

SYLLABUS: SOCIOLOGY OF GLOBALIZATION
SOCIOLOGY 130SG/FALL 2007, T. 5:00-7:50, LSB 1001
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Course Description and Overview

Globalization, it is widely recognized, is profoundly remaking social structure and transforming the lives of people in every corner of the planet. Our personal biographies are linked to increasingly dense networks of global interrelations, as the integration of societies, economies, and cultures fundamentally transforms human life. The concept of globalization is contested, meaning that there are different and competing understandings of what the term means and how to assess the process. One of the most basic definitions is provided by sociologist Roland Robertson: “Globalization as a concept refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole...both concrete global interdependence and consciousness of the global whole in the twentieth century.”

Regardless of how we conceive globalization, the concept has taken academia by storm over the past one to two decades. It occupies an increasingly prominent place in the social sciences and humanities, and even in the natural and applied sciences, and for a very good reason: it is impossible to understand the world in the early 21st century without understanding globalization and its consequences. With this in mind, the objective of this course is to explore what has come to be known as **globalization studies**, and in particular, to survey the distinct themes sub-areas that make up the **sociology of globalization**. These include: globalization studies and theories of globalization; the global economy; political globalization; globalization and culture; transnational civil society/transnational social movements; globalization and gender/race/ethnicity; transnational migration; local-global linkages; global supernumeraries: the new global inequalities. **Note:** there are several other major sub-themes in globalization studies, such as (but not limited to) globalization and the environment and globalization and religious, which we will not cover due to time constraints. However, the sociology department, among others, offers a number of other courses on globalization.

This course will require hard work and a lot of reading. It will be an eye-opener for those willing to work hard and to **think critically**. The course attempts to help students develop the critical thinking analytical skills, and the historical perspective necessary, to examine own deeply held assumptions regarding the social world and to apply sociological inquiry in an attempt to provide explanations for phenomena associated with globalization. If you are looking for an easy four units then this course is definitely not for you and I advise you to drop. If you are prepared to work hard you will come away with greatly enhanced knowledge of the contemporary globalized world and how we go about understanding it. **Please note: you should hold on to this syllabus, as it is a week-by-week guide to the**

course, readings, assignment due dates, and so forth.

Required Readings

- 1) Reading Packet of Selected Articles and Book Excerpts (available at Grafikart, 6550 Pardall Road, Isla Vista. Ph: 968-3575.
- 2) Manfred Steger, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction*.
- 3) Mike Davis, *Planet of Slums*,

Grading, Assignments, and Related Issues

As with all my courses, there are no formal exams, but you WILL be expected to WORK HARD and to prepare a number of written assignments.

Twenty five points will derive from five in-class “pop quizzes” on the readings (five points per quiz). Ten points will derive from two in-class group exercises. Forty points will derive from four written “briefs” on course readings and videos, and the remaining 25 percent will derive from a final report based on your exploration of websites on globalization. There will be at least one opportunity for extra credit (TBA). Please note: *A hard copy of all assignments must be turned in; I do not accept any assignments by e-mail.*

You are expected to do ALL the assigned readings and to come to class prepared to discuss these readings. Please bring each week’s reading to class with you. You are encouraged to ask questions, debate, and provide critical commentary on the readings and the lectures.

Students are expected to arrive on time to class and to not leave early unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. I also ask that you turn off cell phones and beepers while in class.

Please note that attendance is not voluntary; it is required. I may take spot attendance checks at any time. You will lose two points for each absence. I may take attendance at any time....first five minutes, last five minutes, etc. Even if you are present for most of the class you will be counted as absent if you are not present when I take role. The only excused absences are medical and family emergencies, with proper documentation.

Pop Quizzes: There will be five pop quizzes, administered in the first few minutes of class. Each of these five quizzes will be on the readings due on the day the quiz is given. If you have done the readings you will have no problem answering the question and receiving five points. You will receive a zero if you arrive late to class and miss a quiz.

In-Class Exercises: On two separate occasions I will have the class break up into small groups to collectively discuss course readings and topics. You will receive five points for each exercise in which you participate.

Briefs: You will have to turn in four written briefs on the assigned readings, videos, class lectures and discussions. Each brief should be approximately 3-4 double-spaced typed pages (name and perm number on top). Each brief should develop an analytical discussion on the particular topic assigned, mentioning the readings for that topic, lectures, videos and discussions. Please refer below to the week-by-week schedule, which will indicate the topic you are to write on and due dates.

Report on Website: The final graded assignment out of class will be to explore several globalization websites. You should explore at least five websites from the following list. You should print up at least one article or essay from each website and attach it to your report. Your report should be some 9-12 pages approximately, double spaced. You should identify each website you visit and provide a brief description. You should as well discuss how the content of each website relates to the sub-themes of the course and what new or insightful things you learned from each website to round out your perspective and knowledge of globalization studies. As well, you should discuss specifically and in more detail at least one article or essay from each site, and attach a print-out of that essay to your report.

The Global Exchange, <http://www.globalexchange.org/>
Zianet, <http://www.zmag.org/ZNETTOPnoanimation.html>
International Forum on Globalization, <http://www.ifg.org/>,
Center for Research on Globalization: <http://globalresearch.ca/>
Transnational Institute: <http://www.tni.org/>
Institute for Policy Studies: <http://www.ips-dc.org/>
World Trade Organization: <http://www.wto.org/>
Third World Network: <http://www.twinside.org.sg/>
Open Society Institute (George Soro's website) http://www.soros.org/about/bios/a_soros
Globalization Research Center: <http://www.cio.com/research/global/>
The Globalist: <http://www.theglobalist.com/>
World Economic Forum: <http://www.weforum.org/>
BBC World Serve, Globalization:
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/programmes/globalisation/>
Global Policy Forum: <http://www.globalpolicy.org/globaliz/websites.htm>
Focus on the Global South: <http://focusweb.org/>
Globalization Guide: <http://www.globalisationguide.org/index.htm>
The Globalization Website: <http://www.sociology.emory.edu/globalization/index.html>
Yale Global Online: <http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/index.jsp>
LSE Center for Global Governance: <http://www.lse.ac.uk/Depts/global/>

This report will be due the last day of class. Please be prepared as well to discuss in class your experience.

Outline of Course

Week-by-Week Schedule of Readings and Topics:

Oct 2: Introduction and Overview of Course

No readings required.

Oct. 9: Theories/Discourses of the Global System

Readings:

- “Thinking Globally” (in reading packet)
- Robinson, “Critical Globalization Studies” (in reading packet);
- Steger, chapters 1 and 2
- Robinson, “Theories of Globalization” (in reading packet)
- “Global Cities” (in reading packet, encyclopedia entry)
- “Global Consciousness” (in reading packet, encyclopedia entry)
- “Global History” (in reading packet, encyclopedia entry)
- “Global Village”
- “Glocalization” (in reading packet, encyclopedia entry).
- “Connectivity” (in reading packet, encyclopedia entry)
- “Networks” (in reading packet, encyclopedia entry)
- “Space”
- “Time”
- “Third Way”
- “World Polity Theory”
- “World Society Theory”
- World Systems Theory”

First Brief: Discuss the set of readings for October 9. What was your conception of globalization prior to these readings? Have these readings helped you to gain greater inside into globalization? In what ways? What new concepts did you find most useful? How may these concepts be relevant to your own life? This brief will be due on October 16.

Oct. 16: The Global Economy

Readings:

- Steger, chapter 3.
- “International Institutions and Global Economy” (in reading packet)
- “Free Trade Zones” (in reading packet, encyclopedia entry)
- “Fordism/Post-Fordism” (in reading packet, encyclopedia entry)
- “Transportation” (in reading packet, encyclopedia entry)
- “Transnational Capitalism: An Interview with William I. Robinson” (in reading packet)

First brief due today.

Possible Film: TBA

Oct. 23: Political Globalization: Power, Transnational Politics, Global Governance and the State

Readings:

- Steger, chapter 4.
- Kenicse Ohmae, “The End of the Nation State” (in reading packet);
- “Global Governance” (in reading packet, encyclopedia entry)

Excerpts from Film: The Corporation

Oct. 30: Globalization, Culture, and Global Communications

Readings:

- Steger, chapters 5 and 6
- Jan Nederveen-Pieterse, “Globalization and Culture: Three Paradigms” (in reading packet)
- Appadurai, “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy (in reading packet).
- “News Agencies” (in reading packet, encyclopedia entry)
- “News Channels, Global” (in reading packet, encyclopedia entry)

Film: Orwell Rolls in His Grave

Nov. 6: Transnational Social Movements/Transnational Civil Society – Transnationalism, Transnational Communities, Transnational Families.

Readings:

- “Explaining Social Movements” (in reading packet)
- “Civil Society” (in reading packet, encyclopedia entry)
- “Counterhegemonic Globalization: Transnational Social Movements in the Contemporary Global Political Economy” (in reading packet)

Possible Film: TBA

Second Brief: Watch the films “Babel”. Analyze the film employing the terms, concepts, analytical frameworks, and theories we have covered so far in the course. How does the film’s storyline help us “bring to life” the diverse topics and concepts covered so far? Using a critical globalization studies perspective, what may be some of the film’s weaknesses, if any? Strengths? NOTE: this must be an analytical and scholarly discussion using your developing critical globalization studies skills. A mere description of the film will result in a very low grade.

Nov. 13: Globalization and Women/Gender.

Readings:

- “Critical Globalization Studies and Gender” (in reading packet)
- Ehrenreich and Hochschild, *Global Woman* (excerpts in reading packet);
- “The International Division of Reproductive Labor” (in reading packet)
- “Feminism” (in reading packet, encyclopedia entry)
- “Feminization of Poverty” (in reading packet, encyclopedia entry)

Film: Maquilapolis

Second Brief Due Today.

Third Brief: Access to website of the International Organization for Migration (an inter-governmental agency affiliated with the United Nations system), at <http://www.iom.int/jahia/jsp/index.jsp>. Summarize what this website is about – what kinds of information does it offer, etc? – and discuss how the readings for November 20 help you to explore this website and gain insight into its contents.

Nov. 20: Transnational Migration/Globalization and Race/Ethnicity.

Readings:

- “Transnationality” (in reading packet, encyclopedia entry)
- Portes, “Transnational Communities: Their Emergence and Significance in the Contemporary World-System” (in reading packet);
- “Emigrants as Heroes” (in reading packet)
- Robinson, “Aqui Estamos y No Nos Vamos...” (in reading packet)

Possible Film: TBA

Third Brief Due Today.

Fourth brief: Discuss Mike Davis’ book. What does he mean by “planet of slums” and how is this related to the sociology of globalization? How have the topics we have covered in this course related to this book and its contents? Use the concepts and analytical insights you have gained from this course to develop a critical discussion on the book, that is, a critical book review using the tools of globalization studies (NOTE: “critical” in this case does not mean you need to “criticize” Davis; it means you should develop an analytically sharp discussion).

This brief will be due on December 4.

Dec. 4: Global-Local Linkages: The New Global Inequalities - Global Supernumeraries.

Course Conclusions

Readings:

- Mike Davis, *Planet of Slums*

Fourth brief due today.

Report on Websites due today.