Introduction to the Sociology of Globalization

Professor: Joseph Harris (josephh@bu.edu)
Class Time: T/R 3:30-4:50pm
Class Location: CAS Room 203
Office Hours: T/R 12:30-2 or by appointment (SOC 247)
Phone: 617-435-9797

Globalization—what is it? When did it begin? How influential is it? How desirable is it? Is it inevitable? Are alternatives possible? This course will provide undergraduates with an introduction to major theoretical and empirical work that bears on globalization from a sociological perspective. The course takes place in three parts. Part I provides a conceptual and historical introduction to globalization. Part II examines empirical evidence bearing on four commonly made claims about globalization: (1) globalization undermines states, (2) globalization fosters democracy, (3) globalization leads to better developmental outcomes, and (4) globalization leads to homogenization. Part III explores the relationship between globalization and a number of different critical thematic areas, including work, health, human rights, conflict, and migration.

Course Requirements:

1. **Weekly attendance and active participation** in the course. Frequent absences and lack of engagement in class discussion may affect your participation grade.

2. **Five multiple choice quizzes** on the material covered in class and the readings.

3. **Op-Ed** in which you address a globalization-related problem

4. **Midterm and Final**

Grading:

- Weekly attendance and participation 10%
- Quizzes (5 @ 7% each) 35%
- Op-Ed 15%
- Midterm 20%
- Final 20%
Required Textbooks:

There are no required textbooks for this course. All materials are available online or through the course website.

Academic Integrity:

As BU students, you are expected to live up to the university’s academic code of conduct. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Cases of scholastic dishonesty will be referred for disciplinary action and penalties, including but not limited to failure in the course. Undergraduates taking this course are subject to the BU University Academic Conduct Code (http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/), while graduate students are subject to GRS Conduct Code and Academic Discipline Procedures (http://www.bu.edu/cas/students/graduate/forms-policies-procedures/academic-discipline-procedures/).

Disability and Accomodations Statement:

Students are expected to attend class. Student athletes must provide the professor with a game schedule for the semester, signed by the coach, to be eligible for an excused absence. If there is a religious holy day that will require your absence, please notify me no later than the first two weeks of class so that we can make arrangements for your absence. If a student misses class due to an unexcused absence, their absence may be reflected in their participation grade. In the event of an absence, the student should notify the professor in advance and seek notes from one of their colleagues. I will not provide class notes to absent students.

Students needing academic accommodations are encouraged to contact the Office for Disability Services (353-3658). If you require special accommodations, please notify me within the first two weeks of class so that accommodations can be arranged in a timely manner.

Part I – What is Globalization?

1. Concepts and History


2. Theories of Globalization

T (Jan 26): W.W. Rostow (1963) “Stages of Economic Growth” – classic modernization theory (14 pages)

Andre Gunder Frank (1966) “Development of Underdevelopment” – dependency theory (13 pages)

R (Jan 28): Daniel Chirot and Thomas Hall (1982) “World-System Theory.” (15 pages) DIRECTIONS: Skip the following pages: 88-89 (start reading again at the Dependency Theory header), 94-97 (start reading again at Some Criticisms of the Theory header), and 104-6 (bibliography - no need to read)


3. Developmentalism and the Rise of Neoliberalism


QUIZ #1 on Weeks 1-2

R (Feb 4): Peter Evans (1989) “Predatory, Developmental, and Other Apparatuses.” (15 pages) DIRECTIONS: read pp. 569-84 only

Part II – Interrogating Claims about Globalization
4. **Globalization Undermines States**  
Discussion: *Are nation-states becoming obsolete? Are they being “hollowed out” by globalization, or do they still have important roles to play?*

**T (Feb 9):** Susan Strange (1996) “The Declining Authority of States” (6 pages)

Kenichi Ohmae (1996) “End of the Nation-State” and “Rise of the Region State” (12 pages)

**R (Feb 11):** Linda Weiss (1997) “Globalization and the Myth of the Powerless State” (9 pages)

Anne-Marie Slaughter (1997) "The Real New World Order" (11 pages)

Kofi Annan (2001) “The Role of the State in the Age of Globalisation” (4 pages)

5. **Globalization Leads to Better Developmental Outcomes**  
Discussion: *Has globalization “raised all boats,” or has a significant part of the world been left behind? How has globalization impacted developmental outcomes?*

**T (Feb 16):** NO CLASS – BU MONDAY SUBSTITUTION

**R (Feb 18):** Thomas Friedman (2005) “It's a Flat World After All” (9 pages)

Pankaj Ghemawat (2007) “Why the World Isn’t Flat” (7 pages)

**QUIZ #2 on Weeks 3-4**


6. **Globalization Fosters Democracy**  
Discussion: *Has globalization fostered enhanced political participation? Has it fostered democracy? Has it thwarted democracy? What is the relationship between globalization and democracy?*


Benjamin Barber (1992) “Jihad vs. McWorld” (10 pages)
7. **Globalization Leads to Homogenization**  
Discussion: *Many argue that globalization inevitably leads to a convergence of cultures. Does globalization equal Americanization? Is homogenization inevitable? Are vibrant differences possible under globalization? Is resistance possible?*


**QUIZ #3 on Weeks 5-6**

**************SPRING BREAK (MAR 5-13)***************


**R (Mar 17):** MIDTERM COVERING WEEKS 1-7

**Part III – Examining the Relationship between Globalization and Our World**

8. **Globalization and Work**

**T (Mar 22):** Edna Bonacich and Richard Appelbaum (2000) *Behind the Label*  
Introduction (25 pages) NOTE: YOU ARE ONLY REQUIRED TO READ THE INTRODUCTION

Raveena Aulakh (2013) “I Got Hired in a Sweatshop in Bangladesh. Meet my 9 year old Boss.” Available at:  

9. Globalization and Human Rights


http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic446176.files/Week_7/Keck_and_Sikkink_Transnational_Advocacy.pdf

10. Globalization and Environment

T (Apr 5): Guest Speaker: Dr. Julie Klinger, Pardee School of International Relations

Adil Najam et al. (2007) "Environment and Globalization: Five Propositions" (pp.4-28)  

New York Times. (2008) "Whose Rain Forest is this Anyway?"  
http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/18/weekinreview/18barrionuevo.html?_r=0

QUIZ #4 on Weeks 8-9

http://www.asanet.org/images/members/docs/pdf/special/asr/ASR_65_1_Article_4_Frank.pdf

11. Globalization and Conflict

T (Apr 12): Thomas Friedman (1996) “Foreign Affairs Big Mac I” (2 pages) Available at  

Mark Oxley (2008) “War and McPeace: Russia and the McDonald's theory of war” (1 page) Available at  
http://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/sep/06/russia.mcdonalds


12. Globalization and Migration

T (Apr 19): Castles, Migration and Community Formation under Conditions of Globalization

QUIZ #5 on Weeks 10-11


13. Globalization and Health

T (Apr 26): Guest Speaker: Rebecca Farber on Medical Tourism


William Fisher and Thomas Ponniah (2003) Another World is Possible (19 pages)

***Paper copies of Op-Ed Assignment Due in class on Apr 28***