

POL 415/SOC 450: Advanced Research Participation, Immigrant Integration in Charlotte Community mapping project

The goal of the community mapping project is to gain a better understanding of immigration in the Charlotte context. Before we work with city government professionals to develop a research project focused on immigration in Charlotte, we need to learn more about the landscape. This project will help us to develop an overall picture of the foreign born community in Charlotte – what are the most important demographic and social characteristics of this community? What are the primary challenges to immigrant integration and well-being? And, who are the actors and organizations seeking to address these challenges?

Our “map” will have several components, and students will work in two groups to sketch out knowledge for each of these. Each area will require a different approach to information-gathering, and each will be led by either Dr. Commins or Dr. Wills.

- The demographic and social characteristics of Charlotte’s foreign born community (Dr. Wills)
 - Students should find and read empirical studies and other resources to learn about which demographic variables are important to include.
 - Students will research spatial characteristics of immigrant communities in Charlotte, as well.

- The primary challenges to immigrant integration and well-being, as well as the actors and organizations seeking to address challenges to immigrant integration and well-being (Dr. Commins)
 - Students will search local news and information sources to find coverage related to immigrant integration and well-being, and develop a list of actors and organizations that are working on immigrant integration in Charlotte.
 - Actors and organizations to be considered include (but are not limited to):
 - Leaders in the community
 - Governmental organizations: city and county government, law enforcement, school board
 - Experts in local universities, government, etc.
 - Immigrant advocacy organizations
 - Nonprofit organizations with a focus on service, e.g. the Charlotte Bi-Lingual Preschool