Immigrants in America
SOC 446
Spring 2018 Syllabus

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Course Description

It is a cliché with considerable basis that the United States is a nation of immigrants. The U.S. has a higher absolute number of immigrants than any other nation in the world. Millions of immigrants have come to the U.S. to seek religious freedom, family reunification, political asylum, and economic prosperity. Immigrants play a significant role in enriching American culture and fueling economic growth. At the same time, they are regarded as an “unsettling force” and a burden on taxpayers. Over history we see cycles of immigration and cultural and political backlash. As the numbers of authorized and unauthorized immigrants climbed precipitously since the 1970s, another backlash emerged against immigration. With President Trump, this backlash is being further institutionalized in policy and practices with promises to build a wall on the U.S. Mexican border, bans on immigrants from some predominantly Muslim countries, and deportation raids throughout the country.

The movement of people across borders is a central political issue throughout the world. In both the Global North and Global South the issue of migration generates controversy and at times violent contention. While the mobility of goods and capital are widely considered central to the functioning of a global economy, the mobility of labor—the majority of which occurs not between the Global North and Global South but within the Global South—is also an integral part of the global economic system. The mobility of labor—and of people more broadly—however, is regulated and controlled very differently from that of goods and capital. In the midst of highly contentious immigration debates and refugee crises, it is important to remember that the movement of people, both as workers and as refugees, and the controversy surrounding it is not a new phenomenon.

This course is devoted to understanding controversial issues around immigration to the U.S. We will read and discuss social science research on demographics of immigrants, immigration policy, immigrant incorporation, the impacts of immigration on receiving societies, and more.

Some of the topics we will discuss include: Why do immigrants come to the U.S.? Why do the vast majority of people around the world not migrate? How does population movement affect the migrants themselves and the local communities where they live? What are the economic and sociocultural impacts of immigration on the U.S. society? How new immigrants assimilating or
integrating into host societies? What are the impacts of the militarization of borders or of campaigns to make English the U.S.’ official language?

**Books- Required**

There are no required books for this course. All the readings are available electronically. If you do have a great interest in this subject I do recommend the books below, which are the source for the readings, but you are under no obligation to purchase them.

- These books are on reserve at the PSU Library.

**Course Structure**

This class does not have any quizzes or tests. Instead, students will be evaluated on their rigorous engagement with the readings and completion of three medium length papers. Students are expected to thoroughly and critically read and take reading notes on every assigned reading and then engage their peers through writing discussion prompts and responding thoughtfully and critically in online discussions. Students must demonstrate a thorough and critical understanding of the material through each of these online activities, and they will be graded on each. Students will also complete weekly fact lists and three medium length research papers.

As an online course it is imperative that students read all materials closely and engage with each piece of the weekly learning modules and assignments. The week begins at 12:01 am Sunday morning (i.e. late Saturday night) and ends at 11:59 pm the following Saturday. This weekly structure may not be consistent with other online courses you have taken, so be sure to note this schedule and plan accordingly.

**Required online activities are described in the weekly modules, which are accessible in D2L’s Course Content area.**

**Each weekly module includes:**

1. **Reading and Video Assignments**
   - Students are required to read the assigned readings and videos, which will include chapters from the required books and/or materials that will be posted or can be accessed online. Students are expected to take reading notes and notes of the videos, which will guide them in your “Weekly Facts” and “Group Discussion” assignments.
   - Supplemental Information may be posted each week. The supplemental information is not required, but it may be helpful for your Weekly Reflections.
2. **Weekly Facts (5% of grade)**
   - Each week a list of questions will be posted. Students must research the answers to all of these questions and provide the factual responses. These will be in the form of short facts, not opinions or arguments (there is space for that in discussion and research papers).
   - The factual answers may be found in some cases in the assigned readings and in other cases students must research them in other texts or online. Please refer to the list of fact-based webpages on immigration on D2L as a starting place.
   - These **Weekly Facts** posts are due on D2L by **11:59 pm Saturday**, which is when each week’s module officially closes. They are to be uploaded into the Dropbox section on D2L. No late responses will be accepted.
   - You must provide citations for your facts! If your source is a website, a course or outside text, or a course lecture please follow [ASA reference guidelines](http://www.asa-reference.org). Format: List, double spaced, 12pt font, 1”-1.25” margins, Times New Roman, full heading including name, course name and number, assignment name, and date, and full references in ASA format.
   - These Weekly Facts are the kind of information that in many classes would be part of quizzes or tests. But we have neither quizzes nor tests in this course. You just look up the facts and write them and their source down in a list form and submit them before the weekly deadlines Saturday night at 11:59pm.
   - For example, if you were asked:
     - What does DACA stand for, when was it passed and when was it enacted, and what is an impact studies have found of DACA?
       i. **You might answer: DACA stands for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. It was passed on June 15, 2012 and enacted on August 15, 2012. Studies have found that DACA has led to increased labor force participation. Source:** undocu.berkeley.edu/legal-support-overview/what-is-daca/.

3. **Weekly Reflections (25% of grade)**
   - Each week, students are required to write a 1.5-2 page response paper in which they reflect on posted discussion prompts based on that week’s readings and videos.
   - **Reflections** are due on D2L each **Saturday by 11:59**, which is when each week’s module officially closes. No late posts will be accepted.
   - Format: 1.5 to 2 pages, double spaced, 12pt font, 1”-1.25” margins, Times New Roman, full heading including name, course name and number, assignment name, and date, and full references in ASA format. Word or PDF files only.
   - You should follow Dr. Stepick’s Hierarchy of Knowledge in writing your reflections. This hierarchy is also discussed in the online lecture for Module 1. The more advanced you are in the hierarchy, the more points you earn on your reflections. An example is posted on D2L.
   - Do not exceed page limits. Be succinct. Edit all papers for grammar and clarity before submitting. See the writing center for assistance if needed, prior to the due date of all assignments. [http://www.writingcenter.pdx.edu/](http://www.writingcenter.pdx.edu/)

4. **Dr. Stepick’s Lecture**
   - Students are expected to read and/or watch all of the written and/or video material posted and take notes.
After the first week, Dr. Stepick’s lecture will be posted on Mondays so that he can read your reading reflections from the previous week and incorporate general feedback into the his lecture.

5. Online Group Discussions (15% of grade)
   - Each week students must post a discussion question in the discussion forum for that week based on the readings and/or lecture by Thursday at 11:59pm.
   - Students must then post at least two responses to other students’ discussion questions also by Saturday at 11:59 pm.
   - Responses should reflect engagement with the material, not just an opinion. Further, you must follow the guidelines described in Etiquette and Communicating Online. In particular you must be: Be polite and respectful; Be tolerant of views expressed by others; When reacting to someone else’s message, address the ideas, not the person; and, Be careful when using sarcasm and humor, and do not include any obscenities in your messages.

6. Additional Writing Assignments:
   - One Medium-length Paper (different from Weekly Reflections) (10% of grade)
     - Students are required to research and write one medium-length, 7-10, page papers.
     - Format: 7-10 pages, double spaced, 12pt font, 1”-1.25” margins, Times New Roman, full heading including name, course name and number, assignment name, and date, and full references in ASA format. Word or PDF files only.
     - Students will write on one of two topics. Either:
       - A Migration History, that is researching via interviews or archival analysis the migration history of your own family, another immigrant’s migration history, or an historical figure, and relating this history to the course readings.
       - An Immigration Policy, i.e. researching a proposed or passed immigration policy and writing a policy position paper.
   - A Final Research Paper (Total 40% of grade, divided into 3 components. See below)
     - This paper can be on a particular immigrant group to the U.S. (e.g. Iranians or some other national origin group), a general theoretical topic such as those that organize the weekly course modules (e.g. assimilation) or an in-depth analysis of a policy topic (the history of deportation policy).
     - This paper must demonstrate critical engagement with the readings and connections drawn between the course readings, but must also engage with at least 3 outside scholarly sources and at least 2 more popular sources (such as news media articles, videos, art, or organizational materials).
     - This paper has three components:
       - Selection of a Topic (5% of grade)
       - A Detailed Outline (10% of grade)
       - Submission of the Final Paper (25% of grade)
     - Students are highly encouraged to meet with the Professor and TA to discuss their proposed topics and sources.
     - Please refer to the fuller description of the assignment, including the deadline on D2L.

Weekly Checklist:
➢ Read and/or watch lecture and take notes.
➢ Read posted required readings and take reading notes.
➢ Submit Weekly Facts document (with sources!) by 11:59pm Saturday.
➢ Post a discussion question to the discussion forum by 11:59pm Thursday.
➢ Post at least two responses to other students’ discussion questions on the discussion forum by 11:59pm Saturday.
➢ Ongoing: Work on medium-length papers: data collection (interviews and/or archival analysis, policy research), writing.

Course Outline & Weekly Assignments

1. Week 1 April 1-7 Why do immigrants come?
   a. Reading and Video
      iii. Felciano, Cynthia (2005) Are immigrants positively selected or are they “the worst”? Demography 42:131-152.
      iv. Video: The New Immigrants: A New America. This film is available online via the PSU Library. To view it, you must be either on campus or go to Library.pdx.edu and sign-in as a student. The link is: http://psu.kanopystreaming.com.proxy.lib.pdx.edu/video/america-gilded-age-and-progressive-era-new-i
   b. Lecture my overview lecture on immigration
   c. Weekly Facts:
      i. What do immigration scholars mean by 1st generation, 2nd generation, and 3+ generation immigrants?
      ii. When did the US have the highest proportion of foreign-born, i.e. first generation immigrants?
      iii. What are the current numbers of foreign born and the percentage of foreign born in the U.S.?
      iv. How do immigrants’ education levels today compare to native-born US residents education levels?
   d. Weekly Reflection Prompts:
      i. What is the evidence that immigrants are coming to take advantage of US welfare?
      ii. What is the evidence that immigrants come to have “anchor” babies?
   e. Supplemental Information:
i. Immigration Timeline ocp.hul.harvard.edu/immigration/timeline.html

ii. The website ProCon.org has an excellent, remarkably detailed history of immigration law, although it does use the term “illegal immigration,” which find abhorrent. I and many others prefer the term “unauthorized immigration.” http://immigration.procon.org/view.timeline.php?timelineID=000023

2. Week 2 April 8-14 (Trying) to Cross Borders
   a. Reading and Video
      ii. Immigration Story: The story of U.S. immigrants in their own words. https://myimmigrationstory.com/. Read at least two (2) of these stories. Most are only a couple of paragraphs long.
      iii. Connolly, Daniel. More Mexicans are crossing the border— to leave the U.S. Here’s one family’s story. PRI’s The World, January 18, 2017. https://www.pri.org/stories/2017-01-18/more-mexicans-are-crossing-border-leave-us-here-s-one-family-s-story. The webpage has a transcript and a link to the audio of the story. You can choose which you want.
      vi. Video In the Shadows: Undocumented Immigration in America.
      vii. What is DACA, UC Berkeley undocu.berkeley.edu/legal-support-overview/what-is-daca/
      viii. Supplemental information:
         1. Border Battles SSRC with articles on the border, job impacts of immigration, immigrant criminality borderbattles.ssrc.org
         3. Protecting Immigrant and Undocumented Students, Townhall with Anthropologists Action Network for Immigrants and Refugees, March 15, 2017
         4. EDUCATORS FOR FAIR CONSIDERATION (E4FC)

   a. Weekly Facts:
      a. What country is the second largest source of undocumented immigrants in the U.S.?
      b. In what ways can individuals be undocumented, or more specifically, out of status, other than crossing the border undetected?
   b. Weekly Reflection Prompts:
      a. Why do immigrants come without documents instead of by legal channels?
      b. What effect has increasing border surveillance had on the numbers of undocumented immigrants crossing from Mexico?

3. Week 3 April 15-21 Family
   a. Reading
   b. Video:
      i. Life on the Line. This film is available via the PSU Library. To view it, you must be either on campus or go to Library.pdx.edu and sign-in as a student. The link is: http://psu.kanopystreaming.com.proxy.lib.pdx.edu/video/life-line
   c. Questions of fact: what is a mixed status family? What is a transnational migrant?
   d. Weekly Reflection Prompts:
      i. In what ways does current U.S. immigration policy keep families apart?
      ii. In what ways does it keep them together?
      iii. What are the results of families being separated by immigration policy?
      iv. What suggestions do you have for improvement?

*Short Paper DUE Sunday, April 22nd @ 11:59pm

a. Reading
   i. Card, David. Mariel Impact. 1990, Industrial and Labor Relations Review 43:245-257. PDF on D2L

b. Weekly Facts:
   i. What are the most typical jobs immigrants have?
      1. Give examples of high income, high skilled and low income, low skilled?

c. Weekly Reflection Prompts:
   i. What is the evidence that immigrants take jobs away from “Americans”?
   ii. What is the evidence that they do not?

*Final Research Paper Topic & Sources DUE Sunday, April 29 11:59pm via D2L.

5. Week 5, April 29-May 5 Taxes and Social Services: Do immigrants pose a net fiscal burden, i.e. Do they “cost” government and taxpayers?
   a. Reading
      v. Supplemental Information:
1. Another link from ProCon. It again uses the unfortunate phrase “Illegal immigration,” but it does provide both pro and con sides. http://immigration.procon.org/view.answers.php?questionID=000 788

b. Weekly Facts:
   i. What taxes do immigrants not pay?
      1. Distinguish between undocumented and documented?
   ii. What taxes do immigrants pay, again distinguish between undocumented and documented?

c. Weekly Reflection Prompts:
   i. What services provided by public agencies do immigrants “deserve”?
   ii. What, if any, services provided by public agencies do immigrants deserve not at all or less than natives?
      1. Indicate what you mean or how you decide what someone, immigrant or native, “deserves” a service?

6. Week 6, May 6-12 Are immigrants economically advancing, i.e. What is their and their children’s social mobility?
   a. Reading
      
      
      
   b. Weekly Facts:
      i. What are income and educational levels of immigrants compared to U.S.-born?
      ii. What are income & educational levels of the children of immigrants compared to their parents and to U.S. born?
   c. Weekly Reflection Prompts:
      i. What makes the most difference in socioeconomic mobility for immigrants: opportunities, effort, parental education?
7. Week 7, May 13-19 Do ethnic enclaves trap or help immigrants?
   a. Reading
      iii. Stepick, Alex (1989) Informal Economies Cubans and Haitians in Alejandro Portes, Manuel Castells, and Lauren A. Benton, eds. Weekly Facts:
      iv. What is the difference between an ethnic enclave and an ethnic neighborhood?
   b. Weekly Reflection Prompts:
      i. What is the evidence the enclaves limit immigrants?
      ii. What is the evidence enclaves help immigrants?
      iii. Should local, state or national organizations do anything to promote or inhibit the development of immigrant enclaves and/or neighborhoods?

* Final Research Paper Detailed Outline DUE Sunday, May 20th 11:59pm via D2L.

8. Week 8 May 20-26 Assimilation, Integration, Incorporation: Are immigrants becoming American? Are immigrants learning English?
   a. Reading
      i. Stepick and Stepick, 2010. The complexities and confusions of segmented assimilation, Ethnic and Racial Studies. PDF on D2L
Click on “Download Report”

b. Weekly Facts:
   i. What proportion of first generation immigrants do not know English?
   ii. What proportion of second generation immigrants do not know English?

c. Weekly Reflection Prompts:
   i. Immigrants do not want to assimilate. Comment with facts.

9. Week 9 May 27-June 2 Cultural Issues and Religion

a. Reading
   ii. Rey, Terry and Stepick, Alex. 2011 Introduction: Haitian Religion in Miami, Crossing the Water and Keeping the Faith: Haitian Religion in Miami. NYU Press. PDF on D2L
   iii. Ismail, Aymann. March 7, .2017 What Assimilation Problem, Donald? The White House’s beliefs about Muslim assimilation are completely bogus. I know because of how I assimilated. Slate. PDF on D2L

b. Weekly Facts:
   i. What is the ethnic profile or breakdown of Muslims in the U.S.?
   ii. What proportion, more or less, of U.S. Muslims have become Islamic extremists?
   iii. What are the primary religions of immigrants to the U.S. and their proportions?

c. Weekly Reflection Prompts:
   i. Are immigrants more or less religious than native-born Americans?
   ii. Does immigrant religion threaten or enhance U.S. religious leanings?

d. Supplemental Information:

10. Week 10, June 3-9 Immigration and racial/ethnic relations?

a. Reading
   i. Stepick, Alex, Guillermo Grenier, Max Castro and Marvin Dunn. (2003) Making It Work: Interaction, Power, and Accommodation in Inter-Ethnic Relations in This Land Is Our Land, University of California Press. PDF on D2L

b. Video
i.  [http://sites.nationalacademies.org/dbasse/dbasse_171451](http://sites.nationalacademies.org/dbasse/dbasse_171451) Mary Waters on War on Crime and War on Immigrants

ii.  [The Caretaker + The Mayor](#). This film is available via the PSU Library. To view it, you must be either on campus or go to Library.pdx.edu and sign-in as a student. The link is:

http://psu.kanopystreaming.com.proxy.lib.pdx.edu/video/caretaker-mayor

c.  Weekly Facts: None. Work on Final Paper
d.  Weekly Reflection Prompts:
   i.  What produces anti-immigrant sentiment?
   ii.  What produces positive social interactions between immigrants and natives?

11. Week 11, June 10-16 Finals Week

   a.  **Final Paper due Wednesday, June 13th at 11:59 pm. Submit via Dropbox on D2L**

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**Grades**

While most of you are assuredly taking this class just because immigration is in the news and you want to learn everything you can about it, a few of you may also care about getting a good grade. Please note: NO late assignments of any kind will be accepted. This is without exception. The two lowest grades for weekly reflections only for each student will be dropped for to account for absences, illness, and other extenuating circumstances.

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<th>Component</th>
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<td>Active Participation in online discussions:</td>
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<td>Weekly reflections on the readings:</td>
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<td>Weekly Facts</td>
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<td>Migration History OR Immigration Policy Paper:</td>
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<td>Final Research Paper:</td>
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<td>Selecting Topic</td>
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**Meaning of grades:**

A = Excellent: intense effort and remarkable achievement.

B = Good: good effort and pretty good understanding

C = Okay: barely adequate amount of effort or effort that is somewhat mis-focused or mis-targeted

D = Inadequate effort or mis-targeted effort

F = Little or no effort or complete misunderstanding of expectations

**Re-grading Policy:**

If you wish to dispute a grade on an assignment, you must submit a written, one page statement in writing within two weeks after the exam was returned to the class explaining the mistake you think has been made. We will not discuss grades with students outside of office hours or appointments. If an assignment is re-graded, the entire assignment will be re-graded, not just one component. The TA
and I will discuss the assignment jointly. Your grade may be raised, stay the same, or be lowered. If you simply want to understand what you can do to improve your next paper, I will be happy to help you in office hours.

**Office Hours:**
If you have any questions about the class, the readings, the discussions, or anything else, I will be more than happy to meet with you either during office hours (Wednesdays 1-2pm in CH 217J for Dr. Stepick and by arrangement Quinton Alexander. To schedule another time please email me (Stepick@pdx.edu or the TA, Quinton Alexander (quin4@pdx.edu). In your subject line of the email please write SOC 446.

**Email Policy:**
Email stepick@pdx.edu or quin4@pdx.edu with the subject line: SOC 446. On weekdays either of us will generally respond within 24 hours. Please do not email questions about an assignment the night before it is due. Please be respectful and practice professional email etiquette in your correspondence, which includes addressing the recipient and signing your full name on each email. If you have larger questions please come to office hours of either Dr. Stepick or Quinton Alexander with your course materials and questions prepared. **If your question is about the medium-length paper or any of the assignments for the Final Paper (Topic, Detailed Outline, or completed Final Paper) you must contact us at least two days before they are due.**

**How to succeed in this course:**
Learning is an active process; if you think about the things you've learned the best, they're usually things that you haven't sat back passively and "absorbed," but rather things that you learned by actively taking part and practicing. To accomplish this, you are to submit weekly reflections on the weekly readings, videos and guest lecturers, plus a few other, short assignments.

What does "brief reflection of the readings" mean? It doesn't mean just sitting down and mechanically going through the articles; that's a sure way to make even an interesting article boring. Reading is an active and interactive process between the reader and the text. If you're really reading a text you are also reacting to it. I've included a wide range of texts in order to provoke a wide range of responses from readers. Reading should also be a reflective process. To really understand an article deeply it is usually necessary to read it and think about it, and then read it again, and think about it, and discuss it with others, write about it and read it yet again. I've found that even after many readings, when I read a text in order to explain it to someone else I get new perspectives on the author's arguments and assumptions, on the text's strengths and weaknesses. So when I say, "do the readings," I mean "engage yourself with the ideas of the text." I understand that some of the texts are quite complex and that not all of them are entertaining. Struggle is part of the reading experience. If something is not clear, or is confusing, talk about it with others outside of class, and bring it up in class. As I mentioned above, taking notes on a text while you read it or re-read it is also a very good way to engage the text and to make sure you understand it.
Online discussion of readings is also a key part of the learning process. By actively taking part you also improve your chances of doing well on the other written assignments.

**Accommodations**

If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. The DRC is located in 116 Smith Memorial Student Union, 503-725-4150, drc@pdx.edu, https://www.pdx.edu/drc.

- If you already have accommodations, please contact me to make sure that I have received a faculty notification letter and discuss your accommodations.

**Academic Integrity:**

Students are expected to engage in **academic honesty** in all forms of work for this course. Collaborating with other students is a great idea if you are exchanging rough drafts for constructive criticism, studying for an exam together, brainstorming ideas for a homework assignment, etc.; however, it is NOT okay to take ideas from other students or from their work and call them your own, or to write homework assignments or take-home exams together. It is NOT okay to take ideas from the Internet or from any source without putting them in quotations or paraphrasing them and citing them thoroughly. When in doubt, cite! If you use another person’s ideas or words in your writing, you must acknowledge the original source. The university defines plagiarism as “the taking of another’s words or ideas as if they were your own.” It is a serious offense, and can lead to suspension or expulsion from the university. Do not be afraid to use other people’s words or ideas – just provide proper citation for your sources. The simplest way to avoid plagiarism is to use common sense: use quotation marks where necessary and give credit where credit is due.

PSU has adopted a formal Code of Student Conduct and Responsibility which is administered by the PSU Office of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. The Student Conduct Code, which applies to all students, prohibits all forms of academic cheating, fraud, and dishonesty. These acts include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, buying and selling of course assignments and research papers, performing academic assignments (including tests and examinations) for other persons, unauthorized disclosure and receipt of academic information, and other practices commonly understood to academically dishonor. The code of conduct also describes standards of behavior for all student members of the campus community. Violation of the SCC may lead to disciplinary action. Students may obtain copies of the Student Conduct Code by contacting the campus judicial officer or by visiting her office in the Smith Memorial Center.

**Writing Resources:** I highly encourage you to take advantage of the resources on campus to work on writing skills. The [PSU Writing Center](https://www.pdx.edu/writing) can be found in 188 Cramer Hall, and reached by telephone at 725-3570. Their online appointment system allows you to set, change, or cancel
appointments twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Online they also have a Guided Tour to Writing Papers, Frequently Asked Writing Questions, and Instructional Videos.

A note about sexual harassment and assault: In this class you are welcome to be who you are at all times. You can share anything about your life you are comfortable sharing without fear of judgment or ridicule. As your instructor I appreciate everything that makes you unique. In that same vein I expect nothing more than tolerance and acceptance of others even if their words, life choices, or personal attributes do not agree with yours or your own moral preferences. Everyone is different and that is ok. If you find yourself writing something that judges someone, or potentially offends them, delete it or I will. That sounds harsh, but I have zero tolerance for it. If at any time you notice a questionable post, please make sure I am notified so I can take care of it. Individuality makes life exciting and should be celebrated!

PSU Office of Equity and Compliance has adopted a formal Prohibited Discrimination and Harassment Policy. Discrimination or harassment on the basis of age, disability, national origin, race, color, marital status, veteran status, religion, sex, sexual orientation, genetic information or in the use of Worker's Compensation, Federal Family Medical Leave Act, or the Oregon Medical Leave Act is strictly prohibited by PSU policy.