

Migration and Displacement Studies Correlate Sequence



**2021-2022 Handbook
Vassar College**

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Welcome to the Correlate in Migration and Displacement Studies:

Given the unresolved (and interrelated) challenges of war, political/ethnic/religious persecution, global inequality, and climate change, more and more people are being, and will continue to be, forced from their homes. While governments, NGOs, religious relief agencies, and tech innovators across the globe have devised an array of specific—and sometimes conflicting—responses to migration and displacement, institutions of higher learning can, and must, have a different and equally vital focus by preparing students to respond to the challenges posed by this development.

This course of study prepares students to meet the challenges posed by migration and displacement with intelligence, compassion, and ingenuity. This evolving curriculum recognizes displaced people as knowledge producers, and takes into account that their knowledges differ in kind and form across space, time, and cultures. The curriculum is designed to integrate theory and practice to enhance classroom learning, translate inert knowledge into action, and promote community partnerships (locally, regionally, and globally) that foster mutually beneficial relationships among students, community partners, and forcibly displaced people.

Although the Correlate in Migration and Displacement Studies is envisioned as a free-floating course of study, it is “housed” in the International Studies program. Given the unique nature of this Correlate, it is therefore possible to declare both a major in International Studies and a Correlate in Migration and Displacement Studies.

Vassar offers a wide variety of classes related to migration and displacement across the disciplines, but students will also have access to faculty, classes and resources of the Consortium on Forced Migration, Displacement, and Education (CFMDE). This Consortium brings together Vassar, Bennington, Bard-Annandale, Bard-Berlin, and Sarah Lawrence colleges, the New School for Social Research, and the Council for European Studies. Founded in 2016, and funded by grants from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Consortium is building a shared curriculum in Migration and Displacement Studies around student and faculty-driven initiatives. The Correlate offers descriptive and prescriptive classes, classes with a strong community engagement component, and international study opportunities. Students will be able to take classes at all five Consortium schools (via Zoom) and take advantage of existing study abroad opportunities. Students must obtain permission from the Steering Committee to do so. Scholarly conferences, lecture series, teaching labs, and research opportunities, and more supplement the Correlate. The Correlate will provide a well-rounded, historically, geographically, and disciplinarily comprehensive understanding of forced migration.

Meet the Faculty

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[Susan Trumbetta](#)

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[Kimberly Williams-Brown](#)

[Eva Woods](#)

[Italian Department](#)

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[Earth Science and Geography Department](#)

[Office of Community-Engaged Learning](#)

[International Studies Department](#)

[American Studies Department](#)

[International Studies Department](#)

[History Department](#)

[Creative Arts Across Disciplines \(CAAD\)](#)

[Chinese and Japanese Department](#)

[Sociology Department](#)

[Biology Department](#)

[Office of International Programs](#)

[Art and Urban Studies Departments](#)

[Psychological Science Department](#)

[Religion Department](#)

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[Hispanic Studies Department](#)

Declaring and Advising

If you are interested in declaring a Correlate, please contact the Correlate Sequence Advisor at migrationdisplacement@vassar.edu.

Requirements for Correlate Sequence

The Correlate Sequence is housed in the International Studies Program, and it is intellectually envisioned as a “free-floating,” wholly interdisciplinary course of study. True to the global scope of migration and displacement, students are asked to draw on their existing interests and resources across the curriculum. For example, an English major might also complete a correlate sequence in Migration and Displacement Studies. That student could supplement literature classes with ethnographic research in Malaysia and a community-engaged course through LALS. Alternatively, a Biology major might study climate change and migration, traveling to Bern to study the effects of trauma on those displaced by climate-related events and adding a community-engaged Education course to understand climate displacement of children.

The Correlate in Migration and Displacement Studies requires students to choose 6 classes. All Correlates take the Lexicon of Forced Migration and the Senior Capstone course. In addition, they select four courses from the list of approved classes listed on page 10. No more than 1.0 unit of course overlap is allowed between the correlate and the student’s major and/or additional correlate sequence(s). Below is the envisioned course of study.

The Correlate Sequence is housed in International Studies, and requires six units of student work:

- 1) INTL 109: A Lexicon of Forced Migration.
- 2) Four units from a selection of approved courses, chosen in consultation with the student’s Correlate Sequence Advisor, of which no more than one unit should be at the 100-level. At least one of these four courses should be community engaged, away from Vassar’s campus (international or not) if at all feasible.
- 3) One unit at the 300-level to be proposed by the student in consultation with their Correlate Sequence Advisor, in which the student produces a capstone project.

A. A Lexicon of Forced Migration

This introductory course explores the history and stakes of the words we use to describe political realities. We hope to embark with our students on a parallel process of examination and discovery. The course is organized around four thematic anchors: *time, space, and movement; home, belonging and hospitality; discourse, representation, and memory; and law,*

ethics, and policy. Consortium campuses will also host a joint speaker series embedded in the course. The series will include four events per year—one at each college—and will be available to students at other campuses, both in person and digitally.

Explore past syllabi [links] and examples of past student research:

<http://kaiyajohn.vassarspaces.net/>

<https://jhutchinson58.wixsite.com/mysite>

The Selective Bibliography of Forced Migration: <http://forcedmigrationbib.vassarspaces.net>

B. Engaged/Community-Based Learning

These classes link coursework and critical thinking skills with civic and other forms of engagement that contextualize course materials and enhance learning. Integral to our commitment is input from others (migrants, immigrants, asylees, community leaders) to develop our models of community-engaged learning. A significant portion of the learning will occur outside the classroom: students will learn through engagement with surrounding communities. We envision these courses to incorporate traditional liberal arts with community work and research, including, e.g.: conducting interviews; engaging in environmental research in communities alongside government or community organizations; reviewing and summarizing research or policy options; creating public art or instructional materials; conducting project-based work; and engaging with local governments.

For example, in collaboration with Prof. Maria Höhn, students designed a [transnational photography exhibition](#) in Fall 2019. The exhibition, titled “Walls, Borders, Fences,” commemorated the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall while interrogating deteriorating conditions at the current U.S.–Mexico border. Prof. Eva Woods’ HISP/LALS 252: Building Inclusive Communities in Latino-a-x Poughkeepsie is another example of a course that pushes students to engage deeply with people who have migrated to the United States and work together to build community and identify how Vassar and its students can be helpful to the Poughkeepsie Latinx community. See page 9 for a full list of available courses.

C. Three Upper-Level Courses Related to Forced Migration

Students are encouraged to select courses for regional and disciplinary variety. Students can also take advantage of courses at our partner institutions and courses co-taught across institutions via digital classrooms. Sarah Lawrence Prof. Janet Reilly’s *Scholars at Risk: Theory and Practice of Human Rights Advocacy* is funded by CFMDE and has proven a popular choice for students across the Consortium. The course is organized around hands-on work on behalf of imprisoned and endangered scholars and includes an advocacy conference and lobbying campaign. More traditional classroom courses are an option as well. Vassar Prof. Sole Anatrone (Italian) teaches ITAL 240/340: *Italy and Its Migrations: Stories of Italian Emigration and Immigration* (taught in English, with the option for Italian majors to take it in Italian) which asks students to read and discuss narratives of migration, and examine the ways gender, sexuality and social roles determine and are determined by movement through space and time, reflecting critically on the exclusion of women’s voices from early accounts of migration.

D. Study Away

Students are expected to complete an intensive study semester at one of the Consortium's study abroad sites (Berlin, for example) or at one of the intensive summer abroad programs or winter semesters dealing with forced migration being developed by Sarah Lawrence in Bern, Switzerland and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This requirement may also be fulfilled by taking a community engaged course that involves significant work away from Vassar's immediate surroundings, in the U.S. or elsewhere, or by taking part in an internship over the summer that provides hands-on learning and academic rigor. More information about study away and available classes is below; please contact the Correlate Sequence Advisor with any questions about how to fulfill this requirement for the Correlate.

E. Senior Capstone Project

Students pursuing a Correlate in Migration and Displacement Studies are required to complete a senior project. Students preparing a mandatory senior thesis in another department may consider a joint or interdisciplinary project with a migration and displacement component, pending the approval of both programs or departments. This project can be a traditional research paper, or it can be non-traditional: for example, a digital project tailored to our online educational platform or a project with a community engaged learning component. Students may also design final projects to follow and elaborate upon an intensive summer abroad program or a domestic internship, including the Consortium's programs in Germany, Switzerland, and Malaysia. Students interested in working across the Consortium with faculty and students on their capstone project should explore that option with Professor Höhn.

Research Grants and Publications

EuropeNow Campus

The Consortium has partnered with the [Council for European Studies](#), which will feature outstanding student work or projects on its digital platform *EuropeNow*. Students have the opportunity to disseminate research through *EuropeNow Campus*, and to compile resources for the Consortium's [Digital Classroom page](#) through *EuropeNow*. With more than 100,000 readers per month, the platform provides global visibility to work on forced migration, which erases the gap between classroom learning and real world impact. Working in close contact with the *EuropeNow* editorial team, students can prepare interviews, research articles, podcasts, videos, and art. Please contact migrationdisplacement@vassar.edu for more information.

Competitive Research Grants for students' thesis research are available. Please contact migrationdisplacement@vassar.edu for more information. Exemplary student work will be featured at yearly Teaching Labs and on the Consortium's [website](#).

Students proposing an innovative or community-engaged project to engage with forced migration at the local or global level can apply for funding through the Consortium. The most competitive proposals benefit from collaboration. Applicants are encouraged to contact migrationdisplacement@vassar.edu early in the process for advice about available resources and potential collaborators.

A Note on Language Study

The Migration and Displacement Studies Correlate does not have a formal requirement for language study, but if students are serious about any kind of work related to (im)migration and displacement, competence in a non-English language, as well as cultural competency, is crucial. Fluency in at least one foreign language is an asset to any citizen in our global community, and fundamental to leadership in the global challenges ahead. We very strongly encourage all students, and especially students interested in Migration and Displacement Studies, to view language study as an essential component of both their correlate sequence and a well-rounded liberal-arts education.

Study Away

Students are expected to complete an intensive study semester, summer program, or January program dealing with migration and displacement. This program can be completed **overseas or in the United States**, through an approved academic institution or NGO. For example, two Vassar students have spent the summer at a border studies program run by the University of Texas–El Paso and New Mexico State University. The number of study away opportunities is expanding for prospective Correlates in Migration and Displacement Studies. At present, there are several available options.

Bard currently offers a semester-long program at Bard College Berlin (BCB). Although not officially part of Vassar study abroad options, given Berlin’s key position in the theater of global migration, students are encouraged to participate. BCB is a small and radically international campus where approximately 300 students from more than 60 countries pursue B.A. degrees in humanities and social sciences, with instruction in English. Since the “long summer of migration” in Europe in 2015, BCB has made its central strategic goal the extension of access to refugee students and developing innovative approaches to Migration Studies. As of Fall 2019, more than 40 students with refugee backgrounds (from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan) are enrolled in BA programs at BCB, with additional refugee students participating in classes either in person or digitally as guest students. BCB has strong ties to the city, other educational institutions, NGOs, and grassroots “Migrants Welcome” communities that enable joint initiatives as well as internship placements for students. Students who study at BCB will take classes in Migration and Displacement Studies as well as other courses needed for their degree. Instruction will be in English but students will need to speak German in order to participate in the community-engaged classes offered at the Bard College Berlin campus. Furthermore, Vassar students are expected to take a year of German language courses in advance of the trip to

satisfy Vassar’s study away requirements, and to continue taking German courses afterward. For a list of classes offered at Bard, Berlin, see page 9.

The Consortium on Forced Migration offers two intensive **four-week** summer abroad programs in Bern, Switzerland, and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, run through Sarah Lawrence College and the New School for Social Research. Led by New School Professor Adam Brown, the Bern program tackles mental health issues among forcibly displaced individuals in Switzerland. The topic is sparsely researched, even though refugees and asylum seekers have shown elevated rates of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and depression. Students develop skills in collecting and analyzing quantitative data related to the types of mental health issues and factors underlying mental health vulnerability and resilience. They are also trained and participate in interviewing refugees, to contextualize and connect individual mental health risks and resilience in relation to social, political, and economic factors through history and compared to migratory journeys, past and present. Findings are used to work with members of the refugee community to inform public health outreach programs and treatments. These projects are ideally suited for students interested in the intersection of medicine, healthcare, psychology, research methods, translation, statistics, politics, history (and emerging fields in history such as the history of emotions, or migration journeys and migrant knowledges). Vassar’s URSI program may provide financial support for such summer study for qualified students.

The 4-week intensive summer research program in Kuala Lumpur and other cities in Malaysia, led by Sarah Lawrence professor Parthiban Muniandy, offers students the opportunity to learn from local organizations such as Tenaganita and CARAM Asia—organizations that work on migrants’ rights advocacy and activism in the country. During the trip, students will attend workshops and mini-lectures by experts and scholars in the region, in partnership with Khazanah Research Institute and Pondok Perancis in Malaysia. In addition, Dr. Muniandy will provide training on how to conduct mini-ethnographic projects in the city, and students will be asked to carry out observations, interviews, and writing projects. As a major destination and hub for transnational migration, Malaysia attracts a wide range of people from across socio-economic, national, and ethnic backgrounds—from Nigerian students to refugees from Burma. Students will gain a better understanding of lesser-known destinations outside of North America and Western Europe, to see how different experiences are shaped in one of Asia’s “global cities.” Students might take advantage of Ford Scholarships to help defray costs for the summer study.

Life After Graduation

Forced displacement is a global, generational challenge that will touch every aspect of society. The skills and experiences that the Correlate in Migration and Displacement Studies offers — respect for displaced people’s knowledges, critical thinking skills, community engaged courses and special events, a conceptual grounding in the emerging field of forced migration studies — prepare students for a wide variety of career and graduate study avenues. Students pursuing advanced degrees in law, medicine, education, public policy, or another field entirely will find that their classroom and hands-on experiences will make them strong candidates for jobs in

their fields, as employers begin to place value on the importance of understanding the needs and desires of people who have been displaced at every hospital, law clinic, school and government office or nonprofit. One recent alumna (class of '20) is entering a PhD program in History to study the intersection of disability and forced migration, while others have joined the workforce to shape NGOs' responses to displacement.

International Alumnae/i Advisory Board

Jeannette Estruth (VC '07), Assistant Professor of History, Bard College

Anish Kanoria (VC '18), Associate, Hanuman Agro Industries, LTD

Amy Kaslow (VC '81), *K/NOW*

Mariya Nikolova (VC '07), Legal Training Advisor, International Committee of the Red Cross

Alisa Swire (VC '84),

Recommended Reading

Faculty and students have curated written and audiovisual materials to widen the scope of discussion around refugees, migration, and displacement. The Selective Bibliography of Forced Migration [in progress: <http://forcedmigrationbib.vassarspaces.net/bibliography/>] is first and foremost an educational tool for people of all ages and draws on materials which are accessible to a variety of audiences. It is a collaborative, open-access, developing resource aimed at widening the scope of discussion around refugees and forced migration. Its creators (Prof. Brittany Murray, Sam Cavagnolo '22, Haru Sugishita '23, and Matthew Brill-Carlat '19, with the help of other dedicated students) were inspired by the #CharlestonSyllabus, the Ferguson Syllabus, and other crowdsourced resources.

The Consortium on Forced Migration has published four issues of the online journal *EuropeNow*: [March 2019](#), [October 2019](#), [October 2020](#), and [October 2021](#). All issues feature the work of students and faculty at each Consortium member college, including Vassar.

Courses on Migration and Displacement at Vassar

MDS Correlate Courses 2021-2022

AFRS/POLI/PHIL 279 - Spaces of Exception: Migration, Asylum-Seeking, and Today - This course charts and critically examines today's "migratory condition," in which inclusion in the political community is possible only by mechanisms of exclusion and intensified precarity that place the migrant at the outskirts of political legibility. 1.0 units.

ANTH 236 Native North America - This course explores Native American lifeways in North

America for the last 10,000 years, including how knowledge of the past is constructed and how cultures persist through times of extreme hardship and stress. 1.0 units.

EDUC/LALS/URBS 256 - Bilingualism and/in K-12 Education Learning - This course examines the issue of education for English Language Learners through a field based experience in Poughkeepsie Schools. 1.0 units.

EDUC 211 - Intensive - The Caribbean: History, Culture, Migration and Development - This course explores the history, culture, economics/development, migration, and future of the Afro/Indo Anglo Caribbean. 1.0 units.

EDUC 261 - Intensive - Intergroup Dialogue on Race and Migration - This course brings together students from Vassar and Poughkeepsie High School in critical dialogue with the intention of examining power and power structures in our experiences and the world around us concerning race and migration. 1.0 units. Community engaged. Six-week course.

EDUC/LALS 270 - Undocumented, Unapologetic, Unafraid - This introductory immigration course is about undocumented people in the U.S. and is situated within a historical, academic, legal, political, social, cultural, and economic context. 1.0 units.

EDUC/INTL/LALS/MEDS/WMST 271 - Hello, Dear Enemy: Mounting an Exhibition of Picture Books on Experiences of War and Displacement - Students will study war and displacement, journalism and photography, and young adult literature, and then mount an exhibition in the Collaboratory of photographs and books that will travel to area schools and libraries, where Vassar students serve as docents. 1.0 units.

EDUC 282 - Intensive - Finding Place: Refugee Youth Schooling Experiences in Athens, Greece - Students read broadly about migrations and schooling, contemporary Greek politics/economy, EU refugee policies, and travel to Greece to conduct required interviews and surveys. 1.0 units. Community engaged.

FFS 295 - Intensive - Voices of Exile and Migration - This Intensive delves into narratives of exile, migration and immigration, whether forced or chosen and considers the political and aesthetic effects of writing about, and from, exile. 1.0 units.

GEOG/LALS 246 - The U.S.-Mexico border: Nation-State and Nature - This course focuses on the economic growth, demographic expansion and ethno-cultural interaction, and the capitalist production, state-making, and nation building on both sides of the International divide. 1.0 units.

GERM 355 - Dislocated Lives: Refugees and Displaced Persons after WWII - This course will analyze personal accounts, memoirs, films, novels and students work with original documents from the US Holocaust Memorial Museum and International Tracing Service in Germany. 1.0 units.

HISP 206 - Migrant Latin America - This course explores texts, films, and photography that record experiences of events of migration into Latin America. 1.0 units.

HISP 206 - Dreaming and Displacement: Migration Cinema and Literature - This course explores colonial and postcolonial migration, displacement and narratives of liberation through the close analysis of written and visual texts. 1.0 units.

HISP/LALS 252 - Building Inclusive Communities in Latino-a-x Poughkeepsie - This course is community engaged learning with the Latino-a-x community. 1.0 units. Community engaged.

HISP 382 - Decolonizing Digital Culture - This course explores how the history, physical infrastructure, political economy, and symbolic and affective meanings in Hispanophone contexts across Latin America, the Caribbean, Mexico and Spain are crucial for understanding global digital culture. 1.0 units.

HIST 124 - Europe 1945 - This course explores the roots of the war, and how European countries dealt with the destruction, the questions of guilt, collaboration and resistance, and the challenge to create a peaceful Europe in the emerging Cold War order. 1.0 units.

HIST/LALS 263 - Conquest and Borderlands in Colonial Latin America - This course explores the parallel processes of conquering and bordering in Latin America, beginning with examples in the ancient Americas and continuing through the end of the 18th century. 1.0 units.

HIST/LALS 363 - Bordering the Americas - This course examines the creation and proliferation of national bordering regimes throughout the Americas, and addresses how constraining migration affects people, including those who contest borders. 1.0 units.

HIST 380 - Refugees Past and Present: Campus, Survival Strategies, Entrepreneurship - This course examines historical case studies, theoretical readings and some policy papers to develop an understanding of displaced people's economic survival strategies. 1.0 units.

ITAL 240/340 - Italy and its Migrations: Stories of Italian Emigration and Immigration -

This course studies Italian emigration and immigration through novels, poetry, cinema, theater, letters and media coverage. 1.0 units.

LALS/SOCI 253 - Children of Immigration - This course examines how children of immigrants are reshaping America, and how America is reshaping them, by examining key topics such as the impact of immigration on family structures, gender roles, language maintenance, academic achievement, and identity, as well as the impact that immigration reforms have had on access to higher education, employment, and political participation. 1.0 units.

RELI/AFRS 211 - Islam, Europe, and the Americas - This course explores Muslim encounters with and experiences in Europe and the Americas, from the Middle Passage to the present. The course explores the relationship of religion to migration, race, and ethnicity. 1.0 units.

PSYC 362 - Seminar in Clinical Psychology and Psychopathology (with component on migration) - Intensive study of research and theory concerning the nature, origins, and treatment of major psychological disorders with a component on migration. 1.0 units.

SOCI 380 - People on the Move: The Case of People from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq coming to Greece in 2015-2016 - This course focuses on the social and political meaning of forced migration in the 21st Century with particular attention to people from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq who fled their countries in 2015-2016 with hopes of finding safe haven in Europe. 1.0 units. 1.0 units.

URBS 384 - Refugees and Urban Space - This course explores the impact of refugees in urban space as they act as architects and city-makers within the different contexts of displacements, and how they utilize their knowledge on space to produce new hybrid urbanities within settings characterized by permanent temporariness and precariousness. 1.0 units.