1. Immigrants increase the crime rate
Fact: Immigrants are far less likely to commit crimes than native born citizens. Cities with the largest immigrant populations i.e. New York, L.A., Miami, their violent and nonviolent crime rates have consistently declined as immigrant populations have consistently increased. In addition to this, incarceration rates among young males are significantly lower for immigrants than their native born counterparts. The American Civil Liberties Union defends this claim by saying immigrant institutionalization rates are one fifth of native born institutionalization.²

2. Immigrants don’t pay taxes
Fact: Undocumented immigrants pay taxes. Between 50-75% of undocumented immigrants pay federal, state and local taxes. They also contribute to Medicare, pay sales taxes where applicable and property taxes.³ The Institute for Taxation and Economic Policy estimates that households headed by undocumented immigrants paid $11.2 billion in state and local taxes in 2010. That included $1.2 billion in personal income taxes, $1.6 billion in property taxes, and $8.4 billion in sales taxes.¹ The Social Security Administration (SSA) holds that undocumented immigrants "account for a major portion" of the billions of dollars paid into the Social Security system—an estimated $520 billion as of October 2005.²

3. Immigrants don’t want to become citizens
Fact: Immigrants do want to become citizens. As the other group will outline, the process to gain legal citizenship is very complicated, comes with high fees, and will take years to accomplish. Although this process gets consistently harder and the system even more backlogged, the amount of immigrants applying for legal citizenship has increased. According to the American Civil Liberties Union, between the years 2006 and 2007 the applications for citizenship increased by 1.4 million, which was an increase of 50%.²

4. Immigrants take jobs from unemployed U.S. citizens
Fact: Economists estimate that for each job an immigrant fills, an additional job is created. Moreover, immigrants tend to be concentrated in high- and low-skilled occupations that complement -- rather than compete with -- jobs held by native workers. And the foreign-born workers who fill lower-paying jobs are typically first-hired/first-fired employees, allowing employers to expand and contract their workforces rapidly. As a result, immigrants experience higher employment than natives during booms -- but they suffer higher job losses during downturns, including the current one.

5. Immigrants don’t want to integrate into American life
Fact: Today, as before, immigrant integration takes a generation or two. Learning English is one key driver of this process; the education and upward mobility of immigrants’ children is the other. On the first count, today’s immigrants consistently
seek English instruction in such large numbers that adult-education programs cannot meet the demand, especially in places such as California. On the second count, the No Child Left Behind Act has played a critical role in helping educate immigrant children because it holds schools newly accountable for teaching them English. However, the unauthorized status of millions of foreign-born immigrants can slow integration in crucial ways.

6. Immigrants drive down the wages of U.S. workers
Fact: Immigrant workers increase the wages of native-born workers in two ways. First, immigrants and natives tend to differ in the amount of education they have and the skill sets they possess. Second, the addition of immigrant workers to the labor force stimulates investment as new restaurants and stores open, new homes are built, etc. This increases the demand for labor, which exerts upward pressure on wages. With respect to wages, in a 1997 study, the National Research Council estimated the annual wage gain due to immigration for U.S. workers to be $10 billion each year in 2007. In 2007, CEA estimated the gain at over $30 billion per year. The CEA acknowledges that an increase in immigrant workers is likely to have some negative impact on the wages of low-skilled native workers, but they found this impact to be relatively small and went on to conclude that reducing immigration "would be a poorly-targeted and inefficient way to assist low-wage Americans."

7. Immigrants send all of their earned money back to their home countries
Fact: Immigrants do contribute to our economy through home ownership and purchasing other goods and services. The largest way they contribute to the economy is through home ownership, with the U.S. census showing 5.7 million foreign born homeowners. Although immigrants do contribute to our economy, many do send remittances to their families and home countries. According to the American Civil Liberties Union, approximately 51% of immigrants send money to their home countries. Although this money is not going into the U.S. economy it is helping people be able to stay in their home countries rather than migrating to the U.S.

8. Cracking down on illegal border crossings will make the U.S. safer
Fact: The job of protecting the nation’s borders is immense, encompassing nearly 7,500 miles of land borders, 12,380 miles of coastline and a vast network of sea ports, and international airports. The Border Patrol has nearly doubled in size in the past five years, to more than 20,000 agents. Still, our southwest border is more a classic law enforcement challenge than a front line in the war on terrorism. Anti-terrorism measures rely heavily on intelligence gathering and clandestine efforts that are unrelated to border enforcement. Analysts claim that if we provided enough visas to meet the economy’s demand for workers, border agents would be freed to focus on protecting the nation from truly dangerous individuals and activities, such as drug-trafficking, smuggling and cartel violence.
9. Immigrants come to the U.S. to use welfare
Fact: Undocumented immigrants are not eligible for federal public benefits such as Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, Medicare, and food stamps. Even most legal immigrants cannot receive these benefits until they have been in the United States for five years or longer, regardless of how much they have worked or paid in taxes.¹ In one estimate, immigrants earn about $240 billion a year, pay about $90 billion a year in taxes, and use about $5 billion in public benefits.

10. Immigration is an all-time high and most new immigrants came here illegally
Fact: The historic high came more than a century ago, in 1890, when immigrants made up 14.8 percent of our population. Today, about two-thirds of immigrants are here legally, either as naturalized citizens or as lawful permanent residents, more commonly known as "green card" holders. And of the approximately 10.8 million immigrants who are in the country illegally, about 40 percent arrived legally but overstayed their visas. As for the flow of illegal immigrants, apprehensions along the U.S.-Mexico border have declined by more than 50 percent over the past four years, while increases in the size of the illegal population, which had been growing by about 500,000 a year for more than a decade, have stopped.

¹ U.S. Chamber of Commerce Immigration Myths
http://www.uschamber.com/reports/immigration-myths-and-facts

² American Civil Liberties Union
http://www.aclu.org/immigrants-rights/immigration-myths-and-facts

³ Justice for Immigrants Immigration Myths

⁴ 2003 Myth Handout pdf
http://daylaborinfo.org/Documents/MythsandFacts.pdf

⁵ Top 5 Myths of Immigration: Meissner
http://www.statesman.com/opinion/meissner-5-myths-about-immigration-665627.html