

‘Nordic immigration debates from a comparative perspective’

Course content

In this course, we will critically investigate how we, as individuals, communities and societies, talk about immigration. In doing so, we will also go beyond the level of debates and discourse, and address the important ways in which *what* we talk about, and *how* we talk about it, shapes our social reality.

We will begin with well-known theoretical perspectives on the public sphere, media framing and agenda setting, and partisanship and political discourse, which will provide an overview of the dominant ways in which media scholarship views and understands immigration debates.

From there, we will explore the limitations of these approaches, and explore immigration debates from the ground up. In doing so, we will pay particular attention to perspectives that are excluded from dominant debates, such as the lived experiences of migrants living in contemporary Western societies. Throughout the course, these more theoretical discussions will be interwoven with discussions of different methodological approaches, when addressing contentious topics such as immigration in contemporary society. We will also critically reflect on the ethical and normative position of the researcher in studying issues related to racism, discrimination and ‘othering’ practices.

Each week, students will engage with a range of provided online materials, after which they will work on tutorial tasks in their online teams. This course requires students to critically engage with current issues, and to actively participate in group and debate activities. Throughout the course, students will work on a comparative research project, in which they will get first-hand experience about the implications of particular methodological choices and their own positioning as a media researcher.

Learning outcomes

After following this course, students will be able to:

- Understand and critically reflect on theoretical perspectives on immigration debates in democratic societies, including the public sphere, media framing and agenda setting, and political discourse, as well as social discourses, narratives and storytelling.
- Critically compare, negotiate and reflect on methodological choices in studying issues related to immigration, paying attention to issues of ethics, normativity and relative vulnerability of groups under study.
- Understand and reflect on the use of comparative research in understanding immigration debates in different contemporary contexts.
- Apply theoretical and methodological tools presented in the course in the execution of a comparative research project on immigration debates in contemporary society.

Teaching

This course is taught asynchronously and digitally, in weekly three-hour online tutorial sessions. Students are expected to work on their tutorial tasks in teams during the scheduled tutorial session, in which they can expect immediate answers from their tutorial teacher.

Prior to this tutorial session, students are expected to engage with the provided online materials and required readings of each week. Students will complete one or two weekly tasks in their tutorial groups. The completion of these tasks before the weekly deadline will serve as weekly attendance to the course. Remember to put the names of all participating group members on your weekly tasks.

No name = no attendance.

These tasks are not graded and do not have to be of 'perfect' quality, but must be completed before the set deadline in order for students to be listed as 'attending' that week. Examples of attendance tasks are making a poster presentation, or preparing and recording a short debate. Each tutorial task will be accompanied with clear online instructions, and students can contact their lecturer for clarification during set tutorial hours. In addition to these tutorial activities, students are expected to participate actively throughout the course by working on their research project, both independently and in groups.

This course has three mandatory activities:

- A 'pass' for the individual research proposal (week 3)
- A 'pass' for the group presentation (week 6)
- Attendance of 6 out of the first 8 weeks of the course (which, as described above, entails completion of all weekly tutorial tasks before the deadline)

Examination

Final group paper (max. 4000 words excl. references)

Final examination of this course is in the form of a group research proposal focusing on one chosen aspect of immigration debates, hereby comparing one Nordic country with a country outside of the Nordic context. The final assignment should include a clear research question, comparative literature review and proposed methodological approach, reflections on research ethics and the positioning of the researcher, and a student reflection on their teamwork and planning of the work.

Criteria	Points
Focus and RQ <i>Does the paper have a clear RQ?</i> <i>Does the paper have a clear focus?</i>	10 points
Theoretical approach <i>Does the paper clearly present and explain a main theoretical focus?</i>	20 points
Critical engagement with literature <i>Does the paper critically evaluate and contrast the academic literature?</i> <i>Does the paper discuss at least 10 research articles (max. 3 from the assigned literature)?</i>	20 points
Organization <i>Is the paper clearly structured and logically organized (clear introduction, sub-headings and sections of paper)?</i>	20 points
Language and style <i>Is the paper written in correct academic English?</i>	10 points
Referencing <i>Does the paper contain correct and consistent academic referencing?</i>	10 points
Group work <i>Reflection and discussion of the process of group work, detailing the different roles that students took in the project and how they organized working on the final paper.</i>	10 points
Total	100 points

Conversion from points to grade

Points	Grade
91-100	A
81-90	B
71-80	C
61-70	D
51-60	E
50 or below	F

Course structure

Week 1: The public sphere and free speech

Key concepts

- The public sphere (as a space for deliberative politics, and as a broader cultural and social space of boundary creation and contestation)
- (Socio-political perspectives on) free speech and freedom of expression
- Balancing the social values of free speech and non-discriminatory public debate
- Social and symbolic boundaries
- Boundary formation in the public sphere

To get an attendance for this week, you need to:

- Form groups on Canvas (deadline: Wednesday 23rd of September, 18:00)
- Draw up a team 'contract' (deadline: Wednesday 23rd of September, 18:00)

This first week, we will have a physical kick-off session in which we will get to know one another, and we will go over the structure of the course. During the tutorial session, students will form teams and draw up a team contract to organize their teamwork for the duration of the course.

Finally, students will be able to read about the structure of a research proposal, in preparation of their individual assignment due in week 3.

Required literature

- Enjolras, B. (2017). Boundary work in the public sphere. In Midtbøen, A. H., Steen-Johnsen, K. & Thorbjørnsrud, K. (Eds.), *Boundary Struggles Contestations of Free Speech in the Norwegian Public Sphere*, pp. 291-320. Cappelen Dam: open access.
- Midtbøen, A. H., Steen-Johnsen, K. & Thorbjørnsrud, K. (2017). Boundary-making in the public sphere: Contestations of free speech. In Midtbøen, A. H., Steen-Johnsen, K. & Thorbjørnsrud, K. (Eds.), *Boundary Struggles Contestations of Free Speech in the Norwegian Public Sphere*, pp. 13-43. Cappelen Dam: open access.

Week 2: Immigration debates and the mainstream media

Key concepts

Media gatekeeping
Agenda setting
Recent developments related to editorial control and digital technology
Framing
Issue-specific versus generic media frames
Framing effects

Tutorial work

To get an attendance for this week, you need to:

- Submit a digital poster to Canvas that discusses your framing analysis results (deadline: Wednesday 30th of September, 18:00)

In this week's tutorial, students will conduct a mini framing study on one chosen Norwegian article on immigration. Students will share their findings with the rest of the class via a digital poster.

Required literature

Bos, L., Lecheler, S., Mewafi, M. & Vliegenthart, R. (2016). It's the frame that matters: Immigrant integration and media framing effects in the Netherlands. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 55, 97–108

Esses, V. M., Medianu, S. & Lawson, A. S. (2013). Uncertainty, Threat, and the Role of the Media in Promoting the Dehumanization of Immigrants and Refugees. *Journal of Social Issues*, 69(3), 518—536

Ihlebak, K. A. & Thorseth, I. E. (2017). Editorial perspectives on the public debate on immigration. In Midtbøen, A. H., Steen-Johnsen, K. & Thorbjørnsrud, K. (Eds.), *Boundary Struggles Contestations of Free Speech in the Norwegian Public Sphere*, pp. 139-163. Cappelen Dam: open access.

Week 3: Political discourse and the immigration debate

Key concepts

Institutional and discursive political opportunity structures
The populist radical right and their role in immigration debates in Western Europe
Internal and external barriers to free speech in the political sphere

Tutorial work

To get an attendance for this week, you need to:

- Vote for your team's favourite digital poster submitted last week and comment on at least one of the posters. (deadline: Wednesday 7th of October, 18:00)
- In your tutorial group, design a multiple choice quiz of 10 questions of the course contents of week 1-3 and submit on Canvas (deadline: Wednesday 7th of October, 18:00)

MANDATORY ACTIVITY: DEADLINE INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROPOSAL– FRIDAY 9th OCTOBER; 18:00

Required literature

Midtbøen, A. H. (2017). Boundaries of free speech in the political field. In Midtbøen, A. H., Steen-Johnsen, K. & Thorbjørnsrud, K. (Eds.), *Boundary Struggles Contestations of Free Speech in the Norwegian Public Sphere*, pp. 195-227. Cappelen Dam: open access.

Koopmans, R. & Muis, J. (2009). The rise of right-wing populist Pim Fortuyn in the Netherlands: A discursive opportunity approach. *European Journal of Political Research*, 48, 642–664

Week 4: Immigration, discourse and representation

Key concepts

Discourse Analysis
Discursive shifts
Politicization
Mediatization
Media representation
Ascribed identities/representation

Tutorial work

To get an attendance for this week, you need to:

- Answer the multiple choice quiz that one of the other groups has made for you (deadline: Wednesday 14th of October, 18:00)
- Complete your team assignment about the meaning of words in relation to the refugee crisis (deadline: Wednesday 14th of October, 18:00)

This week, students will answer the quiz that another group has made for them, and complete the assignment on the meaning of words in relation to the refugee crisis.

Required literature

Krzyżanowski, M., Triandafyllidou, A. & Wodak, R. (2018) The Mediatization and the Politicization of the “Refugee Crisis” in Europe. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 16(1–2), 1–14

Nadim, M. (2017). Ascribed representation: Ethnic and religious minorities in the mediated public Sphere. In Midtbøen, A. H., Steen-Johnsen, K. & Thorbjørnsrud, K. (Eds.), *Boundary Struggles Contestations of Free Speech in the Norwegian Public Sphere*, pp. 229-256. Cappelen Dam: open access

Rheindorf, M. & Wodak, R. (2018). Borders, Fences, and Limits—Protecting Austria From Refugees: Metadiscursive Negotiation of Meaning in the Current Refugee Crisis. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 16(1–2), 15–38

Week 5: Lived experiences and everyday racism

Key concepts

Standpoint
Social identity theory
Everyday racism
Intersectionality

Tutorial work

To get an attendance for this week, you need to:

- Submit your group's chosen RQ, country comparison and theoretical/methodological lens for their final assignment (300-500 words, deadline: Wednesday 21st of October, 18:00)

This week, students will begin to work on their final group assignment, and submit a very rough draft of their assignment outline. Finally, students are given instructions for their group presentation that is due in week 6.

Required literature

Benson, M. & Lewis, C. (2019). Brexit, British People of Colour in the EU-27 and everyday racism in Britain and Europe. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 42(13), 2211–2228.

Love, C. D., Booyesen, L. A. E. & Essed, P. (2015). An exploration of the intersection of race, gender and generation in African American women doing social justice work. *Gender Work Organ.*, 25, 475–494.

Week 6: Group presentations

<i>Key concepts - none</i>
<i>Tutorial work</i> To get an attendance for this week, you need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Watch all other group presentations and provide feedback for each other group (deadline: Wednesday 28th of October, 18:00) <i>MANDATORY ACTIVITY: TEAM PRESENTATION (DEADLINE: MONDAY 26th OF OCTOBER, 12:00)</i>
<i>Required literature - none</i>

Week 7: Discursive inclusion and exclusion

<i>Key concepts</i> Discursive exclusion Spiral of silence (Self-)censorship Polarization and echo chambers Cultural essentialism and cultural fundamentalism
<i>Tutorial work</i> To get an attendance for this week, you need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare a 10-minute debate, in which your team discusses the democratic benefits and drawbacks of an 'unlimited' immigration debate in Norwegian society, hereby weighing the rights and freedoms of different social groups. You are strongly encouraged to use the required readings from week 1 and week 7. Record your debate in an 8-12 minute video, and upload it to Canvas (deadline: Wednesday November 4th, 18:00) This week, students will prepare a short debate on the benefits and drawbacks of an 'unlimited' immigration debate in Norwegian society, which they will upload on Canvas. Finally, students are expected to use any additional time to work on their final group assignment, based on the peer review they received in the previous week.
<i>Required literature</i> Siebers, H. & Dennissen, M. H. J. (2015). Is it cultural racism? Discursive exclusion and oppression of migrants in the Netherlands. <i>Current Sociology</i> , 63(3), 470–489 Thorbjørnsrud, K. (2017). Immigration critique: Moral boundaries, silence and polarization. In Midtbøen, A. H., Steen-Johnsen, K. & Thorbjørnsrud, K. (Eds.), <i>Boundary Struggles Contestations of Free Speech in the Norwegian Public Sphere</i> , pp. 257-290. Cappelen Dam: open access.

Week 8: Ethics, normativity and positionality

<p><i>Key concepts</i></p> <p>Ethics of care Research ethics in the online sphere: responsibilities and opportunities</p>
<p><i>Tutorial work</i></p> <p>To get an attendance for this week, you need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a mind map of different ethical considerations they foresee in relation to their team project. This will be a handy tool to help you write the ethics section of your final paper! (deadline: Wednesday November 11th, 18:00) <p>This week, students will create a mind map of different ethical issues they foresee in relation to their team project. The remainder of the tutorial session is reserved for teamwork on the final assignment, for which the first draft is due at the start of week 9.</p>
<p><i>Required literature</i></p> <p>Ess. C. (2015). New selves, new research ethics? In Fosshiem, H. & Ingierd, H. (Eds.), <i>Internet research ethics</i>, 48-76. Cappelen Damm: open access.</p> <p>Hossain, M. D. & Aucoin, J. (2018) The Ethics of Care as a Universal Framework for Global Journalism. <i>Journal of Media Ethics</i>, 33(4), 198-211.</p>

Week 9: office hours

<p><i>Key concepts - none</i></p>
<p><i>Tutorial work</i></p> <p>This week, there is no tutorial session. However, students are required to submit a draft of their group assignment (1000-2000 words) at the start of the week, and will be allocated a time slot for a group feedback session with their lecturer, in which they can discuss any issues or plans they have for their final group paper.</p>
<p><i>Required literature - none</i></p>