

## **TOPICS IN APPLIED ECONOMICS (A): ECONOMICS OF MIGRATION**

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### ***1. Objective of the Course***

The Economics of Migration is a branch of economics that studies the causes and consequences of human migration. It seeks to understand the economic incentives and constraints that motivate people to migrate and the economic and social impact of migration on both the sending and receiving countries. The discipline of economics of migration is closely related to several fields of economics, including international economics, labor economics, development economics, and political economy. As such, this course will expose students to topics and tools from all four fields above.

The approach of the course will be empirical and based on the most recent papers in the literature. Throughout the course, students will have the chance to review a wide range of empirical methods to estimate causal effects (such as difference-in-differences, event-studies, instrumental variables, regression discontinuity designs, and synthetic control methods). These advanced quantitative methods are essential for conducting rigorous applied economic research, not only in the economics of migration but also in other fields of economics. In addition, students will develop critical thinking skills by learning how to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different research designs, interpret empirical findings, and identify areas where further research is needed.

## ***2. Plan of the Course***

### **Part 1: Foundations of Migration as a Factor Flow**

In Part 1, we start by examining theories and empirical evidence on the determinants of migration. From the theory side, we will use McFadden's random utility maximization framework, its relationship with the gravity model, one of the key international trade models, and the Roy model, one of the key frameworks in labor economics. We will touch upon topics such as the relationship between income maximization and the self-selection and sorting of migrants, the role of liquidity constraints; and how the models allow us to interpret empirical findings properly.

*Topic 1: Introduction. Data and the global gains from migration.*

*Topic 2: The decision to migrate: the RUM model*

*Topic 3: The selection of migrants*

*Topic 4: Immigration policies*

### **Part 2: Migration and Labor Markets**

In Part 2, we will explore the research questions related to labor economics. First, we will look at the economics of migrant assimilation into the hosting labor markets and communities, focusing on how the methodological issues related to the measurement of assimilation and how to evaluate assimilation policies. Second, we will turn to the economics of migrant refugees and study the determinants of refugee integration and how policies – such as those related to labor market access, citizenship, and skill investment – can affect it. This part of the course will make extensive use of policy evaluation techniques with observational data.

*Topic 5: The effects of immigration*

*Topic 6: Immigrant assimilation*

*Topic 7: Residential segregation*

*Topic 8: The economics of refugee migration*

*Topic 9: Refugees' labor market integration*

### **Part 3: Migration and Development**

In Part 3, we will study the relationship between migration and economic development, focusing on the impact of emigration on sending countries. Topics will include the intertwined relationship between migration and development; brain drain vs brain gain; the impact of

emigration on families left-behind and communities at origin; and the relationship between migration and long-run development. This part of the course will cover papers based on natural experiments as well as papers based on randomized control trials.

*Topic 10: The relationship between migration and development*

*Topic 11: The migration impact on sending households and communities*

*Topic 12: Migration and long-run perspective*

#### Part 4: Migration and Political Economy

In Part 4, we will turn to the literature at the intersection between political economy and political science that studies the societal and political impact of immigration. More specifically, we will review the recent literature on attitudes toward migrants and the effect of immigration - and the increased diversity that comes with it - on the society. Further, we will cover papers that explore the interplay between media, immigration and populist vote.

*Topic 13: Immigration, diversity, and the society*

*Topic 14: Immigration, media, and populist vote*

### **3. Evaluation**

The grade will come from the final exam (60 per cent) and from the presentation of one paper and the discussion of another presented by a classmate and in-class participation (40 per cent).

### **4. Schedule and Readings**

The course is mostly based on academic papers. Each of the lectures will have mandatory and additional readings (mandatory ones are in bold).

There is also a book that covers most of the topics in the first part of the program: Borjas, George J. (2014). *Immigration Economics*. Harvard University Press. Cambridge, MA.

## SYLLABUS

### Part 1: Foundations of migration as a factor flow

*Topic 1: Introduction. Data and the global gains from migration.*

**\*Borjas (2014), Introduction, Chapter 7.**

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*Topic 2: The decision to migrate: the RUM model*

**\*Michel Beine & Simone Bertoli & Jesús Fernández-Huertas Moraga, 2016. "A Practitioners' Guide to Gravity Models of International Migration," The World Economy, Wiley Blackwell, vol. 39(4), pages 496-512, April.**

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*Topic 4: Immigration policies*

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## **Part 2: Migration and Labor Markets**

### *Topic 5: The effects of immigration*

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*Topic 6: Immigrant assimilation*

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