

**Immigration Law and Policy
Spring 2026 5389 /20593**

Syllabus

- Meeting Time and Location:** Tues & Thurs, 10:30-11:50, RM 312
- Faculty Information:** Professor Daniel I. Morales
dimoral2@houston.edu
Office: 341G
Office Hours: M, 10:30-11:45 pm, and by appointment
- Course Materials:**
- 1) Hing, Chacón, Johnson, *Immigration Law and Social Justice* (2nd Ed) (“CB”).
 - 2) Reihan Salam, *Melting Pot or Civil War? A Son of Immigrants Makes the Case Against Open Borders* (Excerpts in Additional Readings)
 - 2) Hein De Haas, *How Migration Really Works* (“HMRW”)
 - 3) Immigration and Nationality Act,
<https://www.uscis.gov/laws-and-policy/legislation/immigration-and-nationality-act>
 - 4) Additional Readings (“AR”)
https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/ljd0rkxwyo2pbwv6ur866/AH5hv4L8sA4CfoR3Duk_xFk?rlkey=eqrqimicwib6qu4xb8djh9espp&st=e93szrfh&dl=0

Course Description: Immigration is a complex and dynamic area of legal study and practice. This course will introduce you to the basic concepts and procedures underlying the practice of immigration law in the United States. We will aim both to understand the statutory complexities of the area as well as to place our current laws in their historical, social, and political contexts. The course will be an important foundation for those of you interested in practicing immigration law, but it will also be of use to those of you planning to enter other fields, such as family law, criminal law, employment law, and business law. Immigration law intersects with each of these in important ways.

We will be guided by several basic questions throughout the course:

- Who is a citizen, and what is the meaning of U.S. citizenship?
- Who can come to this country as an immigrant, visitor, or refugee?
- When and why can noncitizens in the U.S. be forced to leave?

The way I teach is guided by the following insight from the famous sociologist Max Weber: “Words in the classroom are ploughshares to loosen the soil of contemplative thought.” The readings are designed to challenge social orthodoxies and create the conditions for you to arrive at your own, thoughtful, conclusions.

Method of Instruction: I will teach this course using a combination of case analysis, statutory interpretation, lecture, and problem-solving.

Method of Evaluation: 90 percent of your grade for this course will be based on a final scheduled exam at the end of the semester. I will grade your exam essay answers based on the following criteria:

- knowledge of the material in the course
- analysis of the legal and factual issues presented
- clarity, cogency, and organization of argument
- accurate and appropriate use of legal terminology
- quality of expression

The Remaining 10 percent of your grade will be based on your class participation and your completion of a five-minute presentation to the class on a short article discussing a current event at the beginning of class. That presentation and the surrounding discussion will be graded satisfactory/unsatisfactory. Please email me the article or articles you chose to present on the evening before the class you are scheduled to present on at: dimoral2@central.uh.edu.

Each student must pick one class to present a current issue in immigration law or politics. And present an article about that issue. (Anything written or issued in the last year counts as current). You may use any source, but if you are representing the article as factual, I strongly recommend relying only on content from professional news organizations that follow rigorous journalistic standards, e.g., *The Wall Street Journal*.

The linked [folder](#) is a good place to get started. It contains a weekly news roundup for much of the last year compiled by a prominent immigration lawyer that you should feel free to rely on as a resource to track down an article you wish to cover in your presentation.

Please use this [signup](#) to pick a class period to present. Please stick to one person per day until no more spots are left. Only a few of you should have to double up.

Class participation will follow a panel system to be determined on the first day of class with the seating chart.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course you should be able to do the following

- Identify and critique leading rationales for immigration regulation and deregulation
- Identify and utilize all the major methods of legal analysis applicable to immigration laws
- Demonstrate knowledge of and be able to defend a position on key immigration policy questions
- Identify and apply major immigration law precedents to novel facts

How to Reach Me: My regular office hours are Monday 10:30-11:45, but I am happy to make alternate arrangements. As exam time approaches, I will schedule additional hours. I will also typically be available immediately after each class.

Schedule of Assignments: Each class moves at its own pace. I will give the next class assignment at the end of each class. If you miss class, please get the assignment from a

classmate. If you are out of town and need to read ahead, please contact me and I can give you an estimate of where I think we will be. Readings listed here are tentative and subject to change

Chosen names & preferred pronouns: I go by Professor Morales and use he/him/his as my pronouns. I will gladly honor requests to use nicknames, alternate names, or preferred gender pronouns—including non-binary ones such as they/them/theirs. Advise me how you would like to be addressed early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have concerns about how I or your classmates address you.

COVID-19 Information: Students are encouraged to visit the University's COVID-19 website for important information including diagnosis and symptom protocols, testing, vaccine information, and post-exposure guidance. Please check the website throughout the semester for updates.

Reasonable Academic Adjustments/Auxiliary Aids: The University of Houston complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, pertaining to the provision of reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids for disabled students. In accordance with Section 504 and ADA guidelines, UH strives to provide reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids to students who request and require them. If you believe that you have a disability requiring an academic adjustments/auxiliary aid, please contact the Justin Dart Jr. Student Accessibility Center (formerly the Justin Dart, Jr. Center for Students with DisABILITIES).

Recording of Class: Students may not record all or part of class, livestream all or part of class, or make/distribute screen captures, without advanced written consent of the instructor. If you have or think you may have a disability such that you need to record class-related activities, please contact the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center. If you have an accommodation to record class-related activities, those recordings may not be shared with any other student, whether in this course or not, or with any other person or on any other platform. Classes may be recorded by the instructor. Students may use instructor's recordings for their own studying and notetaking. Instructor's recordings are not authorized to be shared with anyone without the prior written approval of the instructor. Failure to comply with requirements regarding recordings will result in a disciplinary referral to the Dean of Students Office and may result in disciplinary action.

Honor Code: The UHLC Honor Code applies to all aspects of this course. You are responsible for knowing all Honor Code provisions and for complying with the Honor Code. Please inquire if you have any questions regarding how the Honor Code's provisions apply to specific activities or situations related to this course. Your continuing enrollment in this course is deemed to be a pledge by you under the Honor Code to comply with the Honor Code in relation to this course and to comply with the instructions in the course syllabus.

AI Generated Text: The software technology known as artificial intelligence has recently expanded its capability to generate text (AI Generated Text). Examples of the technology include what are known as "generative" large language models (LLMs), and a specific implementation what is well known in the general public is ChatGPT. These systems can generate text in response to prompts and/or input of other text/documents/code/images. The output, the AI Generated Text, appears to have

human mimicking “intelligence” and is thus potentially usable as a substitute for written work product one might generate themselves. AI Generated Text can include computer code or programs as well as human language content.

Your continuing enrollment in this course is deemed to be a pledge by you under the Honor Code to not prompt, generate, obtain, read, or use any AI Generated Text in relation to any activity or assessment in this course. This applies to AI Generated Text from yourself or others. This pledge includes that your assessment work product in the course is without any contribution from AI Generated Text. This specifically extends to the plagiarism policy and unauthorized aid/materials parts of the Honor Code: AI Generated Text will be treated as from another/others in applying the plagiarism policy to this course. The term “assessment” means any work product generated for this course that is submitted to the instructor or presented in a class session, regardless whether it is graded content or not. Assessments include mid-terms and final exams. AI Generated Text may not be used in the development or drafting of any assessments created by you in a non proctored environment, such as a “take home” final examination unless specified as an exception below. The parts of the Honor Code that refer to unauthorized materials or aid are specifically prohibited from any use of AI Generated Text in this course unless specified as an exception below.

Mental Health and Wellness Resources: The University of Houston has a number of resources to support students’ mental health and overall wellness, including CoogsCARE and the UH Go App. UH Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers 24/7 mental health support for all students, addressing various concerns like stress, college adjustment and sadness. CAPS provides individual and couples counseling, group therapy, workshops and connections to other support services on and off-campus. For assistance visit uh.edu/caps, call 713-743-5454, or visit a Let’s Talk location in-person or virtually. Let’s Talk are daily, informal confidential consultations with CAPS therapists where no appointment or paperwork is needed.

The Student Health Center offers a Psychiatry Clinic for enrolled UH students. Call 713-743-5149 during clinic hours, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. to schedule an appointment.

The A.D. Bruce Religion Center offers spiritual support and a variety of programs centered on well-being.

Need Support Now? - If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call CAPS crisis support 24/7 at 713-743-5454, or the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: call or text 988, or chat 988lifeline.org.

Title IX/Sexual Misconduct: Per the UHS Sexual Misconduct Policy, your instructor is a “responsible employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and state law and must report incidents of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual intimidation, intimate partner violence, or stalking) about which they become aware to the Title IX office. Please know there are places on campus where you can make a report in confidence. You can find more information about resources on the Title IX website at <https://uh.edu/equal-opportunity/title-ix-sexual-misconduct/resources/>.

Reasonable Academic Adjustments/Auxiliary Aids: The University of Houston is committed to providing an academic environment and educational programs that are

accessible for its students. Any student with a disability who is experiencing barriers to learning, assessment or participation is encouraged to contact the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center (Dart Center) to learn more about academic accommodations and support that may be available to them. Students seeking academic accommodations will need to register with the Dart Center as soon as possible to ensure timely implementation of approved accommodations. Please contact the Dart Center by visiting the website: <https://uh.edu/accessibility/> calling (713) 743-5400, or emailing jdcenter@Central.UH.EDU.

Resources for Online Learning: The University of Houston is committed to student success, and provides information to optimize the online learning experience through our Power-On website (<https://uh.edu/power-on/learning/>). Please visit this website for a comprehensive set of resources, tools, and tips including: obtaining access to the internet, AccessUH, Blackboard, and Canvas; using your smartphone as a webcam; and downloading Microsoft Office 365 at no cost. For questions or assistance contact UHOnline@uh.edu.

UH Email: Please check and use your CougarNet email for communications related to this course. Faculty use the CougarNet email to respond to course-related inquiries such as grade queries or progress reports for reasons of FERPA. To access your CougarNet email, login to your Microsoft 365 account with your CougarNet credentials. Visit University Information Technology (UIT) for instructions on how to connect your CougarNet e-mail on a mobile device.

Webcams: Access to a webcam is required for students participating remotely in this course. Webcams must be turned on (state when webcams are required to be on and the academic basis for requiring them to be on). (Example: Webcams must be turned on during exams to ensure the academic integrity of exam administration.)

Security Escorts and Cougar Ride: UHPD continually works with the University community to make the campus a safe place to learn, work, and live. The security escort service is designed for the community members who have safety concerns and would like to have a Security Officer walk with them, for their safety, as they make their way across campus. Based on availability either a UHPD Security Officer or Police Officer will escort students, faculty, and staff to locations beginning and ending on campus. If you feel that you need a Security Officer to walk with you for your safety, please call 713-743-3333. Arrangements may be made for special needs.

Parking and Transportation Services also offers a late-night, on-demand shuttle service called "Cougar Ride" that provides rides to and from all on-campus shuttle stops, as well as the MD Anderson Library, Cougar Village/Moody Towers and the UH Technology Bridge. Rides can be requested through the UH Go app. Days and hours of operation can be found at <https://uh.edu/af-university-services/parking/cougar-ride/>.

A Note on Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom: [Texas Senate Bill 17](#), the recent law that outlaws diversity, equity, and inclusion programs at public colleges and universities in Texas, does not in any way affect content, instruction or discussion in a course at public colleges and universities in Texas. Academic freedom for teaching and class discussion have not been altered by Texas law. Students and faculty alike continue to enjoy robust legal and Constitutional protections for speech in and out of the classroom.

Syllabus Changes: Please note that the instructor may need to make modifications to the course syllabus. Notice of such changes will be announced as quickly as possible via email.

Class 1: Introduction to Immigration

Handout 1—Mae M. Ngai, Undocumented Immigration to the United States: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives: Pacific and American studies. 2015
Mar(15):8-26
HMRW: 15-60

Class 2: Plenary Power & Migration Law's Morality

CB 37-61
Re NAFTA and Union Organizing in Mexico
<https://jacobin.com/2024/04/uaw-mexican-autoworker-union-organizing/>

Class 3: Scrutinizing Immigration Restrictions

CB 61–82
HMRW: Myth 14 Immigration Lifts All Boats: 222-234

Class 4: Administering Immigration Law

CB: 157-209
HMRW: Myth 21 Border restrictions reduce immigration 326-342

Class 5: Immigration Federalism

CB 209-254
[*ProPublica, Texas' Border Operation Is Meant to Deter Cartels and Smugglers. More Often, It Imprisons Lone Men for Trespassing*](#)

Class 7: Citizenship

CB 255–273

AR Cristina M. Rodriguez, The Citizenship Clause, Original Meaning, and the Egalitarian Unity of the Fourteenth Amendment, 11 J. Const. L. 1363 (2009)
(assignment continued on next page)
[*A Conspicuous Gap May Undermine Trump's Birthright Citizenship Plan*](#), NY Times, Dec. 22, 2025

Amanda Frost, [*The Coming Assault on Birthright Citizenship*](#), The Atlantic, Jan. 7, 2025

Class 8: Citizenship Continued

CB 285-304

Class 9: Loss of Citizenship

CB 305-42

Class 10: Nonimmigrants

CB 343-390

HMRW: 109-28

Class 11: Immigrants Family-Based

CB 391-418

HMRW: 145-60

Class 12: Immigrants Employment-Based

CB 419-44

HMRW: 129-44

Class 14: Inadmissability

CB 445-498

MPCW: 55-6; 53-91

Class 15: Inadmissability Con

AR Dept of State v. Munoz (2024)

CB 499-530

Class 16: Deportability

CB 531-564

Class 17: Deportability, Con.

CB 564-592

Class 18: Deportability Continued

CB 592-624

Class 19: Detention

CB 625-671

Class 20: Prosecutorial Discretion

CB 671-728

Class 21: Enforcement

CB 729--786

Class 22: Relief

CB 787-830

Class 23 Relief Continued

CB 851--892

Class 24 Due Process

CB 1117-1160

Class 25 Rights of Immigrants

CB 1189-1230

Class 26 Asylum

CB 979-1024

Mae Ngai, The End of Asylum, New York Review of Books

Class 27 Asylum

CB 1047-1104

Class 28 Immigration Policy Wrapup