

SOAN 350: Border Crossings  
Andrew Gardner, Associate Professor  
Department of Sociology and Anthropology  
University of Puget Sound

## Migration Synopsis: Project Overview

In groups, you'll be working on an applied project allied to a mission of global social justice. The hydrocarbon-rich states of the Arabian Gulf are an emergent destination for the transnational migration of labor. The Gulf States (Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Oman) host a proportionally astonishing number of migrants. As I have explained in class, we have access via the internet to many thousands of potential migrants. We will provide them with some of the information that will be valuable to them, and help them discern some of the typical challenges, problems, and pitfalls that characterize contemporary Gulf migration.

Your group will be assigned a "sending country." Once you're assigned that country, you should:

- Substantially explore the scholarly literature, gray literature, and journalism on Gulf migration. This will include some of my work, and will include quite a bit of other material.
- Locate and digest any material concerned specifically with your assigned migration conduit. Depending on your assigned country, the quantity of available scholarship specific to your conduit will be highly variable.
- Using ethnographic and social scientific scholarship, develop a basic understanding of the social fields these migrants depart – the households, communities, cities, states, environmental pressures, conflict(s), geopolitical positionality, and the other structural forces that shape these migrations and mobilities.

We will work collectively on the format, structure, and design of the report. Your draft migration brief, due at the midterm of the semester. A revised, edited version will be due at the conclusion of the semester, and will be further edited and uploaded to my [academia.edu](https://www.academia.edu) site.

The above portion of research project should be complemented with ethnographic interviews obtained (if and when possible) via social media. These interviews will, ideally, provide verbatim quotes, migrant narratives, and, overall, a deeper and more nuanced understanding of these transnational mobilities.

The report should be fairly short – perhaps four pages maximum. The appropriate length, presentation style, and content should be a central feature of our conversation in class.

The detailed, informed, and ethnographic understanding of a specific, contemporary migrant conduit you develop over the course of this half-semester project will be your foundation for the second half of the semester, in which we explore the scholarly canon concerned with migration, immigration, transnational labor migration, diaspora studies, mobility, and more.