

2024 U.S. ELECTIONS CURRICULUM – RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF REFUGEES, MIGRANTS, AND ASYLUM SEEKERS UNIT

GRADES:

6-12, University

FACILITATOR NOTE(S):

- Human Rights & The US Elections 101 should be completed before moving on to any activities in this unit.
- Facilitators have the freedom to complete the entire unit or complete specific activities from this unit, depending on how much time is allotted.

MATERIALS:

- Slide Deck
- Slide Deck Lecture Notes
- Immigration Stories
- Anchor Chart Paper
- Markers
- Fact v. Myth Statements
- Media Images
- Anti-Immigration Case Studies

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

- What is a refugee, migrant, and asylum seeker?
- What are the social, political, & economic factors of migration?
- How has migration to the US evolved since the 15th century until today?
- What US policies play a role in the destabilization of other countries and contribute to migration at the southern border?
- What are the US laws/policies that criminalize refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers?
- What are the US obligations to protect, respect, and fulfill the human rights of migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees mandated by international human rights law?
- How can I use what I know about the rights of refugees and migrants during this election cycle?

COMMUNITY NORMS:

- **One mic, one voice:** One person speaks at a time.
- **“Ouch:”** Should a participant feel offended or upset by a comment made during community discussion, that participant can call “ouch” and then educate the rest of the group as to why the comment was offensive/hurtful. This can lead to deeper discussions and strengthen understanding about people’s specific lived experiences.
- **Embrace discomfort:** Get comfortable with being uncomfortable. Growth hurts but the expansion is worth it!

RECOMMENDED SEQUENCE FOR THIS LESSON:

Begin with introduction to the unit, review Community Norms, Essential Questions, and AIUSA Elections Platform.

WARM UP: REFLECTION PROMPT (15-20 MINUTES)

- Participants break into small groups (4-5) and read an immigration story
- Participants discuss the following:
 - What feelings, sensations, thoughts, lived experiences, etc. came up for you as you read your immigration story?
 - In what ways did this immigration story humanize the person behind it?
 - What factors do you think a person must consider before deciding to immigrate to another country?
 - What challenges do you think a person faces throughout their immigration journey?
 - What do you think is the current social and political landscape when it comes to immigration in the US?
 - Suggestion: Facilitator can call whole group back together and write participants’ responses to debrief questions on anchor chart paper, chalk board, dry erase board, etc. for visual aid

LECTURE

- Detailed lecture notes are linked above under “Materials”
- Facilitators have the freedom to break up lectures as they see fit. For example, the Facilitator can choose to teach a couple of slides each day before breaking participants up into their activities.
- Flipped Classroom: Assign specific slides and lecture notes to participants
 - Participants should review the slides before coming to this session
 - Participants should define unfamiliar vocabulary and come up with 2-3 questions and talking points to discuss with peers
 - Facilitator may break participants up into pairs to discuss what they learned from the slides and their questions/talking points as a Warmup
- Evolution of Immigration in the US video
 - Suggestion: Watch the video as a whole group and then break participants into pairs to discuss

ACTIVITY(S):

Choose 1 activity to complete immediately after the Warmup. You may complete additional activities in this unit during a separate session.

1. Fact v. Myth (45 minutes)

- Participants break into small groups
- Each group is given a worksheet with statements
- Participants discuss and decide whether each statement is a fact or a myth
- Facilitator reveals which statements are facts and which are myths
- Participants may create new groups and discuss the following:
 - Where did you receive messages from about immigrants, refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers? (home, school, religious institutions, media, friends)
 - Which statements resonated with you the most during this activity?
 - How has this activity expanded your understanding of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers?
 - How can what you learned in today's activity support you in this election cycle?

2. Media & the Criminalization of Migration in the US (60-80 minutes)

- Participants break into small groups
- Each group explores the media platforms Reuters, CNN, and Fox
- Each group chooses 2-3 news articles and/or news videos about refugees, migrants, & asylum seekers and completes the Media & Migration Comparative Analysis.

• Community Discussion:

- What feelings, sensations, lived experiences, thoughts, etc. came up for you as you analyzed the media materials?
- How do you define media bias, and what role does it play in shaping public perception when it comes to refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers?
- How were migrants represented in each media source? Whose voices are being represented and what voices are missing? What type of language is used to describe refugees, migrants, asylum seekers and the southern border?
- Why is it important for individuals to consume news from a variety of sources?
- Facilitators may bring the community together to share some of their thoughts on the discussion questions.
- Facilitator provides list of research-based news sources. Here are some examples: *The Associated Press*, *NPR News*, *PBS NewsHour*, *Reuters*, *NewsNation*
- Facilitator provides “fact checking” sources such as *factcheck.org*, *Reuters Fact Check*
- Each group completes the Anti-Immigration Laws & Policies research.
- Community Debrief:
 - What thoughts, feelings, sensations, etc came up for you as you researched each law/policy?
 - What surprised you about the laws/policies that you researched during this activity?
 - What is problematic about creating laws and policies that criminalize an entire community of people?

3. Migration & Anti-Blackness in the US (60-80 minutes)

• Part I

- Participants break into pairs or small groups (2-4) and are assigned a chapter from the AIUSA report **They Do Not Treat Us Like People**
- Flipped Classroom Option: Assign chapters to pairs/groups and have them read & take notes before coming to session
 - All pairs/groups read pages 4-7 of the report (Executive Summary)
 - **Pair/Group 1:** Methodology & Introduction
 - **Pair/Group 2:** Systemic Racism Against People of African Descent
 - **Pair/Group 3:** Mass Expulsion of Haitians in Violation of International Law (pg. 16-27)
 - **Pair/Group 4:** Mass Expulsion of Haitians in Violation of International Law (pg. 28-33)
 - **Pair/Group 5:** Mass Expulsion of Haitians in Violation of International Law (pg. 34-41)
 - **Pair/Group 6:** Torture & Other Ill-Treatment of Haitian Asylum Seekers by the US Authorities (pg. 42-51)
 - **Pair/Group 7:** Torture & Other Ill-Treatment of Haitian Asylum Seekers by the US Authorities (pg. 52-58)
 - **Pair/Group 8:** Torture & Other Ill-Treatment of Haitian Asylum Seekers by the US Authorities (pg. 59-Conclusion)
- Participants engage in discussion about what they read and create anchor chart poster to teach the following:
 - What did you learn from the chapter(s) of this report?

- What critical pieces of information can you pull from your assigned chapter(s) that highlight the unique experiences of Black & Brown people seeking asylum at the southern border?
- How can you use what you learned from your assigned chapter(s) as you prepare for the upcoming election cycle?

• Part II

- Participants break into groups (5-6) and analyze AIUSA's recommendations for addressing discrimination against Haitian asylum seekers at the southern border (*This part of the activity can be completed on a different day to allow participants time to process information*)
 - **Group 1:** TO THE STATES ACROSS THE AMERICAS
 - **Group 2:** TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
 - **Group 3:** TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS
 - **Group 4:** ACCESS TO ASYLUM AND NON-REFOULEMENT
 - **Group 5:** TO ADDRESS RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND RACE-BASED TORTURE AND OTHER ILL-TREATMENT
 - **Group 6:** DETENTION OF MIGRANTS AND ASYLUM SEEKERS
- Groups discuss the following:
 - Summary of the recommendations outlined in the report
 - Feelings, oppositions, support, suggestions, etc. about the recommendations

4. La Cosecha/The Harvest Film Screen

- Watch the film [La Cosecha/The Harvest](#)
- Suggestions for watching:
 - Watch film in class together (if there is time left in class after film, students complete reflection questions independently; if no time left in class after film, students complete reflection questions at home and come back to class prepared to discuss in pairs or small groups)
 - Students watch the film outside of class, complete the reflection questions and come back to class prepared to discuss in pairs or small groups
- Community Discussion:
 - How does the film impact your understanding of the stratification (economic, racial, citizenship) system in the US?
 - In what ways does youth migrant work contribute to economic inequality in the US?
 - In what ways do you empathize with the migrant workers documented in the film?
 - What do you think can be done to stop the demand for youth migrant workers?
 - What do you think can be done to humanize migrant workers in the US?

WRAP UP (5-10 MINUTES)

- Something that really resonated with me from today's lesson is...
- Something from today's lesson that I will take back to my community is...
- It is critical to understand the social & political landscape regarding migrants and asylum seekers before voting this election cycle because...

ADDITIONAL READINGS, RESOURCES, AND ACTIVITIES FOR DEEPENING UNDERSTANDING:

- [CBP One: A Blessing or a Trap](#)
- [Immigrants and Violent Crime](#)
- [Immigrants and Violent Crime NPR](#)
- [Asylum Backlog in the US](#)
- [Recent Migration to the US from Central America Congressional Report](#)