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Critical Thinking, Perspective-Taking, and Cultural Humility in Global Refugee Health Studies: A Peer Review of Teaching Benchmark Portfolio

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Critical Thinking, Perspective-Taking, and Cultural Humility
in Global Refugee Health Studies:
A Peer Review of Teaching Benchmark Portfolio

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Spring 2020

Abstract

This portfolio examines the third iteration of a course I developed for the Department of Child, Youth and Family Studies: CYAF 493 – Global Case Studies in Refugee Health and Wellbeing. The primary goal of this course is for students to think critically about the social and structural determinants of refugee health and wellbeing. I have also integrated three core course values to guide instruction: critical thinking, perspective-taking, and cultural humility. Student learning and engagement was analyzed through four areas: (1) a baseline assessment of students' perceptions of refugees, (2) weekly homework reflections, (3) a book review assignment, and (4) mid-semester course evaluations. The baseline assessment, homework reflections, and book review were analyzed using thematic analysis. The mid-semester course evaluations were used to identify students' perceptions of what teaching strategies and course materials were most useful to them. Results indicated that weekly reflections and the book review assignment were instrumental in improving students' learning. I plan to re-align the guiding values and learning objectives, remove one of the major assignments, and center instruction around the core values to foster student learning.

Key words: child, youth and family studies; public health; global health; global studies; social determinants of health (SDOH)

Table of Contents

OBJECTIVES OF THE PEER REVIEW COURSE PORTFOLIO	4
DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE	5
COURSE GOALS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES.....	6
COURSE HISTORY AND CONTEXT	6
ENROLLMENT AND DEMOGRAPHICS	7
TEACHING METHODS, COURSE MATERIALS, AND CLASS ACTIVITIES	8
COURSE DESIGN.....	8
TEACHING METHODS AND RATIONALE.....	8
IN-CLASS INSTRUCTION METHODS.....	9
COURSE ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE OF CLASS.....	10
CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS YEARS: PLANNED AND UNPLANNED.....	13
PLANNED CHANGES TO IMPROVE COURSE DELIVERY	13
UNPLANNED CHANGES DUE TO CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)	13
ANALYSIS OF STUDENT LEARNING	14
STUDENTS’ BASELINE PERCEPTIONS OF REFUGEES	14
LO #2. DESCRIBE THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS THAT AFFECT REFUGEE HEALTH	16
<i>In-Class Activities and Homework Reflections</i>	16
<i>Book Review</i>	19
<i>Core Value: Critical Thinking</i>	20
<i>Core Values: Perspective-Taking and Cultural Humility</i>	21
SUMMARY AND OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF PORTFOLIO PROCESS	23
REFERENCES.....	24
APPENDICES	25
APPENDIX I: SYLLABUS	25
APPENDIX II: REFUGEE FAMILY CASE MANAGEMENT PLAN – EXAMPLE FAMILY PROFILE.....	35

Objectives of the Peer Review Course Portfolio

This portfolio reflects the scholarship of teaching related to CYAF 493: Global Case Studies in Refugee Health and Wellbeing. I chose this course for the Peer Review of Teaching Portfolio because I believe CYAF 493 offers a unique opportunity to help students develop global citizenship and critical thinking skills around a timely topic. The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) recorded the largest number of displaced persons across the globe in 2018; thus far, the international response to refugees fleeing war and persecution has been ineffective. I am excited about the opportunity to work with younger generations to foster compassion for refugees, excitement about migration studies, and skills to work in collaboration with communities affected by forced migration.

Although critical thinking, perspective-taking, and cultural humility have been implicit values that guide my teaching, I had not previously examined what strategies and resources foster students' growth in these areas. Yet it is clear that these values are as critical as content expertise and technical skills when working with displaced persons and communities. For example, refugees are often portrayed as helpless victims in the media. Such accounts ignore evidence that refugees have the creativity and expertise to overcome adversity in ways that are culturally meaningful. I attempt to decenter dominant "white savior" discourses through highlighting the aforementioned values. To this end, my objectives for the Peer Review of Teaching Program course portfolio are threefold: (1) to document how students' respond to the values that guide the class, (2) to identify what teaching strategies challenged students to think critically, and (3) to determine what resources were most helpful in fostering students' understanding of and respect for diverse perspectives.

Description of the Course

Global Case Studies in Refugee Health and Wellbeing (CYAF 493) is an upper-level undergraduate course that introduces students to the study of forced migration—the movement of peoples affected by war, persecution, disasters, and development. The course is divided into three overarching sections: (1) Unit 1: Forced Migration and Refugees 101, (2) Unit 2: Refugee Health and Wellbeing in Local Contexts (Lincoln, Nebraska, and the U.S.), and (3) Unit 3: Refugee Health and Wellbeing in Global Contexts (various case studies).

- *Unit 1: Introduction to Forced Migration and Refugee Health* includes: (a) an overview of global migration, including historical and contemporary migration patterns, (b) key categories and definitions within the overarching umbrella of forced migration (e.g., refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons), (c) an overview of refugee status and resettlement, (d) an introduction to the social determinants of health (SDOH), and (e) an introduction to the values that guide the course.
- *Unit 2: Refugee Health and Wellbeing in Local Contexts* focuses on the following areas: (a) an in-depth lesson on the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program, (b) an overview of refugee resettlement in Nebraska, (c) an in-depth exploration of refugee organizations and services in the state, with an emphasis on Lincoln, (d) case studies of contemporary refugee and im/migration situations in the U.S. (e.g., detention of asylum seekers at the U.S.-Mexico border), and (e) ongoing application of the SDOH and engagement with core course values.
- *Unit 3: Refugee Health and Wellbeing in Global Contexts* includes: (a) a refresher on global migration, (b) an overview of international humanitarian assistance, (c) in-depth case studies of contemporary refugee situations (e.g., Rohingya refugees from Burma), and (d) ongoing application of the SDOH and engagement with core course values.

I had traditionally started the course with what is now *Unit 3: Refugee Health and Wellbeing in Global Contexts* since most refugees reside in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) (UNHCR, n.d.). However, it became clear during the firsts two iterations of this course that students were more engaged learning about refugees in Lincoln, NE because this presented more familiar information – places and organizations that students knew of because of time spent in Lincoln. For this iteration, I started with local case studies and contexts and moved outward. In order to highlight the complex relationships among migration, health, and wellbeing, materials for this course are drawn from multiple disciplines, including global public health, critical medical anthropology, family studies, medicine, political science, and migration studies.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

My overarching goals are simple. I want students to think critically about the complexities of forced migration, to engage in perspective taking and value diversity, and to *want* to learn as much about refugees as possible.

By the end of the course, I want students to meet the following learning objectives:

1. Recognize the diversity among and within im/migrant and refugee groups;
2. Describe the social determinants of health (SDOH) that affect refugee health and wellbeing at the individual, family / household, community, and population levels;
3. Identify refugee aid organizations and describe services provided to refugees in the U.S.;
4. Apply classroom skills to develop a strengths-based service plan for a (fictional) refugee family arriving in Lincoln, Nebraska;
5. Critically evaluate and synthesize information (e.g., scholarly articles, news stories, videos) pertaining to forced migration and refugees; and
6. Demonstrate understanding of migration, culture, and diversity through multiple perspectives and have respectful conversations across differences.

Course History and Context

I created CYAF 493 in Spring 2017 as an upper-level elective in the Department of Child, Youth and Family Studies. Spring 2020 was my third time teaching this class. Although most students are CYAF majors, the course is open to students in the College of Education and Human Sciences (CEHS) and across UNL. CYAF 493 also counts toward the CEHS International Studies Minor. I have been in touch with some students who have gone onto graduate studies and careers related to refugee health and social services after taking this course.

As this is a 400-level class, I want students to be able to think critically and respect diversity in meaningful ways. A possible threat to this is the recent politicization of refugees and im/migrants in the U.S. as well as across the globe. As such, it is critical to acknowledge the body of evidence that shows the deleterious effects of xenophobic policies, structural violence, institutionalized and interpersonal racism, and discrimination on refugees' health and wellbeing. Although I want students to actively seek out opportunities to work with refugee communities through internships or volunteerism, I know the importance of creating space to reflect on “[white] saviorism” and its harmful repercussions. A key takeaway from this course, I hope, is that refugees are not passive recipients of aid or charity, and instead are individuals and communities with agency who promote health, wellbeing, and resilience through active engagement in a complex web of networks.

Enrollment and Demographics

CYAF 493: Global Case Studies in Refugee Health and Wellbeing is a 2-hour and 50-minute course that meets weekly and has an enrollment cutoff of 30 students each Spring semester; it has always filled. The course has benefitted from enrollment of students representing different majors across campus.

Table 1:
Student Demographics, CYAF 493, Spring 2020

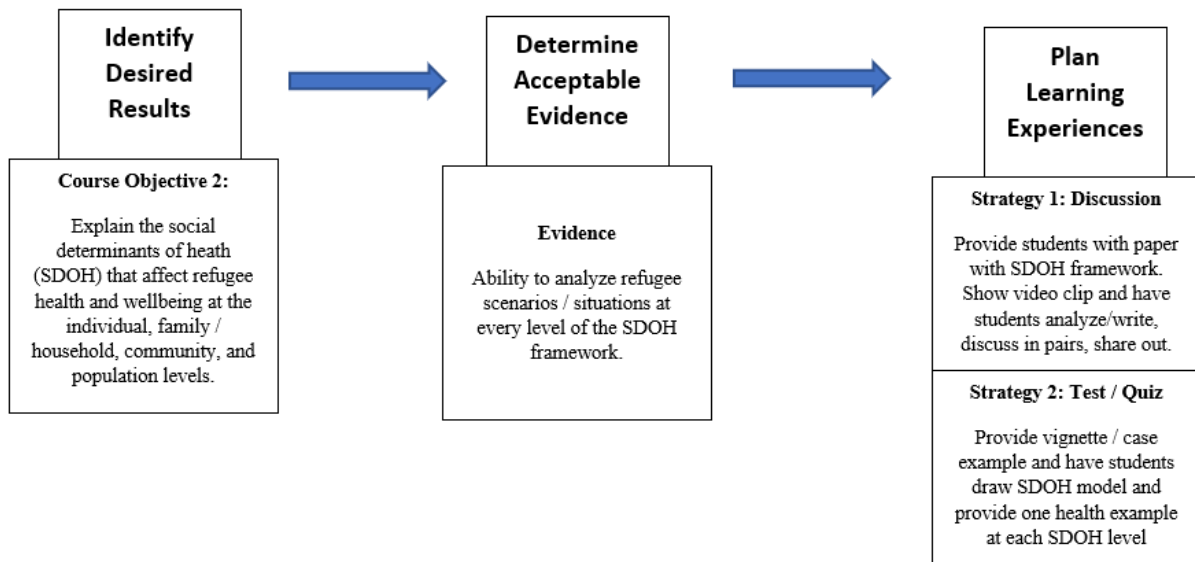
	<i>n</i>	<i>N</i>
<i>Sex/gender</i>		30
Female	28	
Male	2	
<i>Academic standing</i>		30
Sophomore	1	
Junior	12	
Senior	17	
Major area(s) of study		30
Child, Youth & Family Studies	21	
Psychology	7	
Undeclared	2	

Teaching Methods, Course Materials, and Class Activities

Course Design

I use a backward course design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005) paired with multiple teaching methods (e.g., lectures, case studies, applied projects, etc.) to ensure the centrality of course objectives throughout the semester as well as identify teaching strategies and activities to achieve these objectives.

Figure 1: Example of Backwards Course Design using CYAF 493



Teaching Methods and Rationale

As this is a 2 hour and 50-minute course for undergraduate students, I try to maintain the same structure each week for consistency and put the “agenda” on Canvas prior to our class meeting:

Table 2: Typical Class Structure for In-Person Course Meetings

Focus	Description and Teaching Strategies	Time (170 min.)
“Refugees in the News” (Large Group Discussion)	Discussion of current events pertaining to refugees. Students are asked to read the news as part of this class. I use “think / pair / share” to help foster discussion as well as ask prompts about health and wellbeing to tie these to course content.	15 minutes
Mini Lecture 1	Brief lecture providing an <i>overview</i> of the weekly topic.	20 minutes
Small Group Discussion	Students respond to questions / prompts in small group discussions and report main themes to larger class.	25 minutes
BREAK	BREAK	15 minutes
Mini Lecture 2	Brief lecture on a specific subset of the weekly topic	20 minutes
Application of Learning	Groups work together to address or problem-solve a challenge (e.g., students may be given a case file of a hypothetical family arriving to Lincoln, NE and are tasked with identifying services the family members will need). Class discussion after.	40 minutes
Mini Lecture 3: Wrap up	Brief lecture synthesizing major themes and take-home points	20 minutes
Reflection & Wrap-up	Independent journaling, sharing main themes, etc.	15 minutes

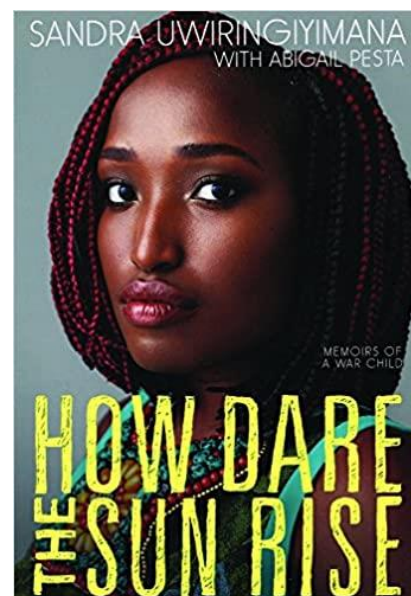
In-Class Instruction Methods

“Refugees in the news.” After greeting the class and reviewing course logistics (e.g., upcoming assignment deadlines), each class period begins with a “refugees in the news” segment. Students prepare for this as part of their weekly homework. The purpose of this segment is twofold: (1) to have students connect contemporary news to course content, and (2) to challenge students to think critically about how news stories portray refugees. To prepare students for this weekly discussion, one of the early in-class activities focuses on evaluating the credibility news sources and how language can be used to frame controversial or sensitive topics.

Mini-lectures. I prepare two to three mini-lectures, each about 15-20 minutes in length, for each weekly session. The first mini-lecture introduces broad concepts related to the weekly module. For example, I used the first mini-lecture of the class (week 2) to provide an overview of key terms related to forced migration (e.g., refugee, asylum seeker, internally displaced persons [IDPs]) and a brief history of international agreements to address refugees globally (e.g., the 1951 Refugee Convention). The second and third mini-lectures explore topics in greater depth and introduce new skills for working with refugee communities.

In-class activities. I use small groups and think-pair-share to enhance students’ comfort engaging in discussions around sensitive topics. Discussions generally focus on analyzing a case scenario (e.g., identifying social determinants of health after watching a brief video clip on urban refugees). Since many CYAF majors are attracted to careers in the human services, I also focus on skill-building in small groups. For example, I have had students connect course materials to action by creating hypothetical inclusive student lunch menus for Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) and orientations for newly arrived refugees in Lincoln.

Book club. One class session each year is dedicated to a book club. I divide students into small groups and bring snacks and sparkling juice to make this a fun activity. I prepare two discussion questions and students are responsible for preparing one to two questions each. The book club is meant to foster perspective-taking and cultural humility, two of the three core course values. In previous years, I let students choose from a short list of books; however, during Spring 2020 we all read the same book. This enabled us to start discussing early chapters in the weeks leading up to the book club, which more fully integrated the book club into the overall course. This year we read *How Dare the Sun Rise: Memoirs of a War Child*, a young adult nonfiction novel by Sandra Uwiringiyimana, an ethnic Banyamulenge refugee from the Democratic Republic of the Congo who survived the Gatumba refugee camp massacre and was eventually resettled in the U.S.

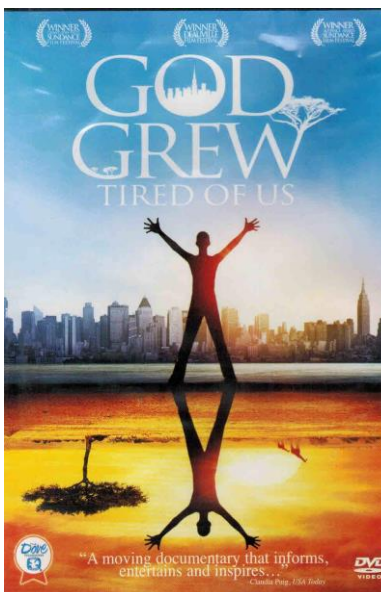


Guest speakers. Most students who take CYAF 493 have not knowingly interacted with individuals with refugee backgrounds. Each year I invite someone with a refugee background to speak to students. These guests are individuals who work at local organizations and agencies and are community leaders in Lincoln. I select guests with these backgrounds as they are accustomed to “representing” their communities by nature of their professional roles. (Although I remind students that no one person is responsible for representing a larger group and that individuals have different lived experiences based on a number of factors; this is a critical reminder as I want students to understand the diversity within and among refugee groups.) Students research the country of origin and refugee situation from which the speaker came and write questions for the speaker as part of the homework assignment. (I tell guest speakers they do not have to answer questions that may make them feel uncomfortable. I similarly instruct students that questions should be respectful and that our guests may not feel comfortable answering some questions.)

One-minute reflections. I use one-minute reflections (also “one-minute papers”) to collect real-time feedback on what materials are useful and which concepts are most challenging to grasp. I also occasionally use this tool as a way to have students self-reflect when we have covered a controversial or emotional topic during the class session.

Class participation. Although my hope is for students to be active participants in the course, I understand that students have varying degrees of comfort speaking in front of an instructor or peers. Class participation is essential to doing well; however, I consider active listening, working in small groups, completing one-minute reflections, etc. to be engaged participation.

Course Activities Outside of Class



Learning materials. I want students to focus on their emotions and responses to the class materials. I also encourage them to synthesize and evaluate diverse information from different sources. Therefore, I assigned a light mix of readings and audiovisual resources. Each week students had one article from a scholarly journal, one essay or article from a news journal or magazine, and one documentary or podcast. (The image to the left is the 2005 documentary *God Grew Tired of Us*, which follows three unaccompanied Sudanese refugee youth from Kenya’s Kakuma refugee camp to the U.S.)

Reflections. Students wrote brief reflections (approximately 350 words) in response to a weekly prompt. These reflections required students to integrate the weekly learning materials

and formed the bases for in-class discussions. In addition to assessing the degree to which students were grasping foundational concepts, I also used weekly reflections to encourage students to think about their own identities, assess their immediate environments in Lincoln and how these social-ecological landscapes might shape refugee health, and consider different perspectives. For example, one of the weekly reflections was a community needs and assets assessment. I provided students with a windshield survey reading and assessment tool (Community Toolbox, n.d.) and asked them to assess resources in their neighborhood that would benefit newly arrived refugees. This was a visual project and students took photographs of resources. A different reflection required students to take a photograph of their favorite meal and write an essay about why it was their favorite food. As I wanted students to think about the sociocultural aspects of food and nutrition, this was scaffolding using prompts to have students think about whether their favorite food was part of their cultural heritage, if it is connected to memories with family and friends, etc. I then asked students to consider not having access to this food and instead be forced to eat meals provided by humanitarian assistance organizations that focus on calorific needs and not the cultural salience of food.

Letter to the editor. Evidence-informed communication that reaches diverse (non-academic) audiences is an important skill for students who wish to enter the health and human services sectors. To help students build these skills, I required them to identify a recent news article from a credible source and write a 250-word letter to the editor. Students were instructed to draw on evidence to respond to the article using persuasive writing. Although not required, I encouraged students to consider submitting their letters to the editor.

Book review. The book review accompanied the aforementioned book club. Students wrote a brief critique of *How Dare the Sun Rise* (Uwiringiyimana & Pesta, 2017). Similar to the book club, I created the book review assignment to enhance students' perspective-taking and cultural humility. However, the book review also provided an opportunity to assess students' critical thinking, specifically how they synthesized and integrated concepts from the broader course into the book review.

Individual final assignment. I want students to enjoy assignments and to have an opportunity to showcase their creativity. I provide four options for the final individual project; however, students were also encouraged to pitch ideas if the options were too constraining. Students submitted their plan for the final by the 8th week of class, ensuring they had thought about the time required to complete a quality project before the final weeks or days of the semester. The final project options follow: **Option One:** *Everything BUT the Research Paper*. For this assignment, students conducted research for a term paper on a specific area of interest and submitted the following: (a) topic and research question(s), (b) an opening paragraph and thesis statement, (c) an outline of the paper, and (d) an annotated bibliography of 20 references (at least 15 must be scholarly journal articles). **Option Two:** *Book or Film Critique*, which follows the format of the above book review but required students to select a novel or film

outside of the course materials. **Option Three:** *Conference Presentation*, in which students submitted a 10 to 15-minute narrated PowerPoint presentation on a topic of interest. **Option Four:** *Program Development*. For this option, students designed a project or program to address a specific issue affecting a specific refugee group (e.g., post-traumatic stress among Yazidi refugees in Lincoln, Congolese women's access to reproductive health services in Kenya's Kakuma refugee camp, health literacy for refugees who arrived to Lincoln in the past three years, etc.). I required specificity because (a) refugee groups have unique histories and cultures and these contexts matter in program design, and (b) it narrowed topics to help students conduct more focused research. Students who selected Option Four submitted an introduction to the population and health issue or topic, a description of the program intended to improve the health and wellbeing of the population, a description of program activities and expected outcomes, and a program brochure designed to share information about the program to recruit clients.

Refugee family case management plan ([Appendix II](#)). The case management plan was a culminating, applied group project (5 students per group). Because I wanted students to be excited about this project, I asked them to list and submit two to three countries or refugee groups of interest and created groups based on these rankings. Students received case management files for fictional refugee families scheduled to arrive in Lincoln, Nebraska. Files were based off of information refugee resettlement agencies receive prior to families arriving in the U.S. and included sociodemographic information for each family member, any special needs family members may have, and some additional context for some family members that highlighted family members' skills, strengths, and hopes.

Changes from Previous Years: Planned and Unplanned

Planned Changes to Improve Course Delivery

Based on previous course iterations, I had planned several changes or additions to the syllabus and instructional methods to improve course delivery. First, I flipped the syllabus from global-local or local-global, focusing first on refugee resettlement in Lincoln, Nebraska. In previous iterations of the class, I started by focusing on refugee situations in low- and middle-income countries to reflect the reality of where most refugees reside. However, students were typically more engaged with lessons on U.S. resettlement because they presented contexts with which they were already familiar. Second, Spring 2020 was the first semester I required students to write weekly reflections on the course materials. I had several reasons for adding this assignment, including ensuring students engaged with the course materials to facilitate their learning and enhance course discussions, to provide an opportunity for students to reflect on their emotional responses to materials in a confidential space, and to evaluate student growth related to the three core course values: critical thinking, perspective-taking, and cultural humility. Finally, I created a new group project, the *refugee family case management plan*. I wanted a project that enabled me to assess cross-cutting learning objectives while providing an opportunity for students to engage in applied learning.

Unplanned Changes Due to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) upended the spring 2020 semester. Across the university, we moved hastily (and sometimes grudgingly) to remote learning. Assignments and learning materials were removed to lighten courses. Many students moved off-campus while others needed to remain in campus housing. All students and professors adapted to a new mode of course delivery. These logistical challenges were of course coupled with less tangible but equally important experiences of stress and liminality in the face of an emergent infectious disease and global pandemic. If I—a public health researcher-practitioner equipped with the tools to protect myself and loved ones—was reacting poorly to the stress of the pandemic, how could I expect my students to cope with changes to their routine, loss of supportive networks, and uncertainty without it affecting their academic performance and overall wellbeing? Therefore, I made major changes to course instruction and assessment.

Like all faculty across UNL, I moved CYAF 493 online. I eliminated “refugees in the news,” most of the mini-lectures, and all of the small group discussions. I also eliminated the Case Management Plan (culminating group project) and reduced the expectations for the final individual project. Students had turned in book reviews and letters to the editor prior to COVID-19; therefore, the remainder of the course centered on weekly discussions using Canvas and on the final individual project.

Analysis of Student Learning

For the purpose of this benchmark portfolio, I focused on the following learning objective:

LO #2. Describe the social determinants of health that affect refugee health and wellbeing at the individual, family / household, community, and population levels.

In order to successfully demonstrate a full understanding of the social determinants of health (SDOH), students must grasp (and hopefully appreciate) the diversity within and among refugee groups (LO#1), have knowledge of the availability of and access to community resources (LO#3), synthesize and evaluate information from different sources (LO#5), and demonstrate and understanding of migration, culture, and diversity from multiple perspectives (LO#6). Prior to the course, I had planned to also assess LO #4: Apply classroom skills and knowledge to develop a strengths-based family case management plan. Unfortunately, I removed this project due to COVID-19. The next logical learning objective was LO #2, which is a cross-cutting learning objective that was assessed in several assignments and provided an opportunity to explore the core course values in greater depth: critical thinking, perspective-taking, and cultural humility.

Students' Baseline Perceptions of Refugees

For the week 1 homework assignment (preparing for Week 2 discussions and activities), I asked students to read two brief articles describing refugees, watch *God Grew Tired of Us* (a documentary about unaccompanied refugee minors [URM] from South Sudan), and reflect on the learning materials. Specifically, I asked students about their reactions to the film (e.g., which individuals portrayed resonated with them, what emotions they experienced) to get a sense of their baseline perceptions of refugees in the context of the guiding course values.

I analyzed students' reflections using inductive and deductive coding to (1) generate themes and identify overall trends as well as to (2) assess students' early engagement with the core values. Students' initial reflections provided insight into how to focus my instruction to promote the three core course values. Unsurprisingly, a bit more than half of the class ($n = 17/30$, 56.6%) used language that othered or exoticized refugees or the countries and cultural contexts from which they came. For example, eight students (26.6%) described refugees' countries of origin as "war-torn," which is language that stereotypes low- and middle-income countries. Several students ($n = 7/30$, 23.3%) discussed their surprise seeing in the documentary, *God Grew Tired of Us*, that refugees are not familiar with "proper hygiene because of their culture" and that they needed to learn hygiene once resettled in the U.S. This is a common confusion between "culture" and "availability of resources"; specifically, when the documentary portrayed refugees learning about showers in the U.S., students understood this as refugees not bathing regularly. This indicated I needed to gently correct notions of cultural cleanliness (i.e., people across cultures value hygiene) and spend additional time focusing on the social determinants of health (e.g.,

access to potable water, lack of running water in many refugee camps, etc.). Finally, several students ($n = 12/30$, 40%); students discussed refugee resettlement as an opportunity to achieve the “American Dream.” The following excerpt from a reflection is illustrative of a common student response:

Eventually, a group of men were given an opportunity they could not deny, they were able to move to the United States for good education and to get a job. Now these men are refugees [because they fled conflict and persecution] (UNHCR, 2016). [...] In my opinion you could say these men were also migrants because they were searching for a better life and education (Sengupta, 2015), which is what they did. All of these men were so thankful for this opportunity but, when they came to America the war and the people back home did not disappear from their minds. I could tell they really cared for everyone back in Kenya and often sent money to family back home to help them because they were unable to help themselves. (Student, Reflection #1)

Considering this reflection was due prior to in-class instruction, this student demonstrated critical engagement with readings that compared and contrasted refugees and im/migrants (Sengupta, 2015); their writing grapples with the complexity of migration. For example, individuals can be forced from their homelands and, after years in countries of first asylum that offer few opportunities, still be excited for possible opportunities in resettlement. These apparent contradictions do not negate one’s refugee status and have, in fact, been discussed by scholars. Nonetheless, responses like this suggested I needed to spend ample time framing *forced* migration and introducing concepts that highlighted refugees’ distress about loss of homeland, culture, and loved ones (e.g., cultural bereavement, Eisenbruch, 1991).

Some students were engaged in higher-level critical thinking from the onset. For example, the following student synthesized the documentary and readings to reflect on the complexities of forced migration:

I would say that I reacted with a variety of emotions while watching *God Grew Tired of Us*. I loved how [the documentary] provided so many perspectives to shed light on the complexities of being a refugee and the process of rebuilding one’s life in a completely new environment. Additionally, I appreciated how they touched on the multitude of factors that impact life for refugees in the host country. This includes the attitudes expressed by community members (e.g., store owner filing a complaint with police when boys came into the store in large groups versus community members supporting the boys in the walk they organized to shed light on the situation in Sudan), social support from other refugees, connection with extended family, and access to employment and/or transportation. [...] John discussed how happy he was that he was able to escape the refugee camp for a better life in the US, but that happiness was sometimes masked with

loneliness and worry when he would think about the people he had to leave behind and the struggles his family was facing in Uganda. [...] Along with the documentary, the readings provided quite a bit of insight on the distinctions between refugees and migrants to articulate why the two terms are not mutually exclusive. More specifically, Sengupta (2015) touched on the avoidance of using a distinction between the two terms it comes to politicians discussing immigration. Rather than recognizing that there are refugees AND migrants fleeing to their country, politicians may refer to everyone as migrants because of the fact that migrants can get deported if they arrive without legal papers, where refugees are protected because of their status (Sengupta, 2015). (Student, Reflection #1)

It should be noted that the above student had prior coursework and internship experience related to refugee resettlement and also hopes to pursue graduate studies and a career related to refugees. Although this does not take away from the excellence of this reflection (e.g., synthesis of materials, self-reflection, use of examples), it is rare for students to grasp refugee studies at such a high level the first week of class.

Many students ($n = 12/30$, 40%), including the student whose work I excerpted above, identified refugees' strengths in the documentary, including strong support networks, the use of spirituality to overcome stress, and openness to new cultures. This demonstrated that students were already prepared to work from a strengths-based perspective, possibly because of previous coursework in CYAF. This indicated that I did not need to spend as much time scaffolding in this area, since strengths-based approaches are common in their major discipline.

Instructor Reflection: Assessing baseline perceptions of refugees was an important step in identifying areas where I needed to provide additional scaffolding. In the future, I plan to more formally assess students' knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions pertaining to refugee health at pre-, mid-, and post-points to provide additional context for instructional strategies.

LO #2. Describe the Social Determinants that Affect Refugee Health

In-Class Activities and Homework Reflections

The social determinants of health (SDOH) refer to the nested layers of context in which people are born, raised, play, work, and grow older (Artiga & Hinton, 2018). The SDOH include health determinants such as access to healthcare, employment and associated income and benefits (e.g., health insurance), neighborhood infrastructure and safety, food (in)security, racism and xenophobia, and social integration (Artiga & Hinton, 2018). I taught the SDOH lesson and facilitated the associated in-class activity during the second week (the first "real" class after the introductory week), as it is a foundational framework for the course. The in-class activity centered on the documentary the students watched for homework, *God Grew Tired of Us* and asked students to identify the various factors that affected the health and wellbeing of the

unaccompanied refugee minors from Sudan (Figure 2). Student groups reported their lists to the class, facilitating a larger class discussion about the importance of the SDOH in refugee health.

Figure 2: In-class Activity on the Social Determinants of Health

Activity #2: Guidelines

- Work in small groups of 4-5
- Think about the documentary *God Grew Tired of Us*
- List the factors that affected the health and wellbeing of the Sudanese adolescents / young men at the individual, community, societal, political, and cultural levels
- Report findings to the class



Following this scaffolded in-class activity, students' second homework reflection focused explicitly on identifying the SDOH. Students read two articles pertaining to refugee health in urban settings (Tippens, 2017) and camp settings (Bowles, 1998), watched the PBS Frontline documentary *Exodus*, and listened to the *This American Life* podcast "Are We There Yet?" (Glass, 2016). Students reflected on the following prompt for the homework assignment:

Review your class notes, week 2 PowerPoint, and readings on the social determinants of health (SDOH). Using the course materials for week 3, identify one factor at the individual, one at the family / household, and one at the community OR policy level (three total) that affect health and wellbeing. These can be health promoting factors (resulting in positive health attainment) or health risk factors (resulting in poor health). Briefly describe how the factors you identified influence refugees' health and wellbeing.

Overall, students' reflections indicated they grasped the SDOH. Twenty-six students (86.6%) successfully identified factors at multiple levels; however, the quality of reflections varied. Only five students (16.6%) synthesized the course materials and provided specific, detailed examples of the SDOH at each level. The following reflection is illustrative of a reflection that received full credit:

I noticed a multitude of [SDOH] factors through our preparatory materials that affected refugee well-being. On an **individual level**, one of the largest factors concerned Isra'a's mental health in the PBS documentary *Exodus* (Bluemel, 2016). While attempting to cross into Croatia from Serbia, Isra'a and her family were forced to sleep outside in the cold as they waited overnight to get through the border. The prolonged time outside caused two children to die from extensive amounts of rain and cold weather. The trauma of witnessing the death of two young children at such a young age imposed a negative impact on her well-being as she was not equipped to cope with that experience. At the

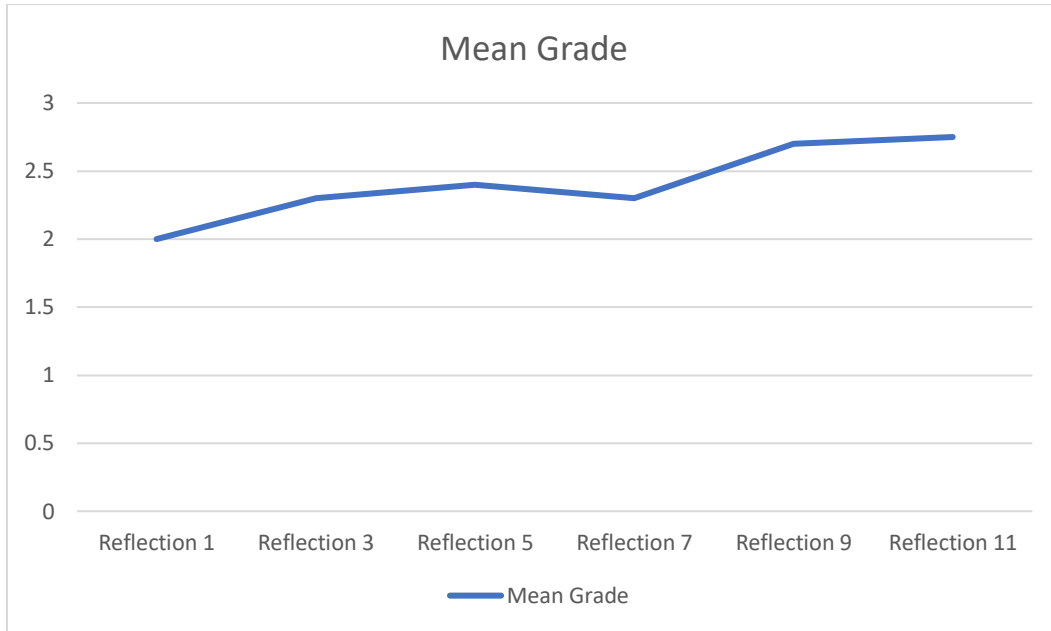
family and household level, many families are torn apart as a result of violence in their home country. For example, in the “Are We There Yet?” episode, Youness Aselom discussed the destruction of his family as a result of the war in Syria and the ramifications these experiences have had on his daughter (Glass & Meek, 2016). After a missile strike killed his wife and one of his daughters in Syria, Youness is now left to care for his daughter on his own. To make matters worse, his daughter is now deathly afraid of the sound of airplanes and fails to make friends with the other children in the refugee camp. With that being said, the experiences of violence and witnessing of death can cause serious consequences when it comes to familial cohesion as well as the psychosocial development of the survivors in the family. Lastly, Bowles (1998) discussed a **community and political** factor in the refugee camps along the Burma-Thailand border that positively impacted refugee well-being. In regards to camp administration, the administrative systems in these camps were maintained by the refugee communities themselves rather than by relief agencies or the Thai government (Bowles, 1998). This allowed refugees to establish a sense of responsibility in their community while ensuring everyone’s voices were heard and needs were met. Ultimately, this increased refugees’ autonomy and self-sufficiency as they were not relying on outside organizations for assistance. (Student, Reflection #2)

More students ($n = 21/30$, 70%), however, wrote reflections similar to the following excerpt, receiving 2 of 3 possible points for the homework.

On a **personal [individual] level**, many of these people don’t have access to good nutrition and hygiene while traveling. They do their best the countries they go through often don’t have enough resources to provide these thousands of people with what they need. At the **family level**, many of them have an amazing sense of community and connection. Many of these young men are leaving their families and traveling this dangerous journey so that they can care for the others in the long run. Being in the UK with refugee status allows them to get their families there as quickly as possible and so they will do what it takes to get there. For many of them this sense of community is what keeps them going and what keeps them striving. At the **policy level**, there are many countries that are attempting to provide aid to those in need. Ultimately not all of the families are able travel together and unfortunately not everyone can give enough resources to stay safe. There are policies in certain countries to help out refugees and migrants, but not all of them abide by the rules especially with an influx of so many of them. (Student, Reflection #2)

This was still early in the semester, and several students continued to struggle with synthesizing information in an upper-level course. The graduate teaching assistant (GTA) and I provided feedback and examples, and the majority of students improved over time (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Students' Mean Reflection Grades Over Time

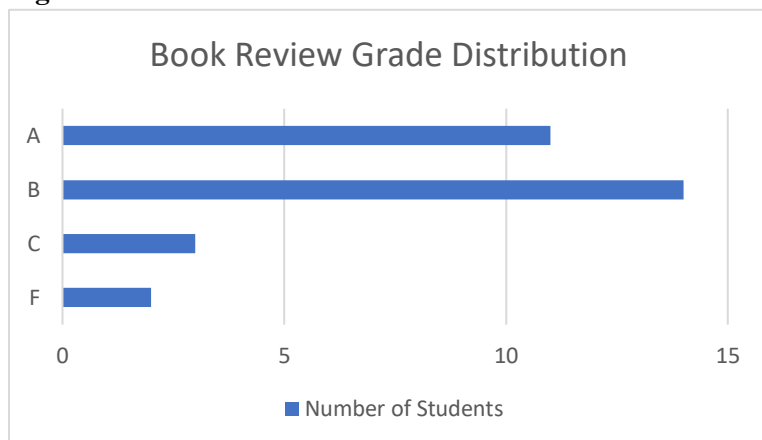


Instructor Reflection: I will definitely continue to require weekly homework reflections based on the course materials. This provided an ongoing opportunity to assess students' grasp of key concepts as well, their engagement with the core values, and growth throughout the semester. Although grading the reflections can be time-consuming, it provides an important way to engage with students and individualize scaffolding through weekly feedback. The change in students' mean reflection grades over the course of the semester suggests this was an effective learning tool. In the future I plan to provide examples of A-level, B-level, and C-level work up-front.

Book Review

Students' performance in the book review clustered in the A and B range. Two students received an 'F' grade for not turning in the assignment but received full points for the Book Club portion because they participated in the Canvas-based book discussion. The Book Review was due the week prior to spring break, and approximately 40% of the class had turned in the assignment before we moved to remote instruction due to COVID-19. As so many students had already completed the work and we had discussed several chapters in the class sessions leading to the Book Club, I decided to keep this in the adjusted COVID-19 syllabus.

Figure 4: Book Review Grade Distribution



Twenty-nine students (96.6%) focused on the SDOH, although this was not an explicit requirement in the prompt. This may indicate that in-class conversations in tandem with weekly homework reflections that center on the SDOH were successful in conveying the importance of social-ecological determinants of health and wellbeing. I assessed students' engagement with the core course values – critical thinking, perspective-taking, and cultural humility – through the final two prompts (six prompts total): (5) Did the book make you think about refugees or refugee health issues in a way you had not before? (6) What does this book contribute to a broader understanding of refugee health and wellbeing?

Core Value: Critical Thinking

The change from baseline regarding perspectives of the U.S. as a land of opportunities for refugees to the critique of third-country resettlement in the Book Review was striking. At baseline, 40% ($n = 12/30$) of students framed refugee resettlement as an opportunity to achieve the “American Dream.” In the Book Review, however, 86.6% ($n = 26/30$) discussed social and structural challenges to refugee integration in the U.S., specifically identifying racism, xenophobia, and institutionalized violence. Students commentaries on social and structural determinants of health in the U.S. resettlement context included:

I appreciate how *How Dare the Sun Rise* allowed readers to walk through all stages of the refugee experience and understand the distinct obstacles refugees face throughout their lives. While I was able to connect with Sandra's story, I was simultaneously educated on the misleading stereotypes about refugees, the complexity of race in the United States, and even the obstacles we still need to overcome in refugee resettlement, all of which have important implications for refugee wellbeing. (Student, Book Review)

How Dare the Sun Rise contributes greatly to a broader understanding of refugees' wellbeing. Sandra's experiences and challenges with her trauma represent the impact

well-being has on daily life. Not only did Sandra's memories and past experiences affect her well-being, but so did the barriers she faced when resettling to the United States. This book provides a better understanding of the struggles faced by refugees and their families when entering a new country. This book specifically looked at the barriers faced by different age groups. The culture changes affected Sandra and her siblings in a different way than they affected her parents. How Dare the Sun Rise takes Sandra and her families first-hand experiences and explains how their lives were affected by entrance into the United States. [...] Refugees have experienced violence in their home countries and the United States. It is crucial to understand that violence and discrimination exist within our own country. (Student, Book Review)

Both of these excerpts represent A-level work and demonstrate evidence of critical thinking about the complexity of third-country refugee resettlement. The second quote, in particular, provides evidence that the student considered how people's lived experiences differ by history and past experiences, by age, and by sex and directly aligns with course objectives and values.

Core Values: Perspective-Taking and Cultural Humility

Although most students demonstrated an appreciation for diverse cultures, there were still some who conflated "culture" and "context" in a way that othered refugees. For example, the following excerpt discusses a "culture" of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC):

Before reading this book, I did not know about the culture of sexual abuse against women in the Congo. [...] A quote from the book helped me understand this (Pesta, 2017), "In many cultures, including mine, young women who are sexually abused are often blamed and rejected in their communities" (p.98). Sandra shares her own experience of being sexually assaulted by a close friend's father and when she tried to tell her friend she was rejected. This helped me recognize the sexual abuse of women in many other cultures and how it differentiates with American society's view of sexual abuse. In the book, Sandra describes the silence surrounding sexual abuse against women in her culture, while America considers these crimes immoral and illegal. This raises the issue of these crimes and how they are perceived in many other cultures outside of the United States. This made me think about refugees and the norms in their culture that can have a great effect on their mental and physical health and shows me how dangerous these refugees' lives were in these camps and areas. (Student, Book Reflection)

This is not to diminish the extent to which sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) has been documented in the eastern DRC; however, a more careful analysis and contextualization of rape and SGBV as a global wartime strategy is missing. Similarly missing is a critique of SGBV in the U.S., despite high prevalence and under-reporting (National Sexual Violence Resource Center [NSVRC], n.d.).

Most students, however, did demonstrate an appreciation for other cultures, active perspective-taking, and cultural humility:

Each page of Sandra Uwiringiyimana’s book taught me something new. I learned the importance of culture, not only a community, but on one’s sense of self. I saw how culture was not just a geographical location, but rather something that could not be taken from someone despite where they were located. I think getting to see learn about someone adapting into a life that I have always considered the “norm” has allowed me to see that perhaps what I think is ‘the right way’ is not how everyone sees it. There was a part in the book where Sandra spoke about thinking the ground beef was worms, this seemed silly to me at first; but then I understood as I took away the perspective of ‘normal’ to me. The book has changed the way I look at refugees. [...] I no longer think of them as one of many, I see how families are trying for the best with the resources they are given. I think that getting the opportunity to read this book has changed the way I view refugees in that it has allowed me to empathize without having experienced the same circumstances. (Student, Book Review)

There were quite a few things that I learned from this book that made me think about refugees in a different light. *How Dare the Sun Rise* displays how quickly someone can turn into a refugee. More often than not, many refugees come from “normal” lives before they are forced to leave their place of origin. Sandra grew up riding bikes around her house, swimming in the nearby lake, and obtaining an education at her town’s school. Unfortunately, many other refugee families like Sandra’s lose their belongings, family members, money, and memories in a matter of minutes and days. This is important to recognize, particularly because many refugees do not have an adequate amount of time to mentally and physically prepare for what they are about to go through in the short- and long-run. (Student, Book Review)

Instructor Reflection: Although I was frustrated when reading some of the Book Reviews, the majority of submissions provided thoughtful, nuanced analysis of the book using scholarly citations. Overall, I was impressed. It is important for me to remember that 60% of the class submitted Book Reviews during COVID-19 and that there will always be variation in student learning and engagement. To address some of the othering that I saw in some of the assignments, I will need to provide timely, gentle guidance to encourage students to reflect on the importance of context and health disparities that continue to exist in high-income countries, including the U.S. I will also plan to emphasize refugee health disparities in the U.S. in future iterations of this course. This analysis demonstrates that the Book Review (and associated Book Club) is a powerful tool to engage with the SDOH as well as to foster critical thinking, perspective-taking, and cultural humility.

Summary and Overall Assessment of Portfolio Process

Participating in the Peer Review of Teaching Program for *Global Case Studies in Refugee Health and Wellbeing* (CYAF 493) equipped me with a greater appreciation for and commitment to aligning course objectives, teaching strategies, and class materials using backward design. Although COVID-19 presented major challenges to teaching during Spring 2020, the backward design actually helped me decide which projects I could remove without sacrificing student learning to meet course objectives. I have two specific changes I plan to implement when I teach CYAF 493 in Spring 2021. First, although I was intentional in assessing core course values during Spring 2020, I realized these are still not explicitly included in the syllabus. I plan to list and define the course values prior to learning objectives and to ensure course values and objectives are aligned. Second, there is too much work in the course (in the pre-COVID-19 syllabus), which I believe distracts students from finding excitement in the class. I plan to get rid of the Letter to the Editor assignment because it is not aligned with the core course values. I am unsure if I will keep both a group final assignment and an individual final assignment. I was heartbroken to remove the refugee family case management plan ([Appendix II](#)) when we transitioned to remote learning. The students did a wonderful job with the individual final projects, particularly in the context of uncertainty and changes due to COVID-19; however, the case management plan enveloped a number of cross-cutting objectives and was directly aligned with our guiding values. I am happy to have new skills gleaned from the Peer Review of Teaching Program to evaluate this in Spring 2021. I look forward to applying these skills as a revise and create future courses throughout my career.

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Appendices

Appendix I: Syllabus

CYAF 493 – Global Case Studies in Refugee Health & Wellbeing: Family, Community, Organizational, and Policy Perspectives SPRING 2020 SYLLABUS

Time: Mondays, 10:00 – 12:50 AM

Location: Louise Pound Hall, Room 2

Professor: Julie A. Tippens, DrPH, MA, MPH (she/her/hers)
Louise Pound Hall, Room 239
jtippens@unl.edu, 402-472-6560

TA: Sarah Erwin, PhD(c) (she/her/hers)
erwin1sc@gmail.com

Office Hours: By appointment

Catalog Description: Global Case Studies in Refugee Wellbeing will explore the dynamics of forced migration across the continuum, with particular emphasis on the effects of migration on families.

Course Description: More than 70 million people were displaced from their homes due to war, violent conflict, and persecution at the end of 2018, representing the largest number of displaced persons since World War II. Individuals and families have made perilous journeys by sea and by land in attempts to survive and reach safety. In Global Case Studies in Refugee Wellbeing, we will explore the dynamics of forced migration across the continuum, with particular emphasis on the effects of migration on the family unit. Examples will span the globe, and will be drawn from contemporary refugee situations, including Syria, Burma, Somalia, among others, as well as diverse refugee resettlement in the United States. This course will pay particular attention to the following: (i) how refugee communities themselves perceive and foster health and wellbeing; (ii) how organizations, including nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), governmental organizations, and intergovernmental organizations (e.g., the United Nations) work to assist refugees; and (iii) how policies directly and indirectly shape the wellbeing of refugees and their families and communities.

Course Prerequisites: None.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of the course students will be able to:

1. Recognize the diversity among and within im/migrant and refugee groups by defining the different categories of migration (e.g., refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons);
2. Describe the social determinants of health (SDOH) that affect refugee health and wellbeing at the individual, family / household, community, and population levels;
3. Identify refugee assistance organizations and describe services provided to refugees in Nebraska;
4. Apply classroom skills to develop a strengths-based service plan for a (fictional) refugee family arriving in Lincoln, Nebraska;
5. Critically evaluate and synthesize information (e.g., scholarly articles, news stories, videos) pertaining to forced migration and refugees; and
6. Demonstrate understanding of migration, culture, and diversity through multiple perspectives and have respectful conversations across difference

Course Notes: All readings other than the text (*How Dare the Sun Rise*) will be placed on the Canvas course site.

Required Texts/Readings:

1. *How Dare the Sun Rise: Memoirs of a War Child* by Sandra Uwiringiyimana. The book can be purchased through the UNL Bookstore or your chosen online vendor.
2. All other required readings and course materials will be made available on the Canvas course site.

Recommended Texts:

Koser, K. (2007). *International Migration: A Very Short Introduction*.

Course Requirements and Assignments:

1. Attendance/Participation: 20 points, 10%

Students are expected to attend classes, to be active and respectful class participants and to respond to the instructor's emails. Attendance and participation are expectations for all students and are consistent with preparation for higher education/a career. A respectful and active class participant is someone who makes an effort to thoughtfully answer or ask questions and engages with the instructor, visitors, and students. Students will also participate in a variety of individual and group learning activities to apply the theoretical concepts explored in the readings. Many of these activities will take place in class after a mini-lecture, video, or audio segment. Some may take more time than the class allows and may be completed as homework. Doing activities not related to this class in any way (e.g., texting, doing other assignments, checking email) is not consistent with being engaged in this class. If you are observed to be doing these activities, you may lose attendance points for the day.

Students will be asked to sign-in at each class and attendance will be monitored.

If there is a doctor's note, points can be given for attendance. All holidays or special events observed by organized religions will be honored for those students who show affiliation with that particular religion. Absences pre-approved by the UNL / CEHS Dean of Students (or Dean's designee) will be also be honored.

Participation: I plan to call on students on most class days to ask questions about the readings. An effort to answer the questions will be counted towards your participation points, as will volunteering.

Part of participation is also keeping current with the news related to refugees globally and locally. The first 15-30 minutes of each class will be dedicated to reviewing current events related to refugees and their wellbeing.

GRADING:

0 points	Unexcused absence
1 point	In class, distracted or disengaged; late
2 points	In class, paying attention, actively engaged, participating

****The lowest grade will be dropped from attendance**

2. Reflections: 30 points, 15%

****Due:** By 11:59 p.m. the Sunday prior to class to the appropriate Canvas folder

Reflections will cover readings, films, audio clips, guest speakers, etc. We will have guest speakers this semester and will watch film clips in class. Students will submit a 350 word reflection discussing your thoughts, feelings, reactions, or

questions about the materials. Reflections should integrate – and cite – course materials.

3. Letter to the Editor: 30 points, 15%

****Due:** 11:59 on Sunday, February 23rd

Identify and read a news article from a credible source pertaining to refugee health and wellbeing. The article should be no more than 2 weeks old. After reading, write a brief (approx. 250 words) paragraph describing the purpose, tone, and audience for this story.

Once you have described the article, you should write a letter to the editor explaining your views on this article. You may comment on any aspect of the article. For example, you may want to critique the story in terms of whether it was “right” or “wrong” and explain why using evidence (e.g., peer-reviewed articles from class). Alternately, you may wish to propose an alternative solution to a stated problem and actions or recommendations described by the author. Or you may express your support for your chosen article, describing why you agree with the author’s viewpoint.

You should ensure that your letter to the editor included evidence-based information (from class readings or outside peer-reviewed readings) to strengthen your argument. As this is a letter to the editor, it is expected to be short. Letters to the editor are often between 150 and 300 words. However, for this assignment, you may write up to 500 words. Anything longer than this will be subject to a grade reduction as this is an exercise in writing clearly and concisely.

Note: While not mandatory, students are encouraged to submit your letters to the editor! This is a great way to help build your resumes and become a voice for change. If you plan to do so and would like someone to proofread, please let me know, and I am happy to assist.

4. Book Review and Book Club: 20 points, 10%

****Book review due:** 11:59 pm on Sunday, March 15th

****Book club date:** March 16th, in class

NOTE: The book review and active participation on the book club day are each worth 10 points. Therefore, if you are absent during the book club day, your grade will automatically be reduced 10 points (or 50% of the grade).

Book Review

Students will submit a **4.5-5 page paper** on *How Dare the Sun Rise*. Format: Times New Roman, 1.5 spacing, 1 inch margins, 12 point font (Citation style: APA) that answers the following questions:

1. In brief: what is the book about? (a paragraph or two, include the author and title)
2. What is the refugee situation or issue the book discusses/explores?
3. What is the tone of the book? (e.g. Funny? Sad?)
4. What do you think the main point of the book was? Was there a message the author wanted you to take from the book ?
5. Did you learn something new? Did the book make you think about refugees or refugee issues in a way you had not before?
6. What does this book contribute to a broader understand of refugees’ wellbeing?
7. Did you like the book? Why or why not? Would you recommend others read it? Why or why not?

****Successful book reviews will incorporate themes or concepts from external, peer-reviewed readings. Students should include a minimum of 3 citations / references of peer-reviewed articles. These may be class readings or others that you have identified through the UNL Libraries website.**

Book Club

On the Book Club class day, students will be assigned to small discussion groups. All students are expected to participate in discussion about the books. Students should submit one book club question (Canvas) for the group discussion by 11:59 pm on the Sunday prior to the book club.

5. Final Individual Project: 50 points, 25%

****Option and topic due:** 11:59 pm on Sunday, February 23rd

****Final project due:** 11:59 pm on Sunday, April 12th

Option A: "Everything BUT the Research Paper"

Students will conduct research for a term paper on a specific area of interest, and will do everything *except* write the paper. Submissions should include: (1) Topic with one overarching and two sub- research questions to explore; (2) an annotated bibliography of 15 scholarly journal articles and 5 additional references (e.g., intergovernmental organization website resource, etc.); (3) an outline of the paper; (4) a thesis statement; and (5) an opening paragraph and summary of findings. Format: Times New Roman, double spacing, 1 inch margins, 12 point font, APA style.

Option B: Book or Film Critique

Students will submit a **4.5- to 5-page paper** on a book or film approved by Dr. Tippens and Ms. Erwin. This has to be something from *outside* of classroom resources. For example, you may not use *God Grew Tired of Us* because we will watch this in class. Format: Times New Roman, 1.5 spacing, 1 inch margins, 12 point font, APA style that answers the following questions:

1. In brief: what is the book / film about? (a paragraph or two, include the author and title)
2. What is the refugee situation or issue the book / film discusses/explores?
3. What is the tone of the book / film? (e.g. Funny? Sad?)
4. What do you think the main point of the book was? Was there a message the author wanted you to take from the book / film?
5. Did you learn something new? Did the book / film make you think about refugees or refugee issues in a way you hadn't before?
6. What does this book / film contribute to a broader understand of refugees' wellbeing?
7. Did you like the book / film? Why or why not? Would you recommend others read / watch it? Why or why not?

****Successful reviews will incorporate themes or concepts from external, peer-reviewed readings. Students should include a minimum of 10 citations / references of peer-reviewed articles. These may be class readings or others that you have identified through the UNL Libraries website.**

Option C: Audio-Recorded PowerPoint Presentation

Identify a refugee health topic that was not covered (or not covered in-depth) in class and that is of interested to you. Create a PowerPoint presentation that includes: (1) an overview of the refugee population or subgroup of interest (e.g., children in detention, women from the Democratic republic of the Congo, etc.), (2) an introduction to a health issue affecting this population / group (e.g., mental health, HIV/AIDS, perinatal depression, etc.), (3) why this is an important health issue (e.g., numbers affected, how it affects people / the broader community, etc.), (4) treatments and/or resources to address this health issue, and (5) summary and conclusion.

You can narrative slides using Microsoft Office PowerPoint OR TechSmith Relay. Your presentation should be between 10 and 15 minutes in length, which is a typical conference presentation limit.

Option D: Develop Program

Students will design a program to address a *specific* issue affecting a *specific* refugee group or population (e.g., post-traumatic stress among ethnoreligious Yazidi refugees, access to reproductive health services among ethnic Karen women, etc.). **Part 1: Brief paper** (approx. 4 pages) that includes the following: (1) introduction to the population and issue/challenge; (2) why this issue is of importance and needs attention (how many people are affected? How is it

affecting their lives / their communities / etc.?). (3) a description of your NEW program or project to address the specific health need and improve health and wellbeing of your target population → include target group (e.g., women, children, overall community, etc.), program activities, and expected outcomes. **Part 2:** Develop a program brochure with information about your program/project to recruit clients. Format: TNR, 1.5 spacing, 1” margins, APA style.

6. Group Project and Presentation: 50 points, 25%

****Presentation Date: April 27th, in class**

****Full Project Due: 11:59 pm to Canvas on Sunday, May 3rd**

Students will work in small, randomly assigned groups (3-5 students) to develop a case management plan for a for a (fictional) family scheduled to arrive in Lincoln, Nebraska. Each group will be provided with a case file including sociodemographic information of family/household members and any special needs the family may have.

The case management plan and presentation should include the following components: (1) An introduction to the family; (2) an introduction to the refugee group / population (e.g., country of origin, reason(s) for forced migration, sociodemographic information, etc.); (3) Background information for each of the family member as well as services and resources available in Lincoln, NE, the state, and the U.S. to meet these needs; (4) Additional challenges and needs you anticipate (e.g., transportation, aging out of LPS, health challenges, etc.); (5) A case management plan and how *you/your organization*, as community and family services specialists, will address needs, mitigate challenges, and help support the family members as they resettle in Lincoln, Nebraska; and (6) A reflection on current gaps in services and how this affects refugees resettling in the state.

This project blends traditional research (e.g., scholarly literature) with more applied research on local resources and services. Additional instructions and a case management template will be provided on Canvas.

ALL ASSIGNMENTS

- Learning to write clearly and effectively for a variety of audiences is a critical professional skill that takes practice. Correct use of grammar, spelling and punctuation is expected in written assignments. **Points will be deducted for poor grammar, spelling and punctuation and for citing references incorrectly.**
- Many mistakes students make can be corrected prior to submission by simply reading the assignment before uploading it to Canvas.
- Successful students budget their time so they are not submitting what is essentially a first draft as a final product.
- Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor, TA, and/or the UNL Writing Center (unl.edu/writing/home) to receive help on assignments as needed.

Late Assignments

- Assignments are considered late after the due date.
- Points will be deducted as described in the assignments above.
- For the book review, critique and analytic paper, two points will be deducted after the deadline and then every 24 hours they are late after that until the assignment is submitted, unless you have an arrangement with the instructor.
- Exceptions will be made only in extreme or unusual circumstances.
- If you have technical problems with Canvas, email the assignment to the instructor.

Grading/Student Evaluation

Assignment	Due Date	Weight	Points
Participation/Attendance	Ongoing	10%	20
Reflections	Ongoing	15%	30

Letter to the Editor	February 23	15%	30
Book Review & Book Club	March 15	10%	20
Individual Project	April 12	25%	50
Final Group Project	May 3	25%	50
	Total	100%	200

Letter Grade	Percentage	Description of Work
A+	98-100	
A	94-97	Work of exceptional quality, involving a deep and comprehensive understanding of the subject area; original research of the highest quality; or some imaginative restructuring of an issue.
A-	90-93	Work of excellent quality, like the above but perhaps not so exceptional, or lacking in some minor way, but still out of the ordinary.
B+	87-89	Work that is very good, does everything that is called for with some distinction, and shows a much better than average understanding or level of research or imagination.
B	83-86	Work that is good, does most of what is asked for in a more than satisfactory way.
B-	80-82	Work that is fairly good, and is of more than just a satisfactory nature, but less than what is considered good work.
C+	77-79	Work that is satisfactory, but no more than that. The student does on the whole what is asked for but at a level that is considered only fair.
C	73-76	Work that is just fair is all right but weak in understanding and execution.
C-	70-72	Work that is fair, but weak in understanding and execution.
D+	67-69	Work that is inconsistent and/or in which student demonstrates a weak understanding of the subject material.
D	63-66	Work that demonstrates little understanding of the subject material.
D-	60-62	Work that does not demonstrate sufficient understanding of the subject material.
F	<60	A failing grade indicates that a student has failed to meet the required performance standard as is stated in the syllabus and modules.

Classroom and University of Nebraska-Lincoln Policies

Communication with Instructor

My preferred method of contact is email (j.tippens@unl.edu). I expect correspondence from university students to be professional (e.g., include salutation, full sentences, appropriate capitalization, etc.), which is in keeping with your training as professionals and your status as adults. I check emails once a day, and will reply to emails within 24 hours between Monday and Friday. I do not check email on Saturdays and Sundays. Please consider this, and plan ahead, when asking assignment-related questions.

Respectful Class Atmosphere (Adapted from Professors Evelyn Alsutany and Alisse Portnoy)

This course addresses challenging and, at times, controversial social and political issues. In order to foster a positive, respectful learning environment, it is important that diverse perspectives can be expressed. Students are encouraged to challenge the readings and other course materials when appropriate. It is also acceptable to disagree with or challenge the ideas of the instructor or other students in a supportive manner. Please remember that hostility and disrespectful behavior is never acceptable. We expect others to respect and listen to our views and must also actively listen when others are speaking, even if we do not agree with them. In this class, we will use scholarly readings and other course materials to inform our opinions and discussions rather than defending viewpoints formed prior to this course.

We will sometimes make mistakes in what we say, how we listen, or how we interact with one another. We must always remain respectful as we learn to have conversations across differences and understand diverse perspectives.

Use of Electronic Devices

Cellular phones should be silenced or turned off during class time. The use of laptops or tablets is permitted during class time to take notes and engage in class-related activities. Laptops, cell phones, tablets, and all other electronic devices are prohibited on days when guest speakers visit the class. Misuse of electronic devices may result in a loss of attendance points for the day.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is essential to the existence and integrity of an academic institution. The responsibility for maintaining that integrity is shared by all members of the academic community. The University's [Student Code of Conduct](#) addresses academic dishonesty. Students who commit acts of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action and are granted due process and the right to appeal any decision.

A Further Note on Academic Honesty

This class is designed to be collaborative, and students are encouraged to talk to each other about the topics covered in class. However, all assignments handed in for a grade should be your own original, independent work. Group exercises should reflect the thoughts, interpretations, and efforts only of those members of the group and no other individuals. DO NOT turn in any work with your name on it that was done by someone else. DO NOT turn in one of your old papers for this course. It is considered self-plagiarism and is against the Code of Academic Integrity. If you have questions about what you can use from other classes, then please talk to the instructor.

What counts as plagiarism?

- Copying and pasting information from a web site or another source, and then revising it so that it sounds like your original idea.
- Doing an assignment/essay/take home test with a friend and then handing in separate assignments that contain the

same ideas, language, phrases, etc.

- Quoting a passage without quotation marks or citations, so that it looks like your own.
- Paraphrasing a passage without citing it
- Hiring another person to do your work for you, or purchasing a paper through any of the on- or off-line sources.
- There are many resources for learning how to correctly note the source of a quotation or idea, including the Writing Center on campus, essay writing handbooks, and informative websites. If you have questions or are unsure about how to properly manage ideas and work that are not your own, please ask!

Diversity & Inclusion

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, national origin, sex (including pregnancy), religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and/or political affiliation.

Services for Students with Disabilities

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options privately. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). If you are eligible for services and register with their office, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so they can be implemented in a timely manner. SSD contact information: 232 Canfield Admin. Bldg.; 402-472-3787.

Video or Audiotaping Class Sessions

Due to the sensitive and controversial nature of some of the topics that will be discussed over the duration of the semester, all classes are closed to the Press/Media. No video or audio taping of class sessions is allowed unless you obtain my permission to do so.

Campus Resources

Husker Pantry. University Health Center, Room 123. Any current student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln who is in need can stop by Husker Pantry to pick up free food and hygiene items as well as get help connecting to university and community resources for food and shelter insecurity. Bring your N-Card. Pantry.unl.edu/welcome

Counseling and Psychological Services. Counseling and Psychological Services is a multidisciplinary team of psychologists and counselors that works collaboratively with Nebraska students to help them explore their feelings and thoughts and learn helpful ways to improve their mental psychological and emotional well-being when issues arise. Our staff support all University of Nebraska-Lincoln students. We understand that students may experience anger, fear, pain and frustration with current events. We are here for all our students to listen and provide support. If you would like to meet with a counselor, call 402-472-7450 or visit caps.unl.edu to schedule an appointment.

****Syllabus Changes:** Information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grade and absence policies, may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice, as deemed appropriate. I will alert the class to any such changes using Canvas announcements / email.

COURSE SCHEDULE, Spring 2020

	DATE	TOPIC/READING ASSIGNMENT
1	1/13	Syllabus, Welcome, Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note: class is online – Dr. Tippens in Kenya for work
2	1/20	No Class: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
3	1/27	In-Person Introductions and Course Expectations Refugee Health 101 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to refugees Migration categories Introduction to the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) <u>Due</u> *1/26, 11:59 pm to Canvas: Reflection #1
4	2/3	Where do Refugees Live? – Part I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refugees in cities and towns <u>Due</u> *2/2, 11:59 pm to Canvas: Reflection #2
5	2/10	Where do Refugees Live? – Part II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refugee resettlement Focus: U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program <u>Due</u> *2/9, 11:59 pm to Canvas: Reflection #3
6	2/17	Refugee Resettlement / Refugee Health in Nebraska <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who lives in Nebraska and where? Resources available to refugees in Nebraska <u>Due</u> *2/16, 11:59 pm to Canvas: Reflection #4
7	2/24	Community Integration and Belonging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is community? The importance of ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) <u>Due</u> *2/23, 11:59 pm to Canvas: Reflection #5 *2/23, 11:59 pm to Canvas: Letter to the Editor *2/23, 11:59 pm to Canvas: Final Project Topic
8	3/2	Refugee Health – Physical Health and Nutrition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infectious and communicable diseases Culture, food, and nutrition <u>Due</u> *3/1, 11:59 pm to Canvas: Reflection #6

9	3/9	Refugee Health – Mental Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From PTSD to cultural bereavement • Stress, coping, and resilience <u>Due</u> *3/8, 11:59 pm to Canvas: Reflection #7
10	3/16	BOOK CLUB: <i>How Dare the Sun Rise: Memoirs of a War Child</i> <u>Due:</u> *3/15, 11:59 pm to Canvas: Book review *3/15, 11:59 pm to Canvas: One book club question
11	3/23	SPRING VACATION (Relax, Enjoy, and Be Safe!)
12	3/30	Special Populations – Vulnerability and Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability • Aging • LGBTQ status • Sexual and gender-based violence <u>Due</u> *3/29, 11:59 pm to Canvas: Reflection #8
13	4/6	Minority Health Disparities Initiative (MHDI) 2020 Spring Conference University of Nebraska Union – Centennial Room 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Must attend at least one session during the day) Registration: https://mhdi.unl.edu/2020-mhdi-conference-registration
14	4/13	Childhood and Refugee Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unaccompanied minors • Children in detention • Challenges and opportunities in refugee education • “School in a Box” <u>Due</u> *4/12, 11:59 pm to Canvas: Reflection #9 *4/19, 11:59 pm to Canvas: Individual Projects
15	4/20	Sexual and Reproductive Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict and sexual health • Family planning <u>Due</u> *4/19, 11:59 pm to Canvas: Reflection #10
16	4/27	Group Presentations <u>Due</u> *4/26, 11:59 pm to Canvas: Reflection #11 *4/26, 11:59 pm to Canvas: Group PowerPoint Slides

****FINAL GROUP PROJECTS DUE TO CANVAS BY 11:59 PM, SUNDAY, MAY 3RD**

Appendix II: Refugee Family Case Management Plan – Example Family Profile

Karen Refugee Family

Name	Sex	Age	Education	Occupation	Marital Status	Pre-Resettlement Location
Saw Bo Mya	Male	73	No formal education	Subsistence farming	Widowed	Mae La camp
Saw Kyaw	Male	52	Some college	Teacher	Married	Mae La camp
Naw Poe Soe	Female	45	Some secondary	Homemaker	Married	Mae La camp
Eh Soe	Male	19	Some secondary	n/a	Single	Mae La camp
Wah Poe	Female	17	Some secondary	n/a	n/a	Mae La camp
Bweh Mya	Male	11	Some elementary	n/a	n/a	Mae La camp

Case Notes

Saw Bo Mya is Saw Kyaw’s father and practices Buddhism. Saw Kyaw, however, converted to Christianity while living in Mae La refugee camp, where he met his wife (Naw Poe Soe) at a church service. Their children are being raised Christian. Saw Bo Mya is widowed and has several children who have been resettled in different countries. His son, daughter-in-law, and grandchildren are his last remaining immediate family residing in the camps; he will travel to the U.S. with them. Saw Bo Mya has diabetes; part of his case management will need to focus on establishing a primary health provider and ensuring he has access to treatment and medication.

Saw Kyaw was a high school teacher in Burma (Myanmar) as well as in Mae La refugee camp. He was eventually promoted to the head teacher at one of the high schools in Mae La camp. He completed the equivalent of an associate degree in Education while still in Burma; his training and experience will not be recognized in the U.S. education system. He is proficient in English, which he studies in Mae La through an adult education program through the Jesuit Refugee Service, a nongovernmental organization (NGO) that operates in the camp.

Naw Poe Soe is married to Saw Kyaw, whom she met at a church in Mae La refugee camp. She is a homemaker and skilled weaver and cook. Naw Poe Soe’s parents were killed by the Burmese Army; she fled with her two sisters to Thailand. Her sisters will remain in the refugee camp. Although she has incredible skills, they are not necessarily valued in the U.S. Before leaving for the U.S., she told her pre-departure case manager that she was “thinking too much” – a common idiom of distress (see Nichter, 1981; Kaiser et al., 2015) that is associated with anxiety and depression.

Eh Soe (19), **Wah Poe** (17), and **Bweh Mya** (11) were born and raised in Mae La refugee camp in Thailand. They speak Karen and Thai. They also studied English in primary and secondary school but are shy about speaking it and do not have native language proficiency. **Eh Soe** helped the International Rescue Committee implement some health programs in Mae La camp and is interested in a career in health, although he is unsure what field. He finished his sophomore year of high school in Mae La, but is at risk of aging out of the Lincoln Public School (LPS) system. **Wah Poe** is a gifted artist, having learned

some of her skills from her mother. She is not sure about her career goals. **Bweh Mya** enjoys school but has been distracted since he learned the family would be moving to the United States.

Helpful Readings to Get You Started

- Im, H., Ferguson, A., & Hunter, M. (2017). Cultural translation of refugee trauma: Cultural idioms of distress among Somali refugees in displacement. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 54(5-6), 626-652.
- Kaiser, B. N., Haroz, E. E., Kohrt, B. A., Bolton, P. A., Bass, J. K., & Hinton, D. E. (2015). "Thinking too much": A systematic review of a common idiom of distress. *Social Science & Medicine*, 147, 170-183.
- Lorga, T., Srithong, K., Manokulanan, P., Aung, T. N. N., & Aung, M. N. (2012). Public knowledge of diabetes in Karen Ethnic rural residents: a community-based questionnaires study in the far north-west of Thailand. *International Journal of General Medicine*, 5, 799.
- Mendenhall, E. (2016). Beyond comorbidity: a critical perspective of syndemic depression and diabetes in cross-cultural contexts. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, 30(4), 462-478.
- Nichter, M. (1981). Idioms of distress: Alternatives in the expression of psychosocial distress: A case study from South India. *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry*, 5(4), 379-408.