

Sociology 360/450: Sociology of Globalization
Winter 2010
MWF 9:00-10:40
Room TBA

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Course Description

As the 1990's unfolded, in academic, policy, and media circles it became increasingly common to assert that we live in the age of "globalization." This claim gained such widespread circulation that it eventually took on the status of conventional wisdom, its various possible meanings rarely explored, much less its basic assumptions ever challenged. This course will investigate the socio-political origins and effects of the notion that globalization is an inevitable state of affairs, or simply "the way the world works," like it or not. Other questions addressed include: Is globalization historically unprecedented? Is globalization really global? What mixture of technological, economic, political, cultural, and other forces are driving it forward? What collective movements have emerged to contest globalization, what are their respective critiques, and what respective alternatives do they propose for organizing socio-political life?

Course Goals

This course endeavors to equip students with the following capabilities:

1. The ability to discern the many angles of "globalization."
2. A skeptical attitude toward dominant representations of "globalization," including the image of "globalization" as a supernatural force beyond human control.
3. An appreciation of the historicity of "globalization," and its character as a *socio-political* project (including its *ideological* aspects).
4. The ability to detect differences between various "anti-globalist" movements on the basis of their differing affiliations and worldviews.
5. The ability to reasonably forecast possible directions in which "globalization" might head.
6. The ability to speak intelligibly (in English) and write coherently (in English) about subjects 1-5.

Classroom Activities

Class sessions will be comprised of a mixture of lectures and short seminar-style presentations and discussions.

Prior Academic Preparation

It is strongly suggested that, prior to enrolling in this course, students first have completed Sociology (SOC 150/180), Ideas and Theories in the Social Sciences (SOC 250), and Economics of Globalization (ECN 322). Other courses useful to take

previously to this one include World History, World Civilization, Introduction to Global Studies, and International Relations.

Course Materials

- Glenn, John. 2007. *Globalization: North-South Perspectives*. London: Routledge.
- Other readings to be placed on library reserve, especially from Robin Cohen and Paul Kennedy. 2007. *Global Sociology*. Second Edition. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Steger, Manfred. 2005. *Globalism*. Second Edition. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Evaluation

Group discussion of key issues will figure centrally in this course. Participation in discussion will count 20% of the overall course grade; if students make a sincere and visible effort to contribute comments that reflect thoughtful engagement with course material, they will earn full credit for participation.

Students have to make a short presentation (5 minutes). It will be worth 20% of the overall course grade.

There will be one in-class exam. It will be worth 20% of the overall course grade.

Finally, students have to write a short (4-10 pages) academic paper. The paper should be about a comparison and evaluation of two discussed theories. The paper will be worth 40% of the overall course grade.

Schedule

January 13: Introduction to the course.

Reading: Glenn, *Globalization: North-South Perspectives*, Chapter 1.

January 15, 18: Globalization: Myth or Reality?

Reading: Glenn, *Globalization: North-South Perspectives*, Chapter 2.

January 18, 20: How Global is Globalization?

Reading: Glenn, *Globalization: North-South Perspectives*, Chapter 3.

January 22, 25: Modernity and the Evolution of World Society.

Reading: Cohen/Kennedy, *Global Sociology*, Chapter 3.

January 25, 27: Trade Liberalization and Economic Growth.

Reading: Glenn, *Globalization: North-South Perspectives*, Chapter 4.

January 29, February 1: Globalization and the Reconfiguration of the State.

Reading: Glenn, *Globalization: North-South Perspectives*, Chapter 5.

February 1, 3: Patterns of Global Poverty and Inequality.

Reading: Glenn, *Globalization: North-South Perspectives*, Chapter 6.

In-class exam, February 5

February 8, 10: The Ideology of Globalism.

Reading: Steger, *Globalism*, Chapter 3.

February 10, 12: Antiglobalist Challengers from the Political Left and Right.

Reading: Steger, *Globalism*, Chapter 4.

February 15, 17: Crime, Drugs and Terrorism: Failures of Global Control.

Reading: Cohen/Kennedy, *Global Sociology*, Chapter 9.

February 17, 19: Population and Migration.

Reading: Cohen/Kennedy, *Global Sociology*, Chapter 10.

February 22, 24: Tourism: Social and Cultural Effects.

Reading: Cohen/Kennedy, *Global Sociology*, Chapter 12.

February 24, 26: Global Governance: Is More Better?

Reading: Glenn, *Globalization: North-South Perspectives*, Chapter 7.

Final paper due March 2