

CET Syllabus of Record



Program: CET Vietnam: Development Studies

Course Title: The Vietnamese Diaspora: Origin, Identity, and Influence

Course Code: HC/DEVS 380

Total Hours: 45

Recommended Credits: 3

Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: Diaspora Studies / Development Studies, International Relations, Sociology, Race & Ethnic Studies, Political Science, Asian Studies

Language of Instruction: English

Prerequisites/Requirements: None

Description

This course examines issues in international migration and diaspora studies from an interdisciplinary perspective, traversing the social, cultural, and literary dimensions of migration and the formation of diasporic communities. As students engage with the varying political, economic, and sociological theories underlying diaspora studies, they will have the chance to apply these concepts through qualitative analysis of specific case studies of Vietnamese diasporic influence in contemporary Vietnam.

The first section introduces students to key political and economic concepts in the field of diaspora studies, and approaches the phenomenon of migration from an international relations perspective. Students discuss the dynamics between diasporic communities, identity, nationalism, and transnationalism. The second section frames diaspora from a sociological perspective, through which students investigate the different forms of domestic and international migration in Vietnam, specifically discussing issues of identity, adaptation, and social consequences of the Vietnamese diasporas. The final section explores the Vietnamese diaspora through artwork, including fiction, documentaries, and films. In this section, in addition to the focus on the Vietnamese diaspora's influence in Vietnam, students also learn about the role of the Chinese diaspora in Vietnamese social and cultural development.

Throughout the course, students are assigned tasks that require them to engage with local Vietnamese migration experts and diaspora community members. Students may also have a chance, depending on availability and logistics, to meet with businesses, organizations, and individuals that represent varying experiences, perceptions, and policies relevant to Ho Chi Minh City's migration and diasporic communities.

Objectives

Through their participation in this course, students:

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- Establish a basic understanding of migration and diasporic theory, including the social, cultural, and political effects of past immigration and emigration in Vietnam.
- Read and apply major theories in diaspora studies to analyze the role of Vietnamese diaspora communities in Vietnam's political, economic, and social development.
- Develop insight into the historical formation and the current effects of migration and diasporic communities in Vietnam.
- Foster critical thinking by examining issues of migration and diaspora from multiple perspectives.
- Apply integrated learning through the final project that brings together guided research, field work, and qualitative analysis.

Course Requirements

- Attendance, detailed in the CET Vietnam Attendance Policy.
- Thorough preparation for each class session by reading all assigned texts and revisiting previous course notes and discussion.
- Active participation in all course activities, including in-class discussions and field trips.
- Full completion of course assignments, which include:
 - **3 essays** (1 for each section). The essays are graded based on how thoroughly the responses address the essay prompt. Content must be concise, coherent, and rely primarily on assigned readings.
 - **1 final project** that demonstrates a deep understanding of a Vietnam-specific research topic within the field of diaspora studies. Students discuss the focus of their final project early on in the semester with the primary faculty member teaching the course. The project must involve student engagement with local communities, businesses, organizations, and individuals relevant to the major themes covered in the course. Students submit a written report of 8 pages and present their research project during the final class meeting.

Methods of Evaluation

The final grade is determined as follows:

20%	Participation
30%	Essay Assignments
50%	Final paper and presentation

Required texts

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1. Banerjee, Sukanya, Aims McGuinness, and Steven C. McKay, eds (2012) *New Route for Diaspora Studies*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
2. Baubock, Rainer & Thomas Faist, eds. (2000) *Diaspora and Transnationalism: Concepts, Theories and Methods*, IMISCOE Research, Amsterdam University Press.
3. Bloom, Harold (2009) *Asian American Writers*, New Heaven: Yale University Press.
4. Braziel, Jana Evans and Anita Mannur, eds. (2003) *Theorizing Diaspora: A Reader*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
5. Lee, Rachel C. (1999) *The Americas of Asian American Literature: Gendered Fictions of Nation and Transnation*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
6. Oliver-Rotger, Maria Antonia, ed. (2014) *Identity, Diaspora and Return in American Literature*, New York: Routledge.
7. Shuval, Judith T. (2000) "Diaspora Migration: Definitional Ambiguities and a Theoretical Paradigm," *International Migration*, 38:5, 41-57.
8. Shackleton, Mark, ed. (2008) *Diasporic Literature and Theory - Where Now?* New Castle: Cambridge Scholar Publishing.
9. Trinh, Minh Ha T. (2011) *Elsewhere, Within Here: Immigration, Refugeeism and the Boundary Event*, New York: Routledge.
10. Cohen, Robin (2008) *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*, London: Routledge.
11. Sheffer, Gabriel (2003) *Diaspora Politics: At Home Abroad*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
12. Butler, Kim D. (2001) "Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse," *Diaspora*, 10:2, 189– 219.
13. Ragazzi, Francesco (2012) "Diaspora: The Politics of Its Meanings," *International Political Sociology*, 6:1, 107–111.
14. Carment, David and Ariane Sadjed (2017) *Diaspora as Cultures of Cooperation: Global and Local Perspectives*, Gewerbestrasse: Palgrave.
15. Varadarajan, Latha (2010) *The Domestic Abroad: Diasporas in International Relations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
16. Laguerre, Michel S. (2006) *Diaspora, Politics, and Globalization*, New York: Palgrave.
17. Shain, Yossi (2007) *Kinship and Diasporas in International Affairs*, University of Michigan Press.

Outline of Course Content

Week 1

Origins and evolution of the concept of the *diaspora*, from ancient to contemporary definitions

The origins of diaspora community-building, how the concept is applied to different groups and changes its meanings over time, its strengths and limitations as an explanatory device

Week 2

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The politics of Diasporas: nationalism and connections

The social, cultural and political relations of the diaspora with homeland and host-land politics

Week 3

Diasporas and International Relations Theory

Diasporas as “peace makers” and “peace wreckers”; the diaspora as an actor in international politics

Week 4

Vietnamese diaspora communities in the world

Vietnamese government’s policy towards Vietnamese diaspora; diasporic politics towards home country of Vietnamese communities in the US and Australia

Week 5

Migration types and how migration patterns have shaped Vietnam

Main points of international and internal migration in the world; tendencies and changes of different migration flows in Vietnam over time

Week 6

Social determinants of moving in domestic and international migration flows in Vietnam.

Theoretical framework for moving determinants from macro to micro level and empirical practices through the case of migration in Vietnam

Week 7

Migrants’ adaptation and their social consequences in Vietnam

Lived experiences of Vietnamese Migrants from internal to external migration, the factors influencing these practices; social implications for the sending and receiving places

Week 8

Post-Renovation Diaspora Return in Vietnam

The politics of return, motivations, homecoming stories, reconciliation, contesting memories

Week 9

Political and Economic Contributions of Returnees

The role of the Vietnamese diaspora in trade and investment patterns; Viet Kieu-owned businesses and shaping Vietnam’s cities

Week 10

Vietnamese Diaspora: Art and Literature

Race and sex, issues of gender and LGBT in Vietnamese immigrant literature

Week 11

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Chinese Vietnamese writers: Conflict and Agreement

The case of Ly Lan – a Vietnamese Chinese writer; Tensions in China-Vietnam relations, depicted through literature and art

Week 12

Films by overseas Vietnamese directors

The role of the Viet Kieu in film-making and taste-making in Vietnamese pop culture