



## SPRING 2026 COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Number: 235-001

Course Title: Immigration Law

Credit Hours: 3

Grading Mode: Letter grade

Meeting Time(s): MON/WED 6:05-7:30 p.m.

Meeting Mode: ON CAMPUS

Exam Time(s): Click or tap here to enter text.

Exam Mode: ON CAMPUS

Prerequisite(s): N/A

Corequisite(s): N/A

Instructor(s):

Jillian Blake | Stephanie Groff

Contact Information and Office Hours:

[jblake21@gmu.edu](mailto:jblake21@gmu.edu) | [sgroff2@gmu.edu](mailto:sgroff2@gmu.edu)

Office Hours: by appointment

Reading(s) & Supplement(s):

REQUIRED:

*Immigration and Refugee Law and Policy*, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2019 (Textbook) - Legomsky and Thronson

2025 Supplement to Legomsky & Thronson, [Immigration and Refugee Law and Policy](#) – Available on CANVAS and online

Please note that, although this area of law has not been altered by Congress for some time, the case law is ever changing. Therefore, reading assignments may be altered throughout the course of the semester. In addition, throughout the course, the professors may designate certain readings optional instead of required. We will update reading assignments via CANVAS and in class, with as much notice as possible.

## RECOMMENDED/ USEFUL RESOURCES:

The Practitioner Insights for Immigration in Westlaw has links to several resources for immigration law research including Cases, BIA Decisions, Statutes & Court Rules, Regulations, and Secondary Sources.

There are several useful secondary sources of immigration law available. Unless noted in the syllabus, these are not required reading but may be useful to gain a better understanding of the assigned material.

- *Kurzban's Immigration Law Sourcebook* (19th edition) (2024) by Ira J. Kurzban, a useful single (expensive) volume intended for immigration practitioners (available online through the library; a prior edition is available in the law library);
- *Immigration Law and Procedure in a Nutshell* (7th edition) (2017) by David S. Weissbrodt & Laura Danielson (available in the law library and for purchase);
- *Immigration Briefings*, a monthly monograph on immigration law issues (available in the law library and on Westlaw);
- *Interpreter Releases*, a weekly newsletter that covers current immigration law issues (available in the law library and on Westlaw).
- *Law of Asylum in the United States*, 2024 ed., (available on Westlaw)

While most reading for the class will be from the textbook and supplement, reading will be assigned from other sources, including the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), federal court cases, and Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) cases. Note that the BIA cases are available in Westlaw and at the Executive Office for Immigration Review's Virtual Law Library at <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/virtual-law-library>. A hard copy of the INA is not required, but it is recommended for a greater understanding of this complex statute and for easier navigation during the final exam, as you will not have access to the internet during the final exam.

## Course Overview:

Immigration law is complex, with rules that do not always follow logic. As Justice Alito stated, "nothing is ever simple with immigration law." *Padilla v. Kentucky*, 559 U.S. 356, 378 (2010) (Alito, J. concurring) (internal quotation omitted). The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit described the "labyrinthine character of modern immigration law" as "a maze of hyper-technical statutes and regulations." *Drax v. Reno*, 338 F.3d 98, 99 (2d Cir. 2003). The class is intended to provide a foundation on which to understand the law as it (currently) exists. Because this is a survey class, there will be significant areas that we either do not cover or do not cover thoroughly.

We will review the history and legal foundations of U.S. immigration law. We will substantively address a number of areas of immigration law, including immigration benefits, criminal immigration provisions, removal, refugee and asylum, and U.S. citizenship. We will also touch upon many of the key policy debates that are critical to understanding the context in which immigration law and immigration lawyers operate.

The law you learn in class could easily change in the future, or even during the course of the class. Immigration enforcement has been a priority for the Trump administration, and we will continue to see substantial changes over the course of the semester; thus readings and class discussions may change to address new developments. We strongly encourage you to read about immigration changes debated in Congress, proposed by the future Trump administration, and discussed by the Supreme Court and to bring thoughts and questions to class.

### Course Learning Outcomes:

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Communicate their knowledge of U.S. immigration law orally and in writing;
2. Navigate and analyze the Immigration and Nationality Act and other authorities; and
3. Evaluate immigration issues in the context of the U.S. immigration system.

### Grading Policies:

Final Exam 75 %: 75 points, 6 questions total  
Assignments 20%: 20 points, 10 points each assignment  
Oral Presentation 5%: 5 points

### Classroom Policies:

**Attendance:** Per AR 3-1.4, “maintenance of matriculation requires regular class preparation, participation and attendance, registration in the course of study required for the student’s program (full-time or part-time), successive registration for each fall and spring term of each academic year until study is completed, and compliance with all other relevant requirements.”

**Absences:** Per AR 4-1.1, “if a student is absent for any reason for more than 20 percent of the sessions of a course, the student is not eligible for credit in that course. A student who is not present for at least 75 percent of a session of the course is absent from that session.”

### Participation & Preparation:

While class participation will not be a component of your grade, you are expected to participate and attend each class. You are required to complete the assigned readings before each class and should be prepared to contribute to class discussion. During the first week, we will discuss expectations for participation and for the assignments.

### Use of Technology & AI:

**Moderate Use Policy:** Generative AI tools may be used in this course for the following purposes, and with the following guidelines. Students may use AI in this course to brainstorm, outline, and study, but may not use AI to respond to class dialogue, Socratic

or otherwise, or any exam. Students must use AI tools responsibly, verify facts presented by AI, disclose when AI tools are used to create course work product, properly cite any AI tools utilized, and should be prepared to produce the transcript of prompts and responses upon request. Misuse will be treated as a violation of academic standards

### Use of Electronic Text Books During Exams:

Students are permitted one laptop computer for exam taking purposes. Additional laptop computers or any other electronic data storage devices are not allowed in an exam room, unless permitted by the course instructor's *written* exam instructions. Electronic text books (e-books) may be used during exams that are designated as open book by the instructor, and the instructor allows text books to be used during the exam and allows access to a student's computer files during the exam (open exam). E -books may not be used in exams where the instructor does not allow students to access their computer files during the exam (secure exam) even if the instructor permits access to text books. If the instructor has blocked access to the internet or computer files, you must bring a hard copy of the allowed text book(s) you wish to consult. Students will need to borrow or otherwise locate a hard copy of the e -book or print resources needed from the e-book to take into the exam room. The instructor determines the length of the examination and whether or not it is secure or open and what, if any, study materials are permitted during the exam. Students are responsible for adhering to the instructor's standards for all examinations, which are included in the examination materials.

## Course Schedule & Assignments

DATE	TOPIC	MATERIALS TO BE READ BEFORE CLASS
<b>Class 1 Wednesday, January 14</b>	Overview of United States Immigration Law and the Constitution: Sources of Federal Immigration Power, The Foundational Cases	Text 1-11, 107-130 (including <i>Chae Chan Ping v. United States</i> and <i>Ekiu v. United States</i> )
<b>Class 2 Wednesday, January 21</b>	Immigration and the Constitution: Limits to the Federal Immigration Power; Modern Developments	Text 131-143, 151-163 (including <i>Fong Yue Ting v. United States</i> , <i>Shaughnessy v. United States Ex Rel. Mezei</i> , and discussion of <i>Landon v. Plasencia</i> in note 4)  Supp 7-9 (Item 8.a), 14-28 ( <i>State v. Munoz</i> , Notes 1-2)
<b>Class 3 Monday, January 26</b>	Immigration and the Constitution: Modern Developments Continued; Plenary Power and Federalism  Modern Admission Procedure: Visa Petitions; Visa Applications; Adjustment of Status	Text 192-205, 293-294, 301-317 (including <i>Trump v. Hawaii</i> majority opinion, and <i>United States v. Arizona</i> )  Text 587-592 (middle), 602-611 (top), 634-637 INA §§ 214(c)(1), 245(a, b, c, and k)
<b>Class 4 Wednesday, January 28</b>	Immigrant Priorities: Immigrants Subject to the General Quotas; Family Immigration; Children and Other Family Members	Text 325-342, 372-86 (including <i>Matter of Mourillon</i> ) INA §§ 201(b), 203(a), 203(d) <a href="#">Current State Department Visa Bulletin</a> INA § 101(b)(1)(A)-(E)
<b>Class 5 Monday, February 2</b>	Immigrant Priorities: Family Immigration: Spouses	Text 347-371 (including <i>Adams v. Howerton</i> and <i>Matter of Zeleniak</i> ) <i>Matter of Da Silva</i> , 15 I&N Dec. 778 (BIA 1976) INA § 216(b)-(c)

DATE	TOPIC	MATERIALS TO BE READ BEFORE CLASS
<b>Class 6 Wednesday, February 4</b>	Immigrant Visas: Employment-Based Immigration: Five Preferences; Diversity Visas	Text 386-408 (including <i>Matter of Marion Graham</i> ), 425-438  20 C.F.R. § 656.17(e)(1), (h) INA §§ 101(a)(27) (skim), 203(b)(1)-(5), 203(c)  <a href="#">DV-2023 Instructions</a>
<b>Class 7 Monday, February 9</b>	Nonimmigrant Visas: Nonimmigrant Priorities; Business Visitors; Visa Waiver Program; Tourists	Text 439-452 (including <i>International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftsmen v. Meese</i> ), 495-499 (including <i>Matter of Healy and Goodchild</i> )  Supp 52-53 (Chart)  INA §§ 101(a)(15) (skim), 214(b) (first sentence only), 217 (skim section a, read section b)  <i>Matter of Hira</i> , 11 I&N Dec. 824 (BIA 1965)  Optional: 9 <a href="#">FAM</a> 402.2-5, skim and stop at 9 FAM 402.2-5(H)
<b>Class 8 Wednesday, February 11</b>	Nonimmigrant Visas: Temporary Workers; Treaty Nonimmigrants; Educational Categories	Text 453-64 (including <i>Nice v. Turnage</i> ), 467-477 (including <i>Matter of Artee Corporation</i> ), 483-495 (including <i>Sheku-Kamara v. Karn</i> )  INA §§ 212(n)(1)(A)-(D), 214(c)(1)  <i>Fogo De Chao v. DHS</i> , 769 F.3d 1127 (D.C. Cir. 2014) (skip sections “II. Standard of Review” and “III. Subject-Matter Jurisdiction”)
<b>Class 9 Monday, February 16</b>	Exclusion Grounds: Historical Background; Grounds Related to Immigration Control; Criminal; Economic Public Health	Text 513-543, 569-580 (including <i>Matter of Arrabally</i> )
<b>Class 10 Wednesday, February 16</b>	Exclusion Grounds: Political and National Security Grounds	Text 543-569 (including <i>Matter of S-K-</i> and <i>Matter of A-C-M-</i> )  INA §§ 212(a)(3)(B), 212(f)

DATE	TOPIC	MATERIALS TO BE READ BEFORE CLASS
		<a href="#"><u>Proclamation 10949</u></a> , <i>Restricting the Entry of Foreign Nationals To Protect the United States From Foreign Terrorists and Other National Security and Public Safety Threats</i> , 90 Fed. Reg. 24497 (June 10, 2025).
<b>Class 11 Monday, February 23</b>	Deportability Grounds: "Admission"; Immigration Control Grounds; Political and National Security	Text 649-678 (including <i>Matter of Ching and Chen</i> , <i>Rosenberg v. Fleuti</i> ), 767-771  INA §§ 237(a)(1)(A)-(H), 237(a)(3)(D), 237(a)(4), 237(a)(6)  Assignment #1 Due
<b>Class 12 Wednesday, February 25</b>	Deportability Grounds: Crime-Related Part I	Text 678-689 (including <i>Padilla v. Kentucky</i> ), 704-731 ( <i>Moncrieffe v. Holder</i> ),  Supp 122-123 (Changes to pages 678, 707, 730)  INA §§ 101(a)(43)(A), 101(a)(43)(B), 101(a)(43)(F), 101(a)(48), 237(a)(2)
<b>Class 13 Monday, March 2</b>	Deportability Grounds: Crime-Related Part II	Text 738-739, 748-765 (including <i>Mellouli v. Lynch</i> )  <i>Mathis v. United States</i> , 579 U.S. 500 (2016) (majority opinion)  Discuss Assignment #1
<b>Class 14 Wednesday, March 4</b>	Relief from Removal: Cancellation of Removal	Text 773-799 (including <i>Matter of Recinas</i> ), 849-854  <i>Matter of Monreal-Aguinaga</i> , 23 I&N Dec. 56 (BIA 2001) (en banc) (majority opinion only) <i>Matter of Buri Mora</i> , 29 I&N Dec. 186 (BIA 2025) <i>Matter of C-V-T-</i> , 22 I&N Dec. 7 (BIA 1998) INA §§ 240A(a), (b)(1), (c), (d)(1)-(2), 240B(a)(1), 240B(b)

DATE	TOPIC	MATERIALS TO BE READ BEFORE CLASS
<b>Class 15 Monday, March 16</b>	Relief from Removal: Registry; Legalization; Adjustment of Status; Private Bills; Voluntary Departure; Temporary Protected Status; Country-Specific Programs	Text 1391-97 <i>Matter of Sosa Ventura</i> , 25 I&N Dec. 391 (BIA 2010) INA §§ 237(d)(2), 244 (skim), 245(a)-(c), 245(i), 249  <a href="#">American Immigration Council, TPS: An Overview</a> , (skim)  <a href="#">National TPS Alliance v. Noem</a> , No. 25-2120 (9th Cir. Aug. 29, 2025). (skim)  <a href="#">Noem v. National TPS Alliance</a> , No. 25A326, 606 U.S. ____ (2025).
<b>Class 16 Wednesday, March 18</b>	Relief from Removal: Federal Prosecutorial Discretion and Role of States      Detention Part 1	Text 803-849 (including <i>Texas v. United States</i> ) (skim), 1419-56 (including <i>Plyler v. Doe</i> )  <i>United States v. Texas</i> , 599 U.S. 670 (2023) (skim)  Skim PD Memos on CANVAS  Text 228-274 (including <i>Zadvydas v. Davis</i> , <i>Demore v. Kim</i> , <i>Jennings v. Rodriguez</i> (majority opinion)), 1071-1074
<b>Class 17 Monday, March 23</b>	Detention Part 2	<i>Matter of Joseph</i> , 22 I&N, Dec. 660 (BIA 1999) <i>Matter of Guerra</i> , 24 I&N Dec. 37 (BIA 2006) <i>Matter of Q. Li</i> , 29 I&N Dec. 66 (BIA 2025) <i>Matter of Yajure Hurtado</i> , 29 I&N Dec. 216 (BIA 2025)  INA §§ 236(a)-(c) (including Laken Riley Act amendments), 235(b)(2)(A), 241(a)(2)  Assignment #2 Due
<b>Class 18 Wednesday, March 25</b>	Deportation Procedure: NTAs; IJs; Representation, Evidence and Proof; Administrative Review	Text 877-890 (including <i>Pereira v. Sessions</i> ), 899-929 (including <i>Matter of Lozada</i> ), 963-976 INA §§ 292, 239(b)



DATE	TOPIC	MATERIALS TO BE READ BEFORE CLASS
<b>Class 19 Monday, March 30</b>	Deportation Procedure: Judicial Review; Exceptions to Usual Procedures	Text 977-994, 999-1014 (including <i>INS v. St. Cyr</i> ), 1032-41  <i>Guerrero-Lasprilla v. Barr</i> , 589 U.S. 221 (2020) <i>Wilkinson v. Garland</i> , 601 U.S. 209 (2024) (Skim)  INA §§ 240(c)(6)-(7), 242(a)  Discuss Assignment #2
<b>Class 20 Wednesday, April 1</b>	Refugees: Asylum and Withholding: Introduction; Meaning of “Persecution;” Religion; Nationality; Political Opinion; Race	Text 1160-89 (including <i>Matter of Acosta</i> , <i>INS v. Elias-Zacarias</i> )  <i>INS v. Cardoza-Fonseca</i> , 480 U.S. 421 (1987) <i>Matter of S-P-</i> , 21 I & N Dec. 486 (BIA 1996)  INA §§ 101(a)(42), 207(c)(1), (3), 208(a), (b)(1)(A), (d)(4), 241(b)(3)(A)
<b>Class 21 Monday, April 6</b>	Refugees: Particular Social Group: Introduction; Sexual Orientation Religion; Nationality; Political Opinion; Race	Text 1189-1220 (including <i>Matter of M-E-V-G-</i> , <i>Matter of Toboso-Alfonso</i> )  <i>Hernandez-Avalos v. Lynch</i> , 784 F.3d 944 (4th Cir. 2015) <i>Matter of M-R-M-S-</i> , 28 I&N Dec. 757 (BIA 2023)(skim) <i>Matter of R-E-R-M- &amp; J-D-R-M-</i> , 29 I&N Dec. 202 (A.G. 2025)
<b>Class 22 Wednesday April 8</b>	Refugees: Particular Social Group: Gender; Nexus	Text 1220-1277 (including <i>Fatin v. INS</i> , <i>Matter of Kasinga</i> , <i>Matter of A-B-</i> ) <i>Matter of A-R-C-G-</i> , 26 I&N Dec. 388 (BIA 2014) <i>Matter of S-S-F-M-</i> , 29 I&N Dec. 207 (A.G. 2025) (skim) <i>Matter of K-E-S-G-</i> , 29 I&N Dec. 145 (BIA 2025) (skim)
<b>Class 23 Monday, April 13</b>	Refugees: Standard and Methods of Proof, Exceptions to Eligibility; Convention Against Torture	Text 1278-1306, 1370-87  8 C.F.R. §§ 1208.16-18  <i>Matter of J-E-</i> , 23 I&N Dec. 291 (BIA 2002) <i>Matter of A-A-R-</i> , 29 I&N Dec. 38 (BIA 2025)

DATE	TOPIC	MATERIALS TO BE READ BEFORE CLASS
		<i>Matter of K-S-H-</i> , 29 I&N Dec. 307 (BIA 2025) (skim) <i>Matter of C-I-G-M- &amp; L-V-S-G-</i> (BIA 2025) (skim)
<b>Class 24 Wednesday, April 15</b>	Deportation Procedure: Simulated Hearing with an Immigration Judge	Materials Available on CANVAS
<b>Class 25 Monday, April 20</b>	Citizenship: Introduction; Acquiring Citizenship; Dual Nationality	Text 1512-62 (including <i>Sessions v. Morales-Santana</i> )
<b>Class 26 Wednesday, April 22</b>	Citizenship: Who Should Be a Citizen?  Final Review	Text 1562-80  Discuss Final/Review Questions

## Student Resources

[Antonin Scalia Law School Academic Regulations](#)

[GMU Common Course Policies Addendum](#)

[Mason Square Services](#)

[Mason Square Police](#)

Van Metre Hall, Room 110

Emergency - Dial 911

Escort Services - 703-993-8070

Dispatch – 703-993-2810

[Student Support and Advocacy Center \(SSAC\)](#)

Mason Square Sexual Assault Services:

Van Metre Hall, Room 222D

703-993-8186

Notice of Mandatory Reporting of Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, Interpersonal Violence, and Stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If a student wishes to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. Students may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

[Mason Square Clinic](#)

Van Metre Hall, Room B102

703-991-2831

[Counseling and Psychological Services](#)

[Student Health Services](#)

[Student Disability Services](#)

[Student Conduct](#)

[University Life](#)