ 25 minutes.
2011 Al Jazeera documentary about Latin American migrants risking life and limb to reach the U.S. border in search of the American dream.

_Which Way Home_ 82 minutes.
Available for streaming on Netflix.com.
2010 Oscar-nominated documentary that follows unaccompanied children from Mexico and Central America on their dangerous journey north to the United States.

_Borderlands: Professors Explore Immigration on the Hyphen._ 5 minutes.
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CBqBRPZd5Pc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CBqBRPZd5Pc)
Over spring break 2009, two College of William and Mary professors and eight students joined Samaritans on an exploratory desert hike in the Tucson/Nogales region of the U.S.-Mexico border.

_The Tinaja Trail_
This 2014 documentary focuses on humanitarian efforts to save the lives of migrants crossing the U.S.-Mexico border and making their way through the harsh, unforgiving borderland desert. Described as "a compelling tale of life and death and humanitarian service," this film features the work of Tucson Samaritans and other Tucson-based groups as well as volunteer organizations in other states. Trailer is available for preview at [http://www.humanitarianfilm.org/](http://www.humanitarianfilm.org/)

Some Tucson Groups with which to familiarize yourselves (all also on Facebook):

Derechos Humanos, [http://www.derechoshumanosaz.net/](http://www.derechoshumanosaz.net/)


Border Patrol Victim’s Network, Red de Victimas de la Patrulla Fronteriza
[http://borderpatrolvictimsnetwork.blogspot.com/](http://borderpatrolvictimsnetwork.blogspot.com/)

Tucson Together, DACA/DAPA legal aid,

Borderlinks, [http://www.borderlinks.org/](http://www.borderlinks.org/)

Southside Presbyterian Church (see social justice, worker center, sanctuary)
[http://www.southsidepresbyterian.org/](http://www.southsidepresbyterian.org/)