

HUMANITARIANISMS: MIGRATIONS AND CARE THROUGH THE GLOBAL SOUTH

A Mellon Sawyer Seminar
Walter Chapin Simpson Center for the Humanities
University of Washington
2020-2021

Teaching Resources: Syllabus¹

The following pedagogy section offers instructors a short guide for using the Mellon Sawyer *Humanitarianisms: Migrations and Care through the Global South* syllabus in their courses.² As digital tools are gaining increased popularity in the classroom, we offer a pedagogical space for instructors to experiment with new audio-visual learning strategies in their teaching. This syllabus is aimed at advanced undergraduate and graduate courses, providing a structured 10-week lesson plan that blends online webinars and supplemental reading materials with interactive class activities and assignments. In addition, the material can be used for both synchronous and asynchronous instruction across online, hybrid, and in-person class formats. We have structured the syllabus with varying teaching needs in mind: instructors may use the course syllabus to create an entire semester/quarter teaching program or embed select thematic portions (modules ranging from one to several weeks of instruction) into their classroom pedagogy.

¹ Last updated: June 2021.

² This syllabus has been created by Mediha Sorma, PhD Candidate in the Department of Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies, University of Washington, and Cristian Capotescu, Mellon Postdoctoral Scholar, Simpson Center for the Humanities, University of Washington.

To facilitate a variety of teaching needs, our webinars offer full accessibility captioning and chapter indexing. Our indexing system enables instructors to use certain portions of our webinars for in-class screenings and home assignments.

The *Humanitarianisms* syllabus also provides a weekly course plan and a list of requirements and assignments. The accompanying study guide allows instructors to track student progress. Accompanying our list of recommended readings are examples of interactive teaching activities that utilize a discussion board, allowing students to critically engage with the class material and interact with each other in the virtual classroom.

Instructors can also refer to our website (▷ access [here](#)) to find additional resources and recommended readings.

We hope instructors will discover valuable new teaching tools through this virtual classroom concept to help students think through the terms and concepts essential to rethinking humanitarianism in the Global South.

HUMANITARIANISMS: MIGRATIONS AND CARE THROUGH THE GLOBAL SOUTH

Course Syllabus

Course Description

This course builds on the Mellon Sawyer Seminar Humanitarianisms: Migrations and Care through the Global South at the University of Washington's Simpson Center for Humanities. Through a series of virtual discussions (webinars), this course seeks to decolonize the rhetoric and understanding of humanitarianism by examining the histories of forced migration and practices of humanitarian care for forced migrants, including both “conventional” and “humanitarian” refugees that developed outside of Europe and North America. Most genealogies of humanitarianism trace its historical emergence in the Judeo-Christian tradition, the European Enlightenment, and the Laws of War. By de-centering the West as the primary locus of study, this course highlights instantiations of humanitarianism in the Global South, with a focus on Asia, the Middle East, and the Mediterranean/North Africa—regions which have been conceptually marked off from the understanding of the development of “humanitarianism,” but which have been the hosts of the bulk of the world’s refugees since World War II.

During the course of 10 weeks, we will pursue a comparative examination of these topics through three thematic clusters—(1) Decentering Migration and Decolonizing Humanitarianism, (2) Comparative Humanitarianisms, and (3) Rethinking the Human. Throughout these clusters, we will compare important conceptual categories that organize humanitarian practices, such as the figure of the “refugee”; what alternative forms “caring for others” might take; and when “human suffering” is deemed worthy of care. These comparisons will allow us to illuminate how non-Western values and reasons constitute the objects of suffering, practices of care, and who or what qualifies as the object of that care.

The Mellon Sawyer Seminar webinars constitute the primary class material and will be supplemented by required and optional readings each week. For full and open access to the webinars, ▶ click [here](#).

Course Requirements

Participation: Your active engagement with the readings, written assignments, and discussions will be foundational to allowing you to better understand and absorb the issues we encounter in this course. You can demonstrate active engagement by coming to class meetings prepared (having read the readings and with any assignments that are due ready to turn in), by watching recorded webinars, by contributing to class and online discussions and group activities, and by completing occasional, short, in-class and discussion assignments.

Study Guide (Optional): You will fill out the Study Guide uploaded on the course website on a weekly basis. The Study Guide evaluates your comprehension of and critical engagement with the class material. It will make sure you understand the terms and concepts discussed each week and that you are able to develop your own thoughts and questions regarding the topic.

Webinar/Reading Response Papers: You will write and turn in three reading response papers over the course of the quarter. These will be typed, 2-3 page long documents in which you will respond to a certain reading (or a group of readings) from the syllabus. This will be an opportunity for you to offer an informed personal reflection on what we watch/read for class. More information about this exercise will be provided during the first or second week of class. Writing prompts for the response papers will be posted on the course website every week.

Group Facilitation: In weeks with double speaker webinars, two groups of four students will be chosen to facilitate class discussion. Group 1 will be assigned the first talk and Group 2 will be assigned the second talk from the webinar. After summarizing the content, main arguments, and primary questions of both talks, the two groups will engage in a conversation by answering the following questions:

- How do the talks speak to one another?
- What are the common threads between them?
- How do they contribute to/intervene into the humanitarianism literature?

The rest of the class will provide material and questions that will generate conversations with the facilitation groups.

Discussion Board: You will post remarks/discussion questions on the discussion board of our course website. Responding to each other's remarks/questions will earn you extra points.

Midterm Exam (For online teaching): You will take a midterm exam half way through the quarter. It will be open note and open book and will cover all material we have studied thus far. The exam will consist of short answer questions and one longer essay-type question. You will have 24 hours to complete the exam.

Final Exam (For online teaching): Your final exam will be similar to the midterm in structure and will cover everything we have studied since the midterm. You will again have access to your notes and readings and you will have 24 hours to complete the exam.

Group Zine Assignment: You will be randomly assigned to a group of four students and you will create a zine on one of the weekly themes. Zines are informal, hand-made magazines that consist of text and creative material like collages, drawings, poetry, visual material etc. The zines will be 40 pages long with at least 5 pages of reference to class readings/videos. You are free to use the rest of the Zine space however you like as long as you make meaningful connections to the class material. Zine samples will be uploaded to the Files folder in our website. Roles within the groups will be determined by the group members.

Course Schedule

Class 1	Introductions
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Webinar: ***

Short Description: ***

Readings:

- Barnett, M., and Weiss, T, eds. 2008. Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Chapters 3 and 11.
- Ramalingan, B., and Barnett, M., “Background Notes: Humanitarian Dilemmas,” ODI: August 2010.

**Optional Readings can be added here.*

Assignments: ***

Class 2

Refugees and First Nations Sovereignty

Webinar:

Anne McNevin, "Sovereignty, Welcome, and Epistemic Hospitality." ▸ Watch [here](#).

Short Description:

In this webinar, Anne McNevin discusses First Nations Sovereignty and refugees detained under the terms of Australian border security as a way to rethink gestures of welcome, responsibility, and care to decolonize humanitarianism.

Readings:

- McNevin, A. (2007). Irregular Migrants, Neoliberal Geographies and Spatial Frontiers of 'The Political'. *Review of International Studies*, 33(4), 655-674. Retrieved January 23, 2021.
- McNevin, A (2018). Hospitality as a Horizon of Aspiration (or, What the International Refugee Regime Can Learn from Acehnese Fishermen)." *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 31(3) (co-authored with Antje Missbach).

**Optional Readings can be added here.*

Assignments:

1. Fill out the study guide.
2. Write two discussion questions on the discussion board.
3. Write a 2-page response paper using the following prompt: "In what ways does Anne McNevin's work contribute to decolonizing humanitarianism?"

Class 3

Palestinian Rights and the Postcolonial Origins of Refugee Rights

Webinar:

Ilana Feldman, "Humanitarian Rights and Palestinian Presence" & Pamela Ballinger: "Provincializing the 1951 Geneva Convention on Refugees."

▸ Watch [here](#).

Short Description:

In this webinar, the panelists Pamela Ballinger and Ilana Feldman discuss how refugees—international and internally displaced, recognized and unrecognized by

various institutions—shape the political, legal, ethical, and lived worlds of humanitarianism and human rights.

Readings:

- Feldman, I. (2018). *Life Lived in Relief: Humanitarian Predicaments and Palestinian Refugee Politics*. Oakland, California: University of California Press. Retrieved January 23, 2021, ▸ access [here](#).
- Ballinger, P. (2020). *Introduction to The World Refugees Made: Decolonization and the Foundation of Postwar Italy*. Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press.

Optional Readings:

- Ballinger, P. (2007). *Borders of the Nation, Borders of Citizenship: Italian Repatriation and the Redefinition of National Identity after World War II*. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 49(3), 713-741. Retrieved January 23, 2021, ▸ access [here](#).
- Feldman, I. (2009). *Gaza's Humanitarianism Problem*. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 38(3), 22-37.

Assignments:

1. Fill out the Study Guide.
2. Write two discussion questions on the Discussion Board.
3. Write a 2-3 page response paper using the following prompt: “In what ways do Feldman and Ballinger’s works disrupt the conventional Humanitarian logics?”

Class 4

Managing Migrants and Challenges to International Law

Webinar:

Jessica Whyte: "'The Opposite of Humanity': Anti-colonial Challenges to International Humanitarian Law" & Emma Meyer: "Managing Migrants, Resettling Refugees."

▸ Watch [here](#).

Short Description:

In this webinar, Jessica Whyte and Emma Meyer discuss management of migrants and national liberation struggles as key arenas for rethinking the concepts of humanity, humanitarianism, refuge-making and law by focusing on the formerly unrecognized arenas and actors of humanitarianism in the Global South.

Readings:

- Whyte, J. (2019). The 'dangerous concept of the just war': Decolonization, wars of National Liberation, and the Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions. *Humanity Journal* 3(9): 313.
- Whyte, J. (2019). Just War, History and Conflict: A Response. *Humanity Journal*,
▷ access [here](#).

**Optional Readings can be added here.*

Assignments:

1. Fill out the Study Guide.
2. Write two discussion questions on the Discussion Board.
3. Write a 2-3 page response paper using one of the following prompts:
 - "In what ways do Whyte and Meyer's work speak to previous webinars?"
 - "How do national liberation movements and Burmese evacuees reimagine the political/historical agency of refugees?"

Class 5**Southern-Led Humanitarian Responses to Displacement****Webinar**

Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, "Shifting the Gaze: Southern-Led Humanitarian Responses to Displacement."

▷ Watch [here](#).

Short Description:

Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh prompts us to recognize displacement as a Southern phenomenon by shifting our gaze to the refugee-hosts in the Global South who resist hegemonic international humanitarian regimes.

Readings:

- Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2020). Recentering the South in Studies of Migration. *Migration and Society*, 3 (1) pp. 1-18.
- Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2016). Refugee-Refugee Relations in Contexts of Overlapping Displacement, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, Spotlight On "The Urban Refugee 'Crisis.'"

**Optional Readings can be added here.*

Assignments:

1. Fill out the Study Guide.
2. Write two discussion questions on the Discussion Board.
3. Write a 2-3 page response paper using one of the following prompts: "In what ways does the concept of "overlapping displacement" challenge the conventional approach to refugeedom and humanitarian response?"

Class 6**Comparative Humanitarianisms in Egypt and the Himalayas****Webinar:**

Amira Mittermaier: "God, Humans, and an Islamic Ethic of Care" & Sienna R. Craig: "From Earthquakes and Empowerments to Pandemics: Tibetan Medical Humanitarianisms."

▷ Watch [here](#).

Short Description:

Amira Mittermaier and Sienna Craig discuss comparative humanitarianisms in Egypt and the Himalayas. Both articulate the need to move away from human-centric, conventional humanitarianisms by bringing to light the Islamic, Tibetan, and Himalayan logics of giving and aid in Egypt, Himalayas, and the U.S.

Readings:

- Mittermaier, A. (2014). Bread, freedom, social justice: the Egyptian uprising and a Sufi Khidma. *Cultural Anthropology*, 29(1): 54–79.
- Craig, S., Gerke, B., Sheldon, V. (2019). Sowa Rigpa Humanitarianism: Local Logics of Care within a Global Politics of Compassion. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*.

**Optional Readings can be added here.*

Assignments:

1. Fill out the Study Guide.
2. Write two discussion questions on the Discussion Board.
3. Write a 2-3 page response paper using one of the following prompts: "Reflect on the non-human centric ethics of care driven by divine inspiration offered by the speakers and examine how it challenges the Western logics of humanitarian care."

Webinar:

Basit Kareem Iqbal, "Ambivalence and Askesis in Zaatari Refugee Camp" & China Scherz, "Seeking the Wounds of the Gift: Recipient Agency in Catholic Charity and Kiganda Patronage."

▷ Watch [here](#).

Short Description:

In this webinar, Basit Kareem Iqbal and China Scherz discuss comparative humanitarianisms in Jordan and Uganda. They ask us to explore a new global humanitarian project as one founded on diverse practices that recognize human suffering, the labor and principles of care, and the material and affective expressions of caring. Iqbal and Scherz invite us to examine the ethical systems, logics, and rationalities that underlie everyday practices of humanitarianism across cultural and religious traditions in the Global South.

Readings:

- Scherz, C. (2013). Let us make God our Banker: Ethics, Temporality, and Agency in a Ugandan Charity Home, *American Ethnologist* 40 (4): 624-636.
- Iqbal, B. (2019). Theorizing Humanitarianism for an Islamic Counterpublic, *Alegra lab*, ▷ access [here](#).

**Optional Readings can be added here.*

Assignments:

1. Fill out the Study Guide.
2. Write two discussion questions on the Discussion Board.
3. Write a 2-3 page response paper using one of the following prompts:
 - "In what ways does Basit Iqbal disrupt the conventional understanding of aid provision?"
 - "How do the case studies China Scherz examines in her talk prompt us to rethink dependency in a different light?"

Class 8

Rescuing the Dead and Rethinking the Human

Webinar:

Sinan Anton, "Rescuing the Dead."

▷ Watch [here](#).

Short Description:

Sinan Antoon discusses rescuing the dead and rethinking the human to explore how the inequalities that characterize and persist in human life endure in death and grief, as well. Antoon asks us to think of war's collateral damage as a black hole into which worlds disappear and from which not even the dead are safe.

Readings:

- Antoon, S. (2012). Chapter 6. "What Did the Corpse Want?" Torture in Poetry. In J. Carlson & E. Weber (Ed.), *Speaking about Torture* (pp. 99-108). New York, USA: Fordham University Press, ▷ access [here](#).
- Antoon S. (2019). *The Book of Collateral Damage*, translated from the Arabic by J. Wright. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. P. 20-23 & 106-108.

**Optional Readings can be added here.*

Assignments:

1. Fill out the Study Guide.
2. Write two discussion questions on the Discussion Board.
3. Write a 2-3 page response paper using one of the following prompts: "Explore what ethical relationships and moral stakes Antoon's usage of the phrase 'rescuing the dead' unearths."

Class 9

Humanitarianism and Mutual Aid Beyond Capitalism

Webinar:

Dean Spade, "Mutual Aid: Radical Care in Crisis Conditions" & Cristian Capotescu, "Echoes of the 'New Soviet Man': Humanity and the Ethics of Giving in Late Socialism."

▷ Watch [here](#).

Short Description:

In this webinar, law professor Dean Spade and historian Cristian Capotescu talk about mutual aid under conditions of crisis caused by capitalism and charity in a socialist context. In each talk, these scholars explore our theme Rethinking the Human by attending to what care means through practices that privilege equality, solidarity, shared suffering, and collective self-determination.

Readings:

- Spade, D. (2020). Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next). Verso: Brooklyn, NY. P.1-42.
- Capotescu, C. (2020). Migrants into Humanitarians: Ethnic Solidarity and Private Aid-Giving during Romania's Historic Flood of 1970. East European Politics and Societies. 2021; 35(2): 293-312.

**Optional Readings can be added here.*

Assignments:

1. Fill out the Study Guide.
2. Write two discussion questions on the Discussion Board.
3. Write a 2-3 page response paper using one of the following prompts: "Join Spade and Capotescu in imagining a new humanitarianism framework that goes against the values of capitalism and investigate the advantages and disadvantages of what they offer as opposed to a deeply rooted and corporatized humanitarian systems of care."

Class 10**Rethinking Humanitarianism and Seeing Beyond the Human****Webinar:**

Nermeen Mouftah, "Sacrificial Skins: The Value of Pakistan's Eid al-Azha Animal Hide Collection" & Juno Salazar Parreñas, "Empathy Beyond the Human in an Era of Inhumanity."

▷ Watch [here](#).

Short Description:

In their talks, Narmeen Mouftah and Juno Salazar Parreñas invite us to think about empathy beyond human relations and how human-animal relations are forged and tested in the service of humanitarian work. In each talk, these scholars explore our theme, Rethinking the Human, by attending to what a common humanity would be if we take into consideration our relations with non-humans and the environment.

Readings:

- Lyons, K., Salazar Parreñas, J., Tamarkin, N., Subramaniam, B., Green, L., & Pérez-Bustos, T. (2017). Engagements with Decolonization and Decoloniality in and at the Interfaces of STS. *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience*, 3(1), 1–47, ▸ access [here](#).
- Mouftah, N. (2020). The Muslim Orphan Paradox: Muslim Americans Negotiating the Islamic Law of Adoption. *Contemporary Islam*, 1-20.

**Optional Readings can be added here.*

Assignments:

1. Fill out the Study Guide.
2. Write two discussion questions on the Discussion Board.
3. Write a 2-3 page response paper using one of the following prompts: “Put these talks into conversation with each other. What is the primary tension between them? Can we reconcile these two seemingly contradicting approaches in order to rethink the human in a productive way?”