

Economics 292.01
The Economics of Immigration
Fall 1998

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Carney 145
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Office Hours:
Mon. 2-3pm
Wed. 10:30am-Noon

Course Description

More immigrants entered the United States during the decade of the 1980s and 1990s than in any comparable period since the turn of the last Century. Why did this upswing in immigration occur? Who are the new immigrants. Where do they come from and what do they do in the U.S? Do immigrants hurt the labor market opportunities of native-born workers and drain the U.S. social welfare system? How does U.S. immigration policy affect the number and type of immigrants we receive. This course will use theoretical and empirical tools learned in other economics courses to address these questions and more.

Course Organization

Course grades will be based on the following:

- 1) Midterm Exam (20%)
- 2) Problem Sets (15%)
- 3) Final Paper (30%)
- 4) Final Exam (25%)
- 5) Participation (10%)

Exams: The midterm exam (20% of semester grade) will be given in class on October 15th. The final exam (25% of semester grade) will be given on Monday December 14th. No early or late exams will be given, so please check your schedule for conflicts now.

The exams are designed to test your knowledge of a broad range of issues in the study of immigration and to allow you to apply your knowledge of economics.

Problem Sets:

Through out the class, assignments will be given to help test your knowledge and hone your analytical skills. These will be good preparation for the exams. They will be graded on a check, check plus, check minus basis. These assignments will account for 15% of the semester grade.

Final Paper:

The final paper in this class is different from other term papers. On the first day of class, you will pick a topic that interests you from a list. The final paper that you turn in should be 15 pages long. The research that you do will combine both library research and field research. Each student must complete at least 10 hours of field research (this will be explained in more detail the first day of class).

You may work on the paper individually or in groups, although there is a limit of four students per paper. Working in groups is an excellent skill to develop, since in most employment settings, it is

a requirement. I encourage you to consider that, although please remember that only one grade can be given per project.

More and more employers are emphasizing the need for good writing skills, and skills at taking and giving constructive criticism. Good writing generally means re-writing. It is very important to learn to revise something you have written in response to comments regarding its content and clarity. These skills all take practice. In order to give you some practice, a rough draft of your paper will be due November 24th. Rough drafts will be circulated among the other students in the class for comment. Everyone will get a draft to read, and everyone will get comments. The comments will be due Thursday December 3rd. The final version of the paper is due by 5pm on Thursday December 10th.

The final paper accounts for 30% of the semester grade.

Participation: In addition to the comments on other students' work, you should keep up with the readings and come to class prepared to discuss what you have read. (10% of the semester grade).

Syllabus

The primary source for this book is Friends or Strangers: The Impact of Immigrants on the U.S. Economy by George J. Borjas. The book is out of print, so I had it photocopied. You can purchase it at the University Bookstore. The price is around \$15 (much less than the hardback edition costs).

We will use this book as an outline for the material to be covered, but you will be expected to supplement your reading as indicated. Supplementary materials will be put on reserve (at least one week in advance) or handed out in class. Not all materials are listed here since some of the sources are current newspaper and journal articles, and I may wish to add to these as new things come out.

I. Introduction

Chapters 1 & 2, in Statistics by David Freedman, Robert Pisani, and Roger Purves.

Introduction in Immigration: Debating the Issues, by Nicholas Capaldi.

I. U.S. Immigration Policy and History

A.

Borjas chp 1 Who Comes: How the Immigration Market Works

B.

Borjas chp 2 American Immigration Policy

"The Political Economy of Immigration Restriction," by Claudia Goldin. NBER Working Paper Series.

Time Magazine, special issue Fall 1993, Read: Editor's introduction, articles on p. 10, p.18, p.28, p.34.

II. Who are the Immigrants?

A.

Borjas chp 3 A Statistical Portrait of Immigrants

B.

Borjas chp 4 Illegal Aliens: The Black Market for Immigrants

Urban Institute report, chp 2 "Estimates of the Undocumented Immigrant Population in Seven States: 1992 and Beyond," p. 17-29.

Time Magazine, article on p. 16.

III. Immigrant's Impact on the U.S. and Immigrant Assimilation.

A.

Borjas chp 5 The Impact of Immigrants on Native Earnings and Employment

Time Magazine, articles on p.60, p.62, p.69, p.73, p.80, p.86.

"The Impact of the Mariel Boatlift on the Miami Labor Market," by David Card, Industrial and Labor Relations Review, January 1990.

"Immigration and Wages: Evidence from the 1980s," Kristin Butcher and David Card, American Economic Review, 1991.

B.

Borjas chp 6 Assimilation and the Earnings of Immigrants

"Black Immigrants in the United States: A Comparison with Native Blacks and Other Immigrants," Kristin Butcher, Industrial and Labor Relations Review, 1994.

"Long-Run Convergence of Ethnic Skill Differentials: The Children and Grandchildren of the Great Migration," G. Borjas, Industrial and Labor Relations Review, July 1994.

"The More Things Change: Immigrants and the Children of Immigrants in the 1940s, The 1970s, and the 1990s," David Card, John DiNardo, and Gena Estes.

Time Magazine, articles on p.55, p.57, p.64, p.78.

C.

Borjas chp 7 Why are the New Immigrants Less Skilled than the Old?

"The Immigrant and Native-Born Wage Distributions: Evidence from United States Censuses," Kristin Butcher and John DiNardo, NBER working paper number 6630.

D.

Borjas chp 8 Employment and Poverty in the Immigrant Population

"Cross-City Evidence on the Relationship between Immigration and Crime," Kristin Butcher and Anne Piehl, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 1998.

“Recent Immigrants: Unexpected Implications for Crime and Incarceration, Kristin Butcher and Anne Piehl, Industrial and Labor Relations Review, July 1998.

E.

Borjas chp 9 Immigration and the Welfare State

“Use of Means-Tested Transfer Programs by Immigrants, Their Children, and Their Children’s Children,” Kristin Butcher and Luojia Hu, May 1998.

Urban Institute report, chp 5., "Costs of Providing Emergency Services Under Medicaid to Undocumented Aliens, p. 107-123.

Urban Institute report, "Estimated Tax Contributions of Undocumented Immigrants in Seven States," p. 131-143.

“The Role of Deportation in the Incarceration of Immigrants,” Kristin Butcher and Anne Piehl, April 1998.

Urban Institute Report, chp. 3, "Costs of Incarcerating Illegal Aliens in Seven States," p.35-54.

Urban Institute Report, chp. 4, "Costs of Providing Public Primary and Secondary Education to Undocumented Aliens in Seven States," p. 61-86.

F.

Borjas chp 10 Immigrant Entrepreneurship and Immigrant Enclaves
Time Magazine, p.82.

G.

Borjas chp 11 The Ties that Bind: The Immigrant Family

"Mass Emigration, Remittances and Economic Adjustment: The Case of El Salvador in the 1980's," by Edward Funkhouser in Immigration and the Work Force.

IV. International Issues in Immigration

A.

Borjas chp 12 American Competitiveness in the Immigration Market

B.

Borjas chp 13 Implications for Policy