Professor Robert Forrant  
HIST3920 - Immigration History  
“Why They Came? What They Brought? What They Found?”  
Monday and Wednesday, 3:30 - 4:45pm

106 Dugan Hall  
Office hours: Monday & Wednesday, 1:30–3:30pm; Thursday 9:00 –11:00am;  
By appointment.  
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Semester grades based on several short writing assignments discussing class readings, a final essay, and engaged and informed participation in class assignments. You will also be working on a few class research projects; much of this will take place in class. However, you may be asked to spend time at the Center for Lowell History too.

Objectives/Learning Outcomes/ Great Expectations:

• Students will acquire an understanding of U.S. Immigration History - both the experiences of immigrants and reactions to that immigration over time, including federal legislation designed to curtail immigration.
• Students will gain a thorough grounding in the use of archives and oral histories.
• Students will analyze primary sources—including letters, government documents, city atlases, oral histories, and photographs.
• Students will be able to demonstrate a thorough grounding in a variety of perspectives on immigration history and how that history relates to contemporary debates on immigration reform.

“Once I thought to write a history of the immigrants in America. Then I discovered that the immigrants were American history.” - Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted*

We will delve deeply into the experiences of women, men, and children who came to the U.S. from the colonial era through the 21st century. But, this will take place within a global context since the movement of millions took occurred worldwide. European migrations during the mid and late 19th/early 20th centuries and the experiences of Chinese and Mexican immigrants are discussed. More recent emigration from the Caribbean, Central, and South America is covered. The flow of refugees into the U.S. will be our focus as well. The evolution of federal restrictions on immigration imposed in the second half of the 19th century and for most of the 20th century is important to our work. What motivated restrictions? What were grounds for restrictions? Who advocated ‘closing the gates’? How and why did policy change after World War II? Four pieces of legislation—the Immigration Act of 1965, the Refugee Act of 1980, the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, and the Immigration Act of 1990—are important to understand. A significant focus for the semester will be the Boston, Lawrence, and Lowell stories.
Note: According to research by the Pew Research Center, the U.S. foreign-born population reached a record 43.2 million in 2015. Since 1965, the number of immigrants in the U.S. has more than quadrupled. Today they account for 13.4% of the U.S. population, nearly triple the share (4.7%) in 1970. However, today’s immigrant share remains well below the record 14.8% share in 1890.

Books:
Llana Barber, Latino City: Immigration and Urban Crisis in Lawrence, Massachusetts, 1945, 2000, University of North Carolina, 2017.
Robert Forrant and Christoph Strobel, Ethnicity in Lowell: An Ethnographic Overview and Assessment, Lowell National Historical Park, 2011.

Relevant Web Sites:
Destination America, PBS: http://www.pbs.org/destinationamerica/res_web.html
Tenement Museum, Lower East Side NYC  http://www.tenement.org/
National Park Service, Ellis Island Immigration Stories
    http://www.nps.gov/elis/historyculture/stories.htm
Library of Congress, Immigration History
The semester week-by-week: Readings should be completed before the first class in the weeks they are assigned.

Week 1. Introduction
Sept. 5: Why study immigration? What does the study of immigration reveal about U.S. history and the stories we tell?

Week 2. A Nation of Immigrants: How did dramatic political, economic, and social changes during the 19th century transform and encourage migration to and within the United States? What were the consequences of U.S. military, territorial, and economic expansion for indigenous peoples, enslaved people, immigrants, colonized peoples, and native-born and naturalized Americans?

Sept. 10: Overview of the Semester
Sept. 12: Immigrants in the Formation of a New Country: “A City on a Hill, or What?”

Reading:
• Martin, A Nation of Immigrants, chs. 1 – 6.

Week 3. Building a Nation, Building A City
Sept. 17: Before class familiarize yourself with Harvard University’s Immigration History website. “Aspiration, Acculturation, and Impact: Immigration to the United States, 1789 – 1930. We will discuss the site as part of our class discussion.
Sept. 19: Who is a Migrant? Why do people emigrate? Be ready to answer!

Reading:
• Start reading Amy Bass, *One Goal*, chs. 1 – 5.
• Koser, *International Migration*, chs. 1 and 2.

**Week 4. Lowell in the Early Days**
Sept. 24: Who was here first?
Sept. 26: Hands Needed?

Reading:
• Bass, *One Goal*, chs. 6 - 11.
• Forrant and Strobel, *Ethnographic Overview*, Executive Summary and pgs, 1 – 62.

**Week 5. One Goal Event and Discussion**
Oct. 1 Discuss *One Goal*
Oct. 3: Amy Bass Event – Attendance Required!
Bass, *One Goal* finish the book.

**Week 6. The Search for Limits:** Nineteenth Century Immigration and the Coming of Immigration Reform. Why has immigration been a topic of perennial debate in the U.S.? How has the fear of foreigners and the desire to define and protect an “American” identity evolved over time? How did policy makers increasingly use race, class, political ideology, health and ability, gender, and sexuality to favor the entry of particular groups and restrict others? Who settled in the United States during the ‘era of exclusion’? How did the ‘era of exclusion’ change Americans’ ideas about belonging, citizenship, and labor? So, who was shut out? How was this accomplished?

Would a similar rationale work today? In response to growing public opinion against the flow of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe in the years following World War I, Congress passed first the Quota Act of 1921 then the even more restrictive Immigration Act of 1924 (the Johnson-Reed Act). Initially, the 1924 law imposed a total quota on immigration of 165,000—less than 20 percent of the pre-World War I average. It based ceilings on the number of immigrants from any particular nation on the percentage of each nationality recorded in the 1890 census—a blatant effort to limit immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe, which mostly occurred after that date. In the first decade of the 20th century, an average of 200,000 Italians had entered the United States each year. With the 1924 Act, the annual quota for Italians was set at less than 4,000.

Oct. 10: A Golden Door for Whom?
Oct. 11: Restrictionism Defined: Who Do We Want to Keep Out (or) Is the Melting Pot a Thing?

Reading:
• Martin, *A Nation of Immigrants*, chs. 6 – 7.
• Neil Swidey, “Trump’s Anti-Immigration Playbook was written 100 years Ago, In Boston,” Boston Globe, January 2017. 
https://apps.bostonglobe.com/magazine/graphics/2017/01/immigration/

Week 7. Immigration Debated – Immigration Reformed
Oct. 15: Exclusion on the Agenda
Oct. 17: Its Complicated: Not All Welcome – Not All Stay
Be ready to discuss in detail the arguments made for establishing a set of immigration rules for admission. Who got to decide how this was done? Were there any biases built into the system of restrictionism passed into law by Congress?

Reading:
• Pfaelzer, Driven Out, chs. 3 - 6.
• Martin, A Nation of Immigrants, ch 8.
• Forrant and Strobel, Ethnography, chs. 5 and 6.

Week 8. The Pull and Push of Immigration Policy
Oct. 22: Driven Out and Its Lessons for Today
Oct. 24: Mexico and Our Border
Reading:
• Pfaelzer, Driven Out, chs. 7 – Conclusion.
• Koser, International Migration, chs. 3 and 4.
• America’s Forgotten History of Illegal Deportations
Immigration to the U.S. by decade, 1820-1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Immigrants</th>
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<tr>
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<td>2,814,554</td>
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<td>1860-1869</td>
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<td>1870-1879</td>
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<tr>
<td>1910-1919</td>
<td>6,347,380</td>
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<td>1920-1929</td>
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<td>2,499,268</td>
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<tr>
<td>1960-1969</td>
<td>3,213,749</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Week 9. Inward and Outward: 1924 – 1965. How did international conflicts lead the United States to diminish the rights of individuals categorized as “enemy aliens”? How did foreign relations influence the reform of immigration and naturalization laws for groups who had faced near exclusion from the U.S. and had been denied access to citizenship?

Oct. 29: Quotas and Reform

Oct. 31: Reopening - the Geopolitics of Immigration Reform: The 1965 Hart-Celler Act. Look over the Pew Research Center – “From Germany to Mexico: How America’s source of immigrants has changed over a century,” Jens Krogstad and Michael Keegan. Be ready to summarize the main points they make. Are you at all surprised by what they discovered? Which groups of immigrants did the new law ‘privilege’, and what contradictions did the new law produce? What was so new about the “new” immigration following the 1965 Hart-Celler Act?

Reading:
• Martin, *A Nation of Immigrants*, chs. 9 – 10.
• Koser, *International Migration*, ch. 5.
• *John F. Kennedy: A Nation of Immigrants - Chapter 2 and Appendix D*. Can be found on course page resource list.
Week 10. **Post 1965 Immigration History and Politics.** How do immigration restrictions serve corporate interests? How do immigration laws benefit “skilled” workers and disadvantage “unskilled” workers? We will watch and discuss the film *Harvest of Empire*, a powerful documentary that exposes the direct connection between the long history of U.S. intervention in Latin America and the immigration crisis we face today.

**Nov. 5:** The Global and the Local

**Nov. 7:** How Globalization Produces Migration: Immigration Law, Economic Policy, and Global Markets in Skilled and Unskilled Workers.

Reading:
- Barber, *Latino City*, Introduction – chapter 2

Be ready to discuss what the numbers are telling us.

Week 11. **Changing Faces.** How are refugees and asylees different from immigrants? Why does the United States prioritize their admission? How are they selected? How is U.S. refugee resettlement policy shaped by U.S. international relations?

**Nov. 12:** Holiday

**Nov. 14:** Changing Faces

Reading:
- Barber, *Latino City*, chs. 3 – 5.
Week 12. What is Thanksgiving?
Nov. 19 – A Nation of Refuge?

Reading: Note: Be prepared to discuss!
• Martin, chs. 10 and 11.
• Art Cullen, “In My Iowa Town We Need Immigrants,” The New York Times, July 31, 2018. “Some state Republicans were for building a border wall before Donald Trump gave it a thought. But in many rural areas, immigrants are keeping the place alive.”
• Deirdre Fernandes, “For refugees in Kenya, an education in hope,” Boston Sunday Globe, July 8, 2018. “The Kakuma Refugee Camp, 80 miles from anywhere in northwest Kenya, is a world apart, a holding center for thousands dispossessed by war and conflict. Opportunity knocks rarely here, but a once-obscure New Hampshire university has made it the idealistic focus of its global plans.”
• Barber, Latino City, chs. 6 – Conclusion.
• Forrant and Strobel, Ethnography, all of part 3.
• Amaris Castillo, “A New World, A New Life: From Ugandan camp to Lowell, a Congolese family starts again”
• Viet Thanh Nguyen, “Good Refugees, Bad Refugees,” The New York Times, May 20, 2018. “I had forgotten that memory of my mother, sitting by herself, reading aloud from a church newsletter. It was the only way she could read, having had only a grade school education. As an American teenager fluent in English, I felt pity for her, and perhaps a bit of shame. The memory came back to me on learning of the White House chief of staff John Kelly’s words about undocumented immigrants coming from south of the border, whom he described as people who would not ‘easily assimilate into the United States, into our modern society.’”
https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/19/opinion/sunday/john-kelly-refugees-immigration.html

Week 13. Lowell and Lawrence
Nov. 26 - World Events and World Migrations
Nov. 28 – Are We a Welcoming Place?

• Barber, Latino City, chs. 6 – Conclusion.
• Forrant and Strobel, Ethnography, all of part 3.
• Amaris Castillo, “A New World, A New Life: From Ugandan camp to Lowell, a Congolese family starts again”
Week 14: The Current Debate: How is Policy Made?
Dec. 3 – What is Happening to the Flows of People?
Dec. 5 – Are Migrants Today the Same as the Irish Arrivals in Lowell in 1840?
• Martin, chs, 12 – 13.
“Immigration is reshaping societies around the globe. Barriers erected by wealthier nations have been unable to keep out those from the global South — typically poor, and often desperate — who come searching for work and a better life. While immigrants have often delivered economic benefits to the countries taking them in, they have also shaken the prevailing order and upended the politics of the industrialized world — where the native-born often exaggerate both their numbers and their needs.”

Final essay question distributed in class on Dec. 5.

Week 15: Final Discussions
Dec. 10 – Lessons from history?
Dec. 12 – What did we learn?

Reading:
• Sonia Nazario, “The End of Asylum,” The New York Times, July 12, 2018. “ADELANTO, Calif. — Moisés Valentín, a pastor at the Christian and Missionary Alliance, and I drove two hours outside of Los Angeles, to the middle of nowhere, high in the Mojave Desert. There, surrounded by sagebrush scrub and crowned in concertina wire, was the Adelanto Detention Facility, the nation’s largest prison for adult immigrants. Many of the people detained there are seeking asylum, running less toward the American dream than away from a Central American nightmare.” https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/11/opinion/asylum-immigration-trump.html

Final Essay due no later than 4:00pm
Wednesday, December 20, 2018.

Lowell Telecommunications Corporation Programs on Lowell’s Immigration History
These 30-minute programs may be helpful as you consider the course material.

History in Lowell: Overview of the History of Immigration to Lowell, 1820s to the Present. UMass Lowell Professor Robert Forrant highlights the general story of the city’s immigration history. (30 minutes)
https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/4jeRlBTetCoFJdyT5ssIvBrB9VUvRN0M/media/341587?autostart=false&showtabssearch=true

History in Lowell: Immigration from Colombia. UMass Lowell Professor Robert Forrant and recent UMass Lowell graduate Sebastian Cardona discuss immigration from Colombia to Lowell in the 1970s. (30 minutes)
https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/4jeRlBTetCoFJdyT5ssIvBrB9VUvRN0M/media/376003?autostart=false&showtabssearch=true

History in Lowell: Recent Immigration and the International Institute. UMass Lowell Professor Robert Forrant and Cheryl Hamilton of the International Institute discuss the role of the Institute since 1918 in settling immigrants and refugees. (30 minutes)
https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/4jeRlBTetCoFJdyT5ssIvBrB9VUvRN0M/media/308631?autostart=false&showtabssearch=true
History in Lowell: Immigration from Africa. UMass Lowell Professor Robert Forrant and Gordon Halm of Lowell’s Africa Center discuss the history of African immigration in Lowell. (30 minutes)
https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/4jeRlBTetCoFJdyT5ssIvBrB9VUVvRN0M/media/375709?autostart=false&showtabssearch=true

History in Lowell: The Burmese community in Greater Lowell. UMass Lowell history professors Robert Fortant and political science professor Ardeth Thawnghmung discuss the growth of the Burmese community in the region. (30 minutes)
https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/4jeRlBTetCoFJdyT5ssIvBrB9VUVvRN0M/media/350477?autostart=false&showtabssearch=true

History in Lowell: Native Americans. UMass Lowell Professor Christoph Strobel outlines the history of Native Americans before the industrial revolution. (30 minutes)
https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/4jeRlBTetCoFJdyT5ssIvBrB9VUVvRN0M/media/341588?autostart=false&showtabssearch=true

History in Lowell: Irish and French-Canadian Immigration. UMass Lowell Professor Robert Forrant discusses Irish and French-Canadian immigration in Lowell in the 19th and early 20th centuries. (30 minutes)
https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/4jeRlBTetCoFJdyT5ssIvBrB9VUVvRN0M/playlists/2270/media/271929?sequenceNumber=13&autostart=false&showtabssearch=true

History in Lowell: Immigrant Quotas. UMass Lowell Professor Robert Forrant discusses 19th and 20th century efforts to limit immigration into the United States, culminating with the establishment of a federal immigrant quota system in 1924. (30 minutes)
https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/4jeRlBTetCoFJdyT5ssIvBrB9VUVvRN0M/playlists/2270/media/300753?sequenceNumber=10&autostart=false&showtabssearch=true

History in Lowell: Immigration Reform. UMass Lowell Professor Robert Forrant discusses the reform of the immigration quota system and how immigration into the United States changed after 1965. (30 minutes)
https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/4jeRlBTetCoFJdyT5ssIvBrB9VUVvRN0M/playlists/2270/media/288516?sequenceNumber=11&autostart=false&showtabssearch=true

History in Lowell: Greek and Portuguese Immigration. UMass Lowell Professor Robert Forrant discusses Greek and Portuguese immigration in Lowell in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. (30 minutes)
https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/4jeRlBTetCoFJdyT5ssIvBrB9VUVvRN0M/playlists/2270/media/288362?sequenceNumber=12&autostart=false&showtabssearch=true

History in Lowell: Urban Renewal and the Knock-Down of Immigrant Neighborhoods. UMass Professor Robert Fortant discusses Lowell's urban renewal projects of the 1960's and 70's when whole neighborhoods were methodically torn down. Maritza Grooms hosts this monthly program on history topics in Lowell. (30 minutes)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wLdRyaIzpUI