
Syllabus – Geography 1301 – Our Globalizing World

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 9:05-9:55 am, Anderson 250, 4 credits: 12 hours per week
Fulfills Liberal Ed requirements of International Perspective Theme; Social Science Core; and Writing Intensive

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Office hours: Monday 10:00 am–1:00 pm and by appointment, 514 Social Sciences

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Teaching Assistants (TAs): ____

****Readings, this syllabus, and other course materials posted on course Web Vista site****

<https://www2.webvista.umn.edu/webct/logon/778683089121>

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Course Overview: This course is an introduction to themes that connect the experiences of everyday life to processes that are “global” in scale. We explore human geography approaches to our food, clothing and consumer goods, housing, and transportation systems, and to a wide range of activities that bring the concept of globalization into our experience and our local context. We take as a starting place a variety of activisms that draw our attention to global issues, as people figure out how to make their behaviors and decisions meaningful in the difficult-to-grasp context of planetary scale. Concepts from human geography—such as migration, flow, networks, boundaries, place, space, and scale—help us understand the many ways we depend upon and influence the networks within which we act. Thinking geographically about our globalizing world may help us interact more thoughtfully with the spheres of influence that affect us and that we affect in our larger regions, nations, and world.

This course meets three times per week: one discussion section for discussing course themes and readings and for working on term projects, and two course meetings for lectures, films, and talks by guest speakers.

Each week we will concentrate on one of the topics listed in the weekly chart below, breaking the topics into smaller sections; each course meeting gives us time for about two topic sections. In addition, each week we’ll work on one topic related to writing and the way that academic knowledge is produced. These topics relate to the sequence of your term project.

You are required to attend all course meetings. You are responsible for all class content; in order to reschedule missed work and examinations, inform your TA in advance if you must miss class. *Attention* includes not only being there and respecting the course’s start and finish time, but also being *attentive*: In order to cultivate an attentive learning environment for you and your peers, no sleeping, chatting about non-class topics, or using cell phones or the internet.

*In order to achieve the course objective of **learning to think geographically about our globalizing world**, the course has five themes, or learning outcomes.*

1. First, you will learn how to identify, analyze, and address problems related to themes of globalization. These themes are represented in news headlines about environmental and geopolitical issues and also connect to your everyday life, decision-making, and spheres of influence. They include the global networks that affect you and that you affect.
2. Second, you will learn how to locate and collect information about these themes and how to critically evaluate the way that this information is created and used.
3. Third, you will learn how to use some of the basic concepts and methods of inquiry and communication that characterize human geography, including how to observe and interpret (or “to conduct field research on”) human-environment relations in different places and at different scales.
4. Fourth, you will learn how to construct effective arguments and to assess, respect, and engage competing arguments and perspectives—and also how to explore how knowledge, practices, and power are different in different places and spaces, and from different perspectives, particularly in relation to processes of globalization.
5. Fifth, you will develop skills, strategies, and habits to improve your writing, as well as your research, reading, speaking, and listening.

Reading, Writing, and Requirements the Course Fulfills

Since this is a 1000 level class we will help you build skills that will be useful throughout your undergraduate program. You will learn how to take effective notes in class, how to use the library, how to go about research, how to write persuasive academic papers, how to read critically, how to present your views verbally, and what it means for to link your academic learning with the world outside the classroom. We will practice *reading, writing, listening, lecturing and discussing* as different ways to think through the topics addressed in this course. Each of these ways of considering information supports the goal of the course – *to learn to think geographically about our globalizing world*. We will add to the brief overview that follows of these different ways to think through the course material in a series of in-class workshops and accompanying resource materials.

In addition, if you have not yet taken the basic library Unravel tutorial, you should plan to do so in the first two weeks of class: <http://www.lib.umn.edu/site/aboutunravel.phtml>

Required texts and other class materials will be posted on the course Web Vista page.

Materials for each week will be posted in advance, usually at the start of each larger course section. In order to understand what we will be talking about during each lecture, and to participate in class discussion, you are expected to have thoughtfully read the texts assigned each week by the end of that week (*before* attending the next week’s classes and discussion). We will discuss upcoming readings each week; ***check the Web Vista page regularly to keep up with current readings.***

I encourage you to ask questions and I may call on you during class; I will also ask you to write brief responses to course themes in class. Your participation in class helps me understand how you are understanding the course materials, and it also helps you think about the topics at hand in different ways. All of the course instructors will meet every other Friday to discuss the course’s progress. We will regularly solicit your questions and feedback on the course, and please feel free to discuss them with us at any time during the semester.

Teaching assistants (TAs) will facilitate discussion sections, which are a chance for you to explore the course material with your peers and to work more closely on course topics and assignments than the lecture format allows. In these smaller class meetings, you will practice speaking skills by presenting your project for peer review (and reviewing your peers), presenting summaries and analysis of required and supplementary readings, and engaging in discussion exercises.

This is a **writing intensive course**. You will be writing a small amount (1-2) pages each week, focusing on how writing can be used as a tool for thinking, learning how to effectively refine and edit text, and considering how various writing strategies might successfully engage with different purposes and different audiences. We will use a multi-part term project to practice different kinds of writing, and we will spend at least half of one class meeting each week working on writing, through demonstrations, workshops, and formal and informal in-class writing exercises. We will focus on *quality over quantity*; with a 4-5 page project worth (across all of its parts and drafts) 40% of your course grade.

This course also fulfills Liberal Educational requirements of the **International Perspective Theme** and **Social Science Core**. This means that we will consider in some detail the central role of social relations and social organization in environmental, economic, political, and cultural globalization. In our approach to these themes, we will think explicitly about the ways that **persuasive arguments**, the central rhetorical device of the social sciences, are constructed, supported, and performed. Studying the way that the category of globalization is used to frame contemporary global issues, and the way that globalization is itself studied, especially in international contexts, will encourage students in this course to think critically about what it means for the University to require you to be “exposed to the responsibilities of global citizenship,” to “develop intercultural competence,” and to “understand our changing global world, the ways in which [you] will participate in global change, and anticipate how [you] might be impacted by international policy and economics.”¹ These questions of geopolitics, development, and agency are also relevant to the **regional analysis and development** (RAD) track in Geography, of which this course is a part.

¹ From a draft of the UMD Liberal Education Forum, accessed August 2008 from <http://blog.lib.umn.edu/wpayne/libed/2008/04/> The TC version reads: “Comprehension of the ways in which you are part of a rapidly changing global environment dominated by the internationalization of most human endeavors,” (From “Liberal Education requirements and courses,” accessed August 2008 from http://onestop.umn.edu/degree_planning/lib_ed/s/)

Week by Week Schedule

Week	Dates	Class Topics
<i>basic themes and issues of globalization and environment</i>		
1		Introduction & course details: topics of globalization, spheres of influence, geographies of globalization
2		Challenges of environmental and international current issues; modernization, development, and the built environment; Basic political economy and ecology. Description of term project
3		<i>No class meeting; field trip (discussion sections do meet)</i> Migrations, flows, boundaries, connections, location & place; development & modernization as expectations and practice
<i>global processes</i>		
4		Intro to economic globalization; the global production line & global supermarket
5		Following commodity chains; waste; full life cycle analysis of the stuff of everyday life; ecological footprint & food miles as measures of globality and globalization
6		Financial institutions & political globalization; Crises: credit crisis; mortgage & housing crisis; farm crisis; food crisis, green revolution, sustainable development
7		Midterm Review <i>No class meeting; field trip</i> Midterm exam
<i>local environments</i>		
8		Energy; the manifestation & measurement of other global processes in local environments; Uneven development & gentrification
9		Migrations, flows, boundaries; Place attachment & mobilization <i>No class meeting; field trip</i>
10		Power geographies & geometries; Orientalism & the flat world
11		Infrastructure(s)
<i>engagements and interventions</i>		
12		Activisms & new world orders
13		Consumer activism; alternative agri-food activism; sustainable consumption? <i>No class meeting: Thanksgiving</i>
14		Perspectives on themes of globalization
15		Summary: Thinking and acting locally and globally Review and Evaluation
Final exam: 1:30pm-3:30pm Wednesday, May 12		

Course Evaluation, Deadlines, and Academic Integrity

Mid-semester exam, Mar ?, in class:	15%
Final exam, 1:30pm-3:30pm Wednesday, May 12:	15%
Participation in discussion sections, summary exercises, & field trips:	30%
Term Project (breakdown below, explained in class):	40%
A: Preliminary proposal / letter of intent (5%, due Sep 26)	
B: Explanation of sources (10%, due Oct 22)	
C: Very close to final draft (10%, due Nov 14 ← earlier)	
D: Facilitated discussion of project (5%, in discussion sections, weeks 10-12)	
Final version (due Dec 8): (10%, due Dec 8 ← earlier)	

There will be a mid-semester and a final exam, each of which will be a combination of multiple choice and essay questions. There will also be short summary and in-class writing exercises and one longer, multi-part project. Material for the exams and in-class writing assignments will be drawn from lectures, films, tutorial section, and the readings. No make-ups exams or exercises will be allowed, except for validated medical emergencies. Students with such emergencies must contact their TA before the exam starts or an exercise is due.

The term project will involve constructing a **proposal** for a project that *could* address a problem that relates to your everyday life and also to the themes of the course. The stages of the project will include:

- a preliminary **letter of intent**, written to me and the TAs to explain what you would like to do, why, and how, and identifying an appropriate audience to which to propose your project
- **an explanation of research resources** in which you **collect data and review relevant literature** that will support your project and convince your audience that you deserve support for the project you propose
- a **well constructed draft of the proposal**, written to the audience you have identified, and incorporating feedback you have received on the previous stages of the project
- an **oral presentation of the project proposal** to a review body of your peers
- a 4-5 page **final version of the proposal**, taking all feedback into account, and supported by a portfolio that shows progress through the previous stages of the project

Readings, lectures, and exercises in class, outside of class, and in the discussion sections have been designed to support this project and to build the knowledge base and skills you will need to carry it out successfully.

In order to succeed in this course (and also to attain a good grade), you must: Attend all lectures and tutorial sections; demonstrate an ability to explain all concepts with your own words and examples; complete the weekly readings and any activities associated with them before class; complete all assignments and projects. These are minimum requirements; your class performance across all activities must also demonstrate outstanding performance. It is your responsibility to keep copies of all your exams and papers, including the grades and comments added by the TA, in case you need to document your performance for any reason.

General criteria for evaluation and definitions of grades:

A = Excellent. Represents achievement that is **outstanding** relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements; strong evidence of original thinking; good organization; capacity to analyze and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence of extensive knowledge base.

B = Good. Represents achievement that is **significantly above** the level necessary to meet course requirements; evidence of grasp of subject matter; some evidence of capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with literature.

C = Adequate. Represents achievement that **meets the basic course requirements** in every respect; student who is profiting from his/her university experience; understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material.

D = Marginal. Represents achievement that is **worthy of credit** even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements; some evidence of familiarity with subject matter and some evidence that critical and analytic skills have been developed.

S = Satisfactory. Represents performance equivalent to or better than a "C-" on the A-F scale.

F (or N) = Inadequate. Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either completed but at a level of achievement not worthy of credit or was not completed.

Specific rubrics for each assignment will be provided with assignment details. Twenty percent of the course grade will have been assigned by the end of 8th week; students who have below a C- at that point should consult with instructors.

Academic Integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty, and to follow the University Student Conduct Code. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own, can result in disciplinary action. Academic dishonesty in any portion of the academic work for a course shall be grounds for awarding a grade of F or N for the entire course.

Access, Disability, and Information Format: If you know of any factors in your life that may hinder your abilities to learn up to your potential in this course, please notify your TA at once. If these factors are recognized disabilities under the ADA, please contact your TA during the first week of class so that your needs can be accommodated. Protect your legal rights by contacting your TA before any graded assignments are turned in, and contacting me before the first exam: accommodations cannot be made retroactively. You may also wish to contact the Office of Disability Services (McNamara Center Suite 180: 626-1333, <http://ds.umn.edu/>). Students unable to use the course Web Vista site should notify their TA of this during the first week, and we can provide course materials in alternate formats.

In this class, our use of technology will sometimes make students' names and U of M Internet IDs visible within the course website, but only to other students in the same class. Since we are using a secure, password-protected course website, this will not increase the risk of identity theft or spamming for anyone in the class. If you have concerns about the visibility of your Internet ID, please contact me for further information.

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