

**ANTH 216: Cultures of Migration
John Felice Rome Center**

Fall 2026

Tuesdays & Thursdays | 2:15-3:30 am

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Office Hours: Thu./Thurs., 12:00-13:00 (or by appointment)

Course Description

Using theoretical and ethnographic texts and documentaries, this course will explore migration in the European Union with specific reference to the Italian case.

This will be done by addressing three central questions: 1) What prompts people to migrate? 2) How do EU and member states policies that seek to “regulate” migration structure the life chances of migrants? 3) How do migrants transform their own life situations and communities in the EU in general and specifically in Italy?

In order to describe the actual journey of migrants from their countries of origin in Sub-Saharan Africa the second part of the course is structured as a “travelogue”. Starting with the decision to leave and the first encounter with the exclusionary EU visa regime, the readings will then describe the perilous journey through the Sahara, the risky voyage across the Mediterranean and finally the constraints of the Italian reception system. In the course of this journey migrants will have to learn how to navigate the strictures generated by the workings of the “migration industry” whose different actors (consular staff, border police, smugglers, international NGOs, etc.) alternatively facilitate or hamper their migratory projects.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of the course students are expected to:

- Describe leading theories of migration in anthropology and related disciplines
- Explain contemporary global and local patterns of migration
- Analyze experiences of migration in relation to political economic contexts such as colonialism, neocolonialism, and racial capitalism
- Describe features of im/migrant and mixed status communities

Reading Materials

- Readings posted on Sakai.

Assessment Components

- | | |
|-----------------|-----|
| • Participation | 15% |
| • Midterm Exam | 25% |
| • Paper | 35% |
| • Final Exam | 25% |

Grading

94-100	A	77-79	C+
90-93	A-	74-76	C
87-89	B+	70-73	C-
84-86	B	67-69	D+
80-83	B-	60-66	D

59 OR LOWER = F

FINAL PAPER

The paper should be at **least 10 pages long**, double space, and written in standard academic form (see “Guidelines” below). Students can **either** write their paper on a topic addressed by readings discussed in class, or write a book report on one of the ethnographies below, which address migration in the Italian context:

- Hans Lucht. 2011. *Darkness Before Daybreak: African Migrants Living on the Margins in Southern Italy Today*. Berkeley, University of California Press. (ebook freely available through Loyola Libraries: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/luc/detail.action?docID=772855>)

A highly readable multi-sited ethnographic account of the lives of a group of migrants from Ghana, living in southern Italy. Hans Lucht describes the challenges they face as they try to make a living in the underground economy. The book begins in Italy and with a first-hand account of their predicament in Italy, then vividly retraces their high-risk journey across the Mediterranean through the Sahara back to their village coastal village on the shores of the Atlantic ocean.

- Anna Tuckett. 2018. *Rules, Paper, Status. Migrants and Precarious Bureaucracy in Contemporary Europe*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. (ebook freely available through Loyola Libraries: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/lucsystem/detail.action?docID=5377559>)

The book describes the everyday workings of immigration law in Italy from the point of migrants. Working as a volunteer in a center for migrants run by a trade union, she describes the frustrations migrant experience when dealing with the Italian bureaucracy. In the process she manages to give a vivid account of how the contradictions of Italian immigration law play themselves out on the ground, thus revealing that migrants’ illegality is most often the result the unpredictable result of how the law is applied.



➔ **DEADLINES** (*NB: students are expected to hand in their work by the dates below; in case they are unable to do so, they should let me know in due time, e.g., at least two days before the relevant dateline*).

- **October 22** students should have a general idea of what they will write about (book report or independent topic) and discuss it with me.
- **November 3** - students who choose an independent topic should hand in a brief abstract and an annotated bibliography (for each reference a couple of sentences explaining its relevance for your argument/chosen topic) of the of standard academic sources they will use.
- **December 3** - final draft due.
- **GUIDELINES:**
 - **Format/Submission** – The abstract, and the annotated bibliography should be typed in Times New Roman, 12 pt. And uploaded on Sakai (<https://loyola.screenstepslive.com/a/1496860-how-do-students-submit-an-assignment>); The final draft, typed in same font, should be double-spaced and also uploaded on Sakai.
 - **Style/Content** – Well, since the paper is worth 35% of the course grade you might want to spend some time in thinking about what you want you say and what is the best way to do it. You have time. Hence, first and foremost, know your limits! Do not overreach yourself. Keep it simple. Write short sentences, check your spelling, try to avoid superlatives and repetitions. DO NOT misspell the authors you cite. DO NOT use citations just to fill the page; use them only to support your argument. Use wikipedia all you want (very useful to get your bearings) but DO NOT cite it as source! Only acceptable sources are from peer reviewed journals (accessible through Loyola libraries: <https://libraries.luc.edu> and you can always ask JFRC librarian, Anne Wittrick, or me, for help!).
 - **Citations** – There are two basic ways to go about it.
 - When the citation is a short one (a phrase, or a short sentence):

“... Rosaldo argues that the "ethnographer, as a positioned subject grasps certain phenomena better than others" (1989:19), yet it seems to me that ...”
 - If the citation is long, you should set it apart from your text and it should be single-spaced:

“... the question of scarcity when talking about organ transplant is a thorny one.

The discourse on scarcity conceals the actual existence of "excess" and "wasted" organs that daily end up in hospital dumpsters throughout those parts of the world where the necessary infrastructure is lacking to use them. (Sheper-Hughes: 2002:49)

Indeed, it would seem that”



Note: if you mention the name of the author you are writing about just before the quote, you may leave the name out:

“... Sheper-Hughes argues that the question of scarcity when talking about organ transplant is a false problem.

The discourse on scarcity conceals the actual existence of "excess" and "wasted" organs that daily end up in hospital dumpsters throughout those parts of the world where the necessary infrastructure is lacking to use them. (2002:49)

Indeed, it would seem that”

- **Bibliography.** At the end of the paper you should list the readings you have used.
 - When it is from a collection:

Sheper-Hughes, Nancy. 2002. "Min(d)ing the Body: On the Trail of Organ-Stealing Rumors". In *Exotic No More: Anthropology on the Front Lines*, edited by Jeremy MacClancy. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
 - For a whole book:

Rosaldo, Renato. 1989. *Culture & Truth*. Boston: Beacon Press.
 - If you have used a chapter from a book by the same author:

Rosaldo, Renato. 1989. "Grief and a Headhunter's Rage". In Renato Rosaldo, *Culture & Truth*. Boston: Beacon Press.

→ **Paper Assessment (100 pts.)**

Citations and bibliography (format)	5 pt.
Abstract	10 pts.
Spelling and grammar	10 pts.
Annotated bibliography	15 pts.
Appropriate use of sources	40 pts.
Consistency of argument	40 pts.

→ **A note on Participation** – It's worth 15% of the course grade; it may seem not much percentage-wise but is of great value for your course grade. It basically means that if you don't do the readings, don't take notes in class, text your friends during lectures and maybe take a nap to boot, not only you'll do poorly in the course, but your normal level of classroom boredom will reach unbearable levels. Do the readings before class (if you take notes in the process that's plus); if there is something in the readings, you do not understand you say so (it may even be an opportunity to start a class discussion!), if you don't understand something during my lectures, you ask. If you have some comments you feel relevant to the topic at hand, you are welcome to intervene. You don't have to do it all the time, just every once in while it's good enough. Participation does not mean "impress your professor" it simply means to show a reasonable level of engagement with the topics discussed in class.

Attendance Policy

In accordance with the Rome Center mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, and in compliance with full-time student visa status, all courses adhere to the following attendance policy.

Prompt attendance, preparation and active participation in course discussions are expected from every student and synonymous with academic success. Attendance is mandatory at every class meeting for each course. Lateness or leaving class early will impact the course grade at the professor's discretion. All absences, including medical absences, will be treated the same, unless they are documented long-term conditions or emergencies. Such situations will be evaluated case-by-case by the Academic Affairs office.

Once-a-week classes:

- After 1 absence, a 2% final grade reduction will be applied for each missed class.
- Missing 3 classes or more will result in an automatic failure (F).

Twice-a-week classes:

- After 2 absences, a 2% final grade reduction will be applied for each missed class.
- Missing 6 classes or more will result in an automatic failure (F).

Three-times-a week classes:

- After 2 absences, a 2% final grade reduction will be applied for each missed class.
- Missing 6 classes or more will result in an automatic failure (F).

Late or Missed Assignments & Exam Policy

Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading without the authorization of the instructor. As per the JFRC academic policies, students who miss any scheduled exam or quiz, including a final exam at the assigned hours will not be permitted to sit for a make-up examination without approval of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. Permission is given rarely and only for grave reason; travel is not considered a grave reason. Make-up exams will only be given for documented absences.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are unacceptable at the JFRC and will be dealt with in accordance with Loyola University Chicago's guidelines. Please familiarize yourself with Loyola's standards here: http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml. You are responsible to comply with the LUC Student Handbook.

Accessibility Accommodations.

Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center requiring academic accommodations should contact the Office of the Dean at the John Felice Rome Center, the first week of classes.

Statement on Title IX

The Rome Center follows Loyola's [Comprehensive Policy and Procedures for Addressing Discrimination, Sexual Misconduct, Retaliation](#) and will comply with those as indicated and instructed.



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Course Schedule

Date	Activity	Assignments/Readings
Week 1		
	“Describing” Migration	
Tu 09/01	Course Overview: when we talk about migration, what are we talking about?	
Thu 09/03	Anthropology and Migration: Issues Nicholas De Genova on the migration crisis, mobility and postcolonial studies. (19’53”, 2017)	Brettel: “Theorizing Migration” - selection
Week 2		
Tu 09/08	Whose Knowledge?	Raghuram & Sondhi: “Decolonising This Decolonising That: Beyond Rhetorical Decolonisation in Migration Studies”
Thu 09/10	What’s in a Word	Scheel & Tazzioli: “Who is a Migrant? Abandoning the Nation-state Point of View in the Study of Migration
Week 3		
	Sedentary Metaphysics	
Tu 09/15	Invasive Others: Plants? People? Pathogens’ Miriam Ticktin and Bridget Anderson (16’27”, 2021)	Malkki: “National Geographic”
Thu 09/17	Where do You think you’re Going?	Spijkerboer “The Global Mobility Infrastructure”
Week 4		
	EUropean Anxieties	
Tu 09/22	Dace Dzenovska, <i>Refugees in Europe: a crisis of connection</i> (18’ 2015)	Laine: “Reframing African Migration to Europe: An Alternative Narrative
Thu 09/24	Barbarians At the Gates!	Walters: “Imagined Migration World”
Week 5		
Tu 09/29	Don’t Move! Civilize!	Freemantle & Landau: “Migration and the African Timespace Trap”
Thu 10/01	The Identity of Europe	Stierl: “Re-Imagining EUrope through the Governance of Migration”
Week 6		
Tue 10/06	<i>Review</i>	
Thu 10/08	<i>Midterm</i>	

Break (Oct 9-18)

Week 7

The Journey

Tu 10/20 "Shadow Game"
(Eefje and van Driele, 55', 2021)

Thu 10/22 From the Outside Looking in

Vigh "Wayward Migration"
Topic Deadline!

Fri 10/23 The World from "below"

Belloni "Cosmologies and Migration"

Week 8

Tu 10/27 Smile!

Scheel: "The Secret Is to Look Good on Paper"

Thu 10/29 "Niger. Europe Migration"
(Al Jazeera, 26', 2019)

Brachet: "Manufacturing Smugglers"

Week 9

Tu 11/03 Border Externalization

Pacciardia and Berndtsson: "EU border
externalisation and security outsourcing:
exploring the migration industry in Libya"
Abstract & Bib. Deadline!

Thu 11/05 Biding Time
Europe's Migration System
(Democracy Now! 16', 2021)

Achtnich: "Waiting to Move on"

Week 10

Is This Italy?

Tu 11/10

Colucci: "Foreign immigration to Italy"

Thu 11/12 CCÀ SEMU Here we are, lives on hold in Lampedusa
(Vullo, 14', 2019)

Franceschelli: "Global migration, local
communities and the absent state"

Week 11

Tu 11/17 We're Here to Help!
"Welcome to Italy. Migrant Tales of Survival"
(Kenawi, 46'17", 2019)

Giudici: "The list. On discretion and refusal in
the Italian asylum system"

Thu 11/19 Paperwork

Tucket: "Strategies of Navigation"

Week 12

Tue 11/24 Walk on the right side of the street

Fabini: "Internal bordering in the context of
undeportability"

Thanksgiving Break (Nov 26-29)

Week 13

Tue 12/01 Afroltalians

Hawthorne: "Making Italy: Afro-Italian
entrepreneurs and the racial boundaries of
citizenship"

Thu 12/03 Review

Final draft Deadline!

TBA (Dec 7-10)

Final!