Course description: This inter-disciplinary course introduces students to contemporary theories and research on international migration, development and poverty and the role of remittance and microfinance as new forms of capital alleviating poverty in Latin America and the new Global South (specifically in nations with increasing rates of immigration and micro-enterprising by women (Mexico, Dominican Republic, Peru, Bangladesh, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa.). The main objective of this course is to investigate how migration, remittance and microfinance reduces poverty and promotes development. Does access to remittance or loans help alleviate poverty or enhance the probability of immigration or employment particularly the socio economic mobility of women and their children in both sending and receiving, host societies? What role does the United Nations as well as the World Bank and other ‘mediating’ institutions (such as NGOs and MFIs) play in the globalization of migration and labor, or in the feminization of ‘credit’ among the poor? Are women agents of social change or unwittingly serve the needs of global capitalists in this new form of ‘bottom-up’ economics? How is remittance and micro financing new forms of development and what government or private interventions must take place to increase the banking or formalization of poor people’s capital? Through lectures and active class discussions, including presentations by invited development and poverty experts, students will further explore how families in poor and developing nations can benefit from remittance and micro-enterprising as well as investments. Interdisciplinary case studies from Mexico, the DR, the US, India and Africa will illustrate how migration, employment and micro-financing can affect employment as well as the ability of women and their families to engage in self-entrepreneurship and development and at once elicit greater government and state involvement and accountability.

Guest speakers: To encourage relevant research projects, a number of international and local experts on migration, microfinance and development will be invited as guest lecturers. In addition, students will be introduced to ongoing research projects at the Center for International policy studies (CIPS), an interdisciplinary research which has sponsored three international conferences on comparative immigration, remittances and crisis recovery, as well as site visits by/to other local and international agencies, such as the Office of International Migration and and Bethex Federal Credit Union, including possible site visits to and a number of local merchants and small entrepreneurs in the Bronx. Students are expected to participate in class discussions and prepare a final research presentation. Class presentation: Students will prepare a 3-6 page case study of a migration or microfinance program applying theory to practice. During the last day of class students will conduct a brief, 20 minutes presentation summarizing a case study of research interest. The paper should have 1-2 pages summarizing the NGO, government or multilateral program in addition to 1-2 pages relating this activity to course readings. The final 1-2 pages should include a small proposal of further observations for a larger research project. Students should prepare a power point which includes clear sources and references (citations) for all tables, figures, as well as links to key arguments based on overall theme of the course, including a list of references as the last slide, in standard author (date) title, publisher format (not just urls). Course Requirements: Students should participate in class discussions, answer weekly discussion questions; and prepare short paper and class presentations relevant to immigration, remittances or microfinance (financial access). Reading and discussion questions will be posted on the course calendar after each lecture (due Tuesday, typed 1-2 pages single spaced).

Primary texts: (recommended and required readings from these books in addition to selected articles below):
Secondary texts/references:


Lecture Topics/Readings

Part I: Migration, Development and Gender

1. Introduction and Overview: current controversies in Migration and Microfinance

Videos: PBS Now Documentary 2007 *Whose making money from Microcredit* (video or in words as a debate):
NY Episode 4 Intro (2 mins) NY immigration (10 mins) Full Episode (large file)
Heal Chapter 8, “Getting rich by selling to the poor” pp. 176-91.
Ananya Roy Chapter 3: "Dissent at the Margins: Development and the Bangladesh Paradox
Banerjee and Duflo (2011) A billion barefoot entrepreneurs?

2. Classic and Contemporary Theories of Immigration (discussion questions see course calendar)

Norma Fuentes (2011) NACCs Presentation, April 1st, Pasadena California.

Further reading: Saskia Sassen, (introduction and chapters 1 and 2 in, The Mobility of Labor and Capital).


Part II: Microfinance, remittances and poverty


**Resources for Immigration Research**

- Pew Hispanic Center Resource Page
- International Migration Organization World Migration Report 2005: Costs and Benefits of Migration
- Migration Policy Institute Zef discussion papers by Oded Stark
- Institute for the study of International Migration
- World Bank Migration and Remittances center