



**University of Guelph
Department of History**

MA Thesis Defence

Student: Jose Alonzo

Date: September 7, 2022

Time: 1:00pm – 3:00pm

Place: Virtual

**“The Balikbayan Program and Labour Export Policy: The
Socioeconomic Relationship Between the Philippine State and
Filipino Diaspora”**

Abstract

In 1973, Filipino President Ferdinand Marcos initiated the Balikbayan Program, a tourism scheme dependent on the return of the Filipino diaspora to their homeland to serve two purposes, legitimize Martial Law and generate foreign exchange through tourism. A year later, the 1974 Philippine Labour Code was formed, encouraging labour migration of Filipino citizens to combat unemployment and generate foreign exchange through remittances. The Balikbayan Program and Philippine Labour Code were frameworks which started the country's economic reliance on its diaspora and developed nationalistic terms such as Balikbayans and Overseas Filipino Workers to link overseas Filipinos to the country. Economic reliance towards the diaspora continued with succeeding administrations, producing a political discourse, that reconceptualized the diaspora as transnational citizens of the Philippines who served for the betterment of the homeland thus, reinforcing and perpetuating their financial contributions and place as important drivers of national and economic development.

Advisor:

Dr. Kevin James

Examination Chair:

Dr. Renee Worringer

Examining Committee

Members:

Dr. Norman Smith

Dr. Jesse Palsetia