

Department: GEOG

Course No: 1100 [165]

Credits: 3

Title: Globalization

Contact: Alexander Vias

Content Area: CA2-Social Sciences and CA4 Diversity and Multiculturalism

Diversity: CA4 International

Catalog Copy: GEOG 165. Globalization. Either Semester. Three credits. Study of the spatial linkages between social, cultural, economic, political and environmental processes driving change around the world today. Focus on theory and impacts of globalization through case studies at the local, regional, national and international scales.

Course Information: a. A central objective of GEOG 165 is to introduce students to globalization as a complex process that can be examined from a number of perspectives, with a focus on the geographical nature of the process. An additional objective is to help students appreciate how globalization works at multiple spatial scales, and the interaction of the local with the global, and vice versa.

Finally, an objective of the course is to demonstrate to students the broad nature of globalization and its impacts, and how the process touches virtually all aspects of society (e.g., culture, politics, and the economy) and the environment. At the end of the course, students will be able to better analyze and understand a number of the global processes changing everyday life for people around the world. (see attached preliminary syllabus for more information)

b. Each week students will read material from the class text, and at least 1-2 readings on WebCT. Additionally, students will regularly assess their understanding of materials through online quizzes. Other weekly requirements include participation in online and in-class discussions, and completion of in-class writing activities. A semester-long writing project, that will undergo several iterations (with feedback), will culminate in a short 5-7 page paper on a topic in globalization. Finally, there will be three exams, with a format that includes multiple choice and short essay questions. (see attached preliminary syllabus and paper rubric for more information)

c. Rather than focusing on regions and places, GEOG 165 uses a variety of geographical principles and models to examine spatial economic, political and cultural “processes,” especially the role of geographic scale on these processes and the significance of spatial interaction between different parts of the world. A major theme throughout the course is the tension created through globalization processes, especially between different cultures, and between the developed and developing nations of the world. At all times, the value of examining global processes and impacts from multiple perspectives is emphasized.

Tentative Order of Topics :

1. Introduction to Globalization: A Geographic Perspective
2. Globalization Theory: How Do I Know Globalization When I See It? How Can We Understand and Gauge Globalization Processes?
3. Forces of Globalization I: Technological Change
4. Forces of Globalization II: People on the Move
5. Global Political Integration: History, and the Role of War
6. The Rise of International Governance
7. Global Trade, Markets and Finance
8. Firms, Transnational Corporations, and Global Production Networks
9. Culture and Multiculturalism in a Global Society
10. Cultural Change from Above and Below: Cultural Imperialism, and the Fundamentalist / Indigenous Backlash
11. Impacts of Globalization on the Environment: From the Local to the Global
12. Where Are We At? Is Globalization a Juggernaut of (Good/Bad) Change or Much Ado About Nothing?

Meets Goals of Gen Ed: 2. Acquire intellectual breadth and versatility – The course is intended to introduce globalization to students from the perspective of multiple disciplines (sociology, political science, economics, cultural studies, environmental sciences, etc.), but with an overlying theme that geography is central to understanding this complex process of change. Central to the course is that no single discipline can offer a comprehensive view of globalization. From this course, it is expected that students will move on to higher level courses in the different disciplines.

5. Acquire awareness of their era and society – Globalization, both at the popular and academic levels, has become one of the most hotly contested issues of the past decade. Students will acquire a basic understanding of many of the processes driving globalization today, and the multi-faceted impacts of these processes.

6. Acquire consciousness of the diversity of human culture and experience – Acquiring this knowledge is central to the course, especially understanding how globalization processes may impact different peoples and societies of the world in varied ways. Understanding the geographical differences in the economies and cultures of the world is what allows us to understand the varied impacts of globalization.

7. Acquire a working understanding ... continue to acquire and use knowledge – The course's readings, written assignments, and a variety of discussions will help student achieve this goal. Students will learn about many of the different sources of information crucial to academic inquiry, and to critically judge the nature of that information. Students will also learn that no one perspective offers the answers to the social processes driving global change. That is, simple answers do not always work.

CA2 Criteria: 1. Introduce students to theories and concepts of the social sciences – The course introduces students to theories and ideas from such disciplines as geography (e.g., spatial agglomeration, distance decay), economics (international trade theory), sociology (e.g., stratification),

especially the role they play in globalization processes.

2. Introduce students to methods used in the social sciences ... - In this course, students will use data from a number of sources, especially those used by many social scientists (Census, UN, and other government sources), and utilize tools of data analysis such as cartography and simple statistical techniques. Additionally, students will develop an understanding of how many social scientists do research, especially the development of models, the testing and verification of models, and how models can evolve, change, and be replaced over time. Ethical issues related to the gathering and use of public/private data are explored. Students are also introduced to the dilemma scholars confront when trying to analyze society and societal change in an objective manner, especially given the unintended biases we all bring to any analysis because of our cultural upbringing.

3. Introduce students to ways in which individuals, groups, behave and influence one another and the environment – At the heart of this course is the significance of spatial interaction between societies around the globe. Additionally, students will learn that interactions also take place at different spatial scales—between individuals, institutions and states, and between the local and the global. Finally, students will discover that at every step of the globalization process the environment is profoundly affected, be it local land degradation, or global warming, and that global disparities make some peoples and societies more/less able to manage the environmental problems that are emerging.

4. Provide students with tools to analyze ... groups... and to examine social issues and problems ... international level – The course really emphasizes the value of using a geographic framework for analyzing the complexity of globalization. While all the social science disciplines provide key insights on many of the processes driving global change, the geographic nature of globalization, and the interaction between places and spatial scales, really provides a solid foundation for organizing and understanding the variety of cultural, political, economic, and environmental changes taking place. In addition, students will learn that the impacts of globalization can vary along a number of different societal fault lines, between: different racial and ethnic groups, different cultural groups, men and women, people of different ages, and between different economic and social classes.

CA4 Criteria: 1. Emphasize varieties of human experiences.....and/or modes of creativity – the variety of human experiences and perceptions is emphasized through numerous case studies that articulate the subtle and/or major differences in the impacts of globalization on indigenous cultures in various parts of the world. For example, while the broad and powerful economic processes of capitalist expansion at a global scale may alter traditional economic and cultural systems, new opportunities have emerged for cultures that significantly differ from western cultures. A major case study of this issue to be presented in class will address the increasing popularity of international music styles which have grown very popular on their own, but which are also adapted to reflect the experience and style of different cultural groups around the world. Additionally, while interest in these international styles of music helps preserve these culturally distinct types of music, it has become a big business dominated by multinational corporations.

In addition, the views of different peoples around the world with respect to globalization will be explored. This will be done through the selective use of articles written by the residents of nations facing the significant impacts of globalization. In the field of geography, this emerging literature featuring indigenous scholars has more clearly elucidated how different societies view and react to the globalization process. Material on this topic is also provided through careful use of selected newspapers from different parts of the world, and now available on the internet. I have found through my own experience reading a number of international newspapers that events related to culture, political, environmental, and economic change are often viewed from a completely different perspective when seen from the eyes of people of other nations (whose cultural norms differ from our own).

3. Consider the similarities that may exist among diverse groups – the course considers a major criticism of globalization, “cultural imperialism,” and how this process might be homogenizing world cultures, for better or for worse, Especially important will be a discussion of how diverse groups view the globalization processes, the important role of distinctive cultural roots and identities to peoples and societies, how this heterogeneity benefits everyone around the globe, and the emerging backlash from people facing the disintegration of their indigenous cultures . At the same time, alternative views that stress the potential for globalization and international trade to reduce economic disparities (by creating niche opportunities for once remote/isolated economies[e.g. cultural tourism]) around the world will be introduced, perhaps lessening a major source of global tensions today.

4. Develop an understanding of and sensitivity to issues involving human rights and migration – In this course, the problems and tensions created through migration and the development of multicultural societies is extensively explored. Also, considered is the conflict emerging in immigrant groups trying to maintain their cultural heritage while trying to assimilate and adapt to their new homes. At the same time, the development of global institutions such as the UN and Amnesty International is analyzed, especially the role of these institutions in counterbalancing the traditional power of nation-states, and the part they play in advocating and monitoring human rights around the world, and in allowing those politically marginalized to have a voice.

International: 1. The course focuses on issues of diversity/multiculturalism issues in developed countries like Canada , Singapore and Australia , and in developing nations like Mexico , Indonesia , China , Egypt , and Brazil , especially on the role of migration in creating the opportunities and problems associated with these diverse populations. Additional material on cultural conflicts within countries between long-term indigenous societies and recent immigrants is introduced.

2. The course focuses on cultural continuities and transformation of time and place – The course carefully examines how globalization has drastically transformed some societies, while other societies have successfully developed ways of slowing the process of cultural change and the destruction of local indigenous cultures. In fact, students will learn how some indigenous cultures have utilized globalization processes, especially international tourism, as a way to simultaneously promote economic self-reliance and ensure the continued survival of local traditions.

Some emphasis will be given to countries like China and India that are benefiting economically from globalization processes, moving these countries to the top tiers of economic powerhouses. At the same time, much of China and India remain under-developed, and the process of globalization has created large classes of both economic winners and losers. Finally, many of the issues related to cultural conflict and tension are embodied in these countries as well, where the forces of global pop culture in urban areas are running head on into cultures with long and proud histories, and where traditional beliefs still remain strong, especially in the more rural parts of these countries.

Role of Grad Students: M.A. level graduate assistants attend class, aid in proctoring and grading tests, and grading assignments. They also tutor individual students. In addition to M.A. level duties, some Ph.D. level graduate students develop and deliver lectures in the course as part of their preparation (in GEOG 415) for delivering the course as primary instructor. As primary instructors, Ph.D. students are supervised both by their advisors and by the Geography 160 coordinator.