



COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
Exploring Migration and Displacement through Group Story-Reading (liet. Migracijos ir priverstinio per(si)kėlimo reiškinių pažinimas per literatūros skaitymą grupėse)	

Academic staff	Core academic unit(s)
Coordinating: Assoc. prof. dr. Ieva Steponavičiūtė Aleksiejūnienė Other: Assoc. prof. dr. Satu Grünthal Assist. prof. dr. Vainius Bartasevičius	Centre for Scandinavian Studies (Faculty of Philology, Institute for the Languages and Cultures of the Baltic), Universiteto str. 5, Vilnius and Institute of International Relations and Political Science, Vokiečių str. 10, Vilnius.

Study cycle	Type of the course unit
First	Interdisciplinary studies (individual study subject)

Mode of delivery	Semester or period when it is delivered	Language of instruction
Seminars, lectures, group and individual work, out-of-classroom experience	Autumn	English

Requisites	
Prerequisites: English proficiency min. level B2	Co-requisites (if relevant): -

Number of ECTS credits allocated	Student's workload (total)	Contact hours	Individual work
5 ECTS	130 hours	48	82

Purpose of the course unit

The course aims – by integrating relevant aspects from political science, sociology, literary and educational studies – to provide students with an understanding of migration and forced displacement phenomena and to explore the role of literature, and especially of a shared reading experience, in fostering social awareness.

Learning outcomes of the course unit	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
An understanding of the social, political, and cultural dimensions of migration and forced displacement. Knowledge of the causes, processes, and impacts of migration on individuals and communities.	Lectures and interactive presentations, seminars and guided discussions, group work, independent research and reading, field encounters.	Test on concepts, peer reviews, assessment of group projects and individual study logs.
The ability to engage with migration literature integrating concepts from literary studies and sociology of migration.	Lectures and interdisciplinary seminars, group discussions, writing of a study log, independent reading.	Home assignments, assessment of group projects and individual study logs.

Awareness of how literature and storytelling can influence social consciousness and attitudes toward migration.	Readings of literature, group discussions and seminars, field encounters	Assessment of group projects and individual study logs.
Collaboration skills and practical methods for engaging in reading circles.	Group projects and team assignments, peer-led discussions, presentation and feedback sessions	Peer-reviews, assessment of group projects and individual study logs.

Content	Contact hours							Individual work: time and assignments		
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Workshops	Laboratory work	Internship	Contact hours, total	Individual work	Tasks for individual work	
Fundamental literary skills and principles of shared literary reading										
1	Introduction into the course structure and goals. Exchange in small groups of ideas/stories related to migration.			2				2	2	Be ready to share your motives for selecting the course, and your expectations for it.
2	'Book tasting' – teachers present samples of suggested books for shared reading (including possible suggestions from students), e.g: R. Šepetyš: <i>Between Shades of Gray</i> (2011); J. Skaletskā: <i>You Don't Know What War Is</i> (2022); P. Statovci: <i>My Cat Yugoslavia</i> (2014); S. Tasane: <i>Child I</i> (2018); Gisli Pálsson: <i>The Man Who Stole Himself. The Slave Odyssey of Hans Jonathan</i> (2016); D. Grinkevičiūtė: <i>Shadows on the Tundra</i> (1997/2018); R. Kibelka: <i>Wolf children: Commuters at Memel</i> (1996); A. Šlepikas: <i>In the Shadow of the Wolves</i> (2012/2020); S. Oksanen: <i>Dog Park</i> (2016); M. Reva: <i>Endling</i> (2025). Division into ad hoc groups.	2		2				4	2	Think of a book that you would like to suggest for a group reading (optional) and inform the teachers.
3	Finalization of group division based on individual book choices. Exchange of reasons within the groups for selecting the particular book.			2				2	6	Read the extracts from the suggested books individually. Then, in ad hoc groups, discuss these extracts. Based on the discussions, decide for yourself which book(s), in order of priority, you would like to read and discuss during the course. Submit your individual decision prior to the class.
4	Fundamentals of understanding fictive worlds: poetic imagination, reality, and emotion. Literary genres and why they matter.	2		2				4	6	Read Zunshine (2006), Palmer (2010), Ljungberg (2017), and, optionally, Nussbaum (1995, 1-12). Complete the assigned tasks. Read the first instalment of the

										chosen book and discuss your first emotional response in groups.
5	Introduction to the reading circle method: theory and practice, including a demonstrational workshop; Brainstorming possible activities for field encounters (see nr. 13)	2		2				4	6	Read Dogan & al. (2020) and complete the assigned tasks. Read the second installment of the book and discuss in groups how the style and literary mode creates the mood. Fill in the initial information in the provided template for a study log.
Introduction to migration studies										
6	Defining key concepts – international vs. internal migrant, asylum seeker, refugee; reviewing global migration and migration policy trends; migration governance – who is responsible for migration management? Migration management in democratic and non-democratic countries; politics of immigration in the West	2						2	6	Read Castles, de Haas & Miller (2014, 1-20) for the theoretical part. Continue working in reading groups according to the guidelines provided during the demonstrational workshop. Keep your individual study log.
7	Forced migration and displacement: Introducing the main principles of international refugee protection regime; 1951 Geneva Convention and its critique; current challenges to refugee protection; climate migration; gender dimension of forced migration	2	2					4	6	Read Piguet (2021) for the theoretical part. Continue working in groups according to the guidelines provided during the workshop and in consultation with teachers. Keep your individual study log.
8	Transnationalism and multiple nationality: What is diaspora and transnationalism? Financial and social remittances; diaspora policies of countries of origin; effect of migration processes on citizenship policies; multiple nationality.	2						2	6	Read Vertovec (2004) for the theoretical part. Continue your readings, mix in groups to exchange ideas on the process of shared reading. Keep your individual study log.
9	Immigrant integration: Alternative definitions of immigrant integration; integration as a bi-directional process; different dimensions of integration; alternative individual adaptation strategies; state-level policies on integration – multiculturalism vs. assimilation.	2						2	6	Read Ager & Strang (2008) for the theoretical part. Continue working in groups according to the guidelines provided during the workshop. Keep your individual study log.
10	Test of concepts		2					2	2	Prepare for the test of concepts.
Migration literature and field encounters										
11	Finalising the choice of field encounter events and the plan of activities.			2				2	2	Discuss and decide in the groups which option you choose from suggested field encounter events. Prepare to suggest ways how to make this encounter most

										productive with respect to the aims of the course.
11	Migration literature: its significance, common genres and key examples. Representing refugee experience in literature (voice and authority): who tells migration stories? Migration literature vs. migrant literature.	2		4				6	8	Read two self-chosen chapters from Gröndahl & Rantonen (2018), and, optionally, Jagne-Soreau (2021). Continue group activities. Reflect in your study log on the relevance of these readings for your understanding of the book you are discussing in your group.
13	Field encounters (as finalized earlier) – for example: visiting a migration agency, meeting an artist with migration experience, attending a relevant exhibition or theatre performance, or preparing a shared meal based on a recipe representing a participant’s culture or inspired by a book/film about the migrant experience.			4				4	6	Prepare for the events according to the teachers’ instructions and your ideas presented in the finalising session.
14	Inter-disciplinary seminars. Discussion of the field encounters. Updates by groups on the progress of group work and peer feedback from different disciplinary perspectives.			4				4	10	Prepare in groups to present impressions from the field encounters and preliminary ideas about the book read, following the guidelines for shared reading, and reflecting on the experience of working in groups from different disciplines. In your individual study log, reflect on how the process is going so far, especially how you are combining your literary reading skills with your new theoretical knowledge about migration and experience of the field encounter.
15	Preparations for final presentations and evaluation of the course.		2	2				4	10	
	Total:	16	6	26				48	82	

Assessment strategy	Weight %	Deadline	Assessment criteria
Test of concepts	30%	End of October	<i>Assessed on a 0–3 point scale</i> based on the accuracy and completeness of answers and the correct application of theoretical concepts from the course. 3 – Excellent: Answers are accurate, complete, and demonstrate correct application of theoretical concepts. 2 – Satisfactory: Answers are mostly accurate and complete; theoretical concepts applied adequately but with minor gaps. 1 – Poor: Answers show limited accuracy or completeness; theoretical concepts applied incorrectly or superficially. 0 – Not submitted / irrelevant: No meaningful answer or completely off-topic.

Learning portfolio	Compulsory for passing the course	During the semester	Participating in 80 percent of classes, being actively involved in group work, completing all home assignments, providing peer reviews.
Group project output (group assessment, formats may vary): a standard PowerPoint presenting systematized insights from the shared book reading; a visual book trailer; a short panel discussion in front of the class; a collective short story or film script (followed by a Q&A session); or other creative outputs inspired by the book and group discussions	50%	End of the semester	<p><i>Assessed on a 0–5 point scale based on:</i> Understanding of the text and migration themes: demonstrating clear comprehension of the book and its representation of migration experiences.</p> <p>Creativity and presentation: presenting insights in an engaging, coherent, and adequately chosen format (PPT, trailer, panel, story, script, etc.).</p> <p>Organization and clarity: presenting ideas in well-structured, logical, and easy for the audience to follow ways.</p> <p>Collaboration and participation: evidencing teamwork and constructive engagement of the group participants.</p> <p>5 – Excellent: Exceeds expectations in most or all criteria 4 – Good: Meets criteria well with minor gaps 3 – Satisfactory: Meets minimum expectations 2 – Needs Improvement: Partial understanding or execution 1 – Poor: Minimal effort, unclear or inaccurate 0 – Not submitted / irrelevant</p>
Individual study log: a personal reflection on the process and outcomes of group work and field encounters, considering the relevance of basic sociological and political knowledge for understanding a literary text, as well as the role of the text and shared reading in deepening understanding of migration and displacement	20%	Kept during the semester and submitted at the end of the semester	<p><i>Assessed on a 0–2 point scale based on critical engagement with the shared group reading experience and one’s own role in it, connection to relevant sociological and political concepts, and clarity of presentation.</i></p> <p>2 – Excellent: Thoughtful, thorough, and clear reflection; strong connection to course concepts and shared reading experience. 1 – Satisfactory: Basic reflection; some connection to course concepts and shared reading, but partial or underdeveloped. 0 – Poor: Minimal or missing reflection; little or no connection to course concepts or shared reading; unclear or not submitted.</p>

Author (-s)	Publishing year	Title	Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication	Publishing house or web link
Required reading				
Ager, A., & Strang, A.	2008	Understanding integration: A conceptual framework	Journal of Refugee Studies 21	https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fe n016
Castles, S., de Haas, H., & Miller, M. J	2014	The age of migration: International population movements in the modern world	5th edition	Palgrave Macmillan
Dogan, B., Yildirim, K., Cermik, H., & Ates, S.	2020	Promoting pre-service teachers’ reading attitudes through literature circles: A mixed methods design	International Journal of Educational Methodology 6(4)	https://doi.org/10.12973/ije m.6.4.653
Gröndahl, S. & Rantonen, E.	2018	Migrants and Literature in Finland and Sweden.	Studia Fennica Litteraria 11	http://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/27477

Ljungberg, C.	2017	What does reading ‘do’ to our bodies? (Reading as mapping)	Robert T. Tally Jr.(ed.). The Routledge Handbook of Literature and Space	Routledge
Palmer, A.	2010	Storyworlds and Groups	Lisa Zunshine (ed.) Introduction to Cognitive Cultural Studies.	Johns Hopkins University Press
Piguet, E	2021	The ‘refugee crisis’ in Europe: Shortening distances, containment and asymmetry of rights—A tentative interpretation of the 2015–16 events	Journal of Refugee Studies 34(2)	https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/feaa015
Vertovec, S.	2004	Migrant Transnationalism and Modes of Transformation	International Migration Review 38	https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/27645423.pdf
Zunshine, L.	2006	Why do we read fiction?	Why We Read Fiction: Theory of Mind and the Novel.	Ohio State University Press
Recommended reading				
Jagne-Soreau, M.	2021	“I don’t write about me, I write about you”. Four major motifs in the Nordic postmigration literary trend.	Anna Meera Gaonkar, Astrid Sophie Ost Hansen, Hans Christian Post, and Moritz Schramm (eds.) Postmigration.	Transcript Verlag https://doi.org/10.14361/9783839448403-010 .
Nussbaum, M.	1995	The Literary Imagination	Poetic Justice: The Literary Imagination and Public Life.	Beacon Press
de Haas, H, Czaika, M, Flahaux, M.-L, Mahena, E, Natter, K, Vezzoli, S, & Villares-Varela, M. (2019).		International Migration: Trends, Determinants, and Policy Effects	Population and Development Review 45(4)	https://doi.org/10.1111/padr.12291

NOTE: Including Open Educational Resources in the reading list is recommended

Rubrics for Assessment of Interdisciplinary Competencies

Competence	Threshold Level of Achievement	Typical Level of Achievement	Excellent Level of Achievement
Recognition of Interdisciplinary Perspectives	Demonstration of an emerging ability to identify connections between social and political theory and literary texts, with limited reflection on the value of the shared reading experience as a space for reflection, dialogue, and awareness of sociological or political aspects of migration.	Demonstration of the ability to relate insights from social and political theory to specific moments in literary texts and to reflect on the value of the shared reading experience, as a space for reflection, dialogue, and awareness of the	Demonstration of the ability to integrate insights from social and political theory with literary analysis, reflecting critically on the educational, social, and civic value of the shared reading experience as a space for reflection, dialogue, and nuanced awareness of migration and

Competence	Threshold Level of Achievement	Typical Level of Achievement	Excellent Level of Achievement
		sociological and political aspects of migration.	displacement as interconnected political, social, and cultural phenomena.
Collaborative and Innovative Thinking	Demonstration of a basic capacity to collaborate in group reading and project activities, showing respect to others' perspectives and willingness to contribute to shared goals. Engagement in discussion and peer review is cooperative but not initiative-driven, largely descriptive, with limited evidence of innovative thinking.	Demonstration of effective collaboration in group reading and project activities, showing respect for others' perspectives and contributing to shared goals. Engagement in discussion and peer review is constructive, with some initiative and occasional evidence of innovative ideas that support the group's work.	Demonstration of effective and proactive collaboration in group reading and project activities, integrating others' perspectives while shaping shared goals, and deciding the concept of the final product. Engagement in discussion and peer review is insightful, initiative-driven, and marked by innovative contributions that enhance the group's work and outcomes.
Communication in Interdisciplinary Teams	Demonstration of basic ability to communicate in an interdisciplinary team, sharing one's own disciplinary knowledge and showing openness to perspectives from other disciplines.	Demonstration of ability to communicate effectively in an interdisciplinary team, engaging constructively with perspectives from different disciplines.	Demonstration of clear, confident, and nuanced communication in an interdisciplinary team, actively facilitating dialogue and integrating diverse disciplinary perspectives.
Critical Reflection	Demonstration of basic critical reflection on concepts and themes related to migration and forced displacement, incorporating limited insights from literary texts, field encounters and group project experience, with minimal connection to social, political, or cultural processes.	Ability to critically reflect on concepts and themes related to migration and forced displacement, integrating insights from literary texts, group projects, and field encounters. Reflections show emerging connections to social, political, and cultural processes, linking textual representations with real-world experiences.	Demonstration of thoughtful and nuanced critical reflection on concepts and themes of migration and forced displacement, integrating insights from literary texts, group projects, and field encounters. Reflections are analytical and original, showing clear connections to social, political, and cultural processes and demonstrating awareness of ethical and societal dimensions.