

**Proseminar****Globalization: Promises and Discontents**

CORE-GG2014

Gallatin School of Individualized Study

New York University

Fall 2011

## COURSE INFORMATION

Professor **Ritty Lukose**, Office 715 Broadway (or 1 Washington Place), room 610; email: [ritty.lukose@nyu.edu](mailto:ritty.lukose@nyu.edu).

Course Schedule: Mondays, 6:20-8:20pm, 715 Broadway, room 401.

Office Hours: My regular office hours are Mondays, 9-2, Tuesdays 9-12. I can be available between 2-4pm on Mondays to meet. Please email me.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

In popular and scholarly discourse, the term "globalization" is widely used to put a name to the shape of the contemporary world. In the realms of advertising, a variety of media, policymaking, politics, academia, and everyday talk, "globalization" references the sense that we are now living in a deeply and ever-increasingly interconnected, mobile, and speeded-up world that is unprecedented, fueled by technological innovations and geopolitical and economic transformations. Drawing on perspectives from history, anthropology, cultural and literary studies, geography, political economy, and sociology, this course will explore theories, discourses, and experiences of globalization. Running through the course are three central concerns: 1) exploring claims about the "new-ness" of globalization from historical perspectives, 2) examining how a variety of social and cultural worlds mediate globalization and 3) analyzing a contested politics of globalization in which the opportunities for social mobility and transformation are pitted against renewed intensifications of exploitation and vulnerability along long-standing vectors of difference and inequality. While "globalization" is often touted as a "flattening" of the world, this course moves beyond such clichés to understand the intersection between large-scale transformations in political economy and culture and multiple cultural worlds situated unevenly on the world's map.

While the above provides you with some description of the substantive content of the course, this class is also a proseminar for masters students. Therefore, another aspect of this course addresses your development within Gallatin. We will be examining *globalization* as an example of how one can do *interdisciplinary studies* at the graduate level. Along those lines, the course has two goals:

- 1) A key component of the course involves short and longer writing assignments that will help you to learn to articulate in written form the logic of an academic argument, to compare and contrast arguments and to synthesize and critique arguments and debates that emerge from a variety of perspectives. These are exercises in critical reading and writing skills that will be crucial for your graduate study.
- 2) A second goal of the course is to help you to understand how one goes about exploring a complex theme (globalization just being one example) from a variety of disciplinary perspectives.

So, we will spend time focusing on the logic of inquiry of several different disciplines and methods that are used.

#### REQUIRED TEXTS

*Sweetness and Power* by Sidney Mintz

*A Short History of Neoliberalism* by David Harvey

*Growing Up Global: Economic Restructuring and Children's Everyday Lives* by Cindi Katz

*Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection* by Anna Tsing

*Brick Lane* by Monica Ali

All books are available through Shakespeare and Company Booksellers, 716 Broadway at Washington Place (212-529-1330). All other reading materials will be available through the course blackboard website which everyone MUST be able to use.

Also, this syllabus is a work in progress. There might be occasions during the course of the semester when readings might change and/or additional materials added and assignments shifted as well. While I don't anticipate this happening very frequently (and of course, I will give you notice), I would like the course to be open to our evolving conversation.

#### COURSE PROCEDURES AND ASSIGNMENTS

This is a seminar course. Therefore, punctuality, regular attendance and participation are important for this class to work well. Arrival in a timely way and regular attendance is a requirement. If, due to illness or other emergency, you must miss class, please let me know via email.

**One brief paper** (2-3 pages) will be due the second week of class. This paper must 1) offer your own definition or understanding of globalization, and describe issues you are most interested in pursuing during the course, and/or some examples of globalization you have experienced in your own life; and 2) describing your own Gallatin concentration, the disciplines and fields of inquiry you intend to draw on, and the state of your own thinking about a thesis. This assignment will not be graded.

**Six 3-5 page discussion papers** (typed, double spaced, 12 point) will be due (see course schedule). These assignments are of two types:

- 1) There are four academic books (I am excluding the novel) that we will be reading this term. All of you must turn in an analytical summary of each of these books. This entails writing a 3-5 page concise precis of the book. This will involve identifying the book's main question/thesis, a discussion of how the author develops her/his thesis, and situating the text within the broad field of "globalization". How does each book approach "globalization" in a particular manner? What are the different methodological and theoretical approaches taken in these works? These papers are **not** "reaction/response" papers, but short, focused, engaged, analytical summaries.
- 2) An additional two short discussion papers correspond with the last session of a thematically organized section of the syllabus. There are three weeks when its possible to turn one of these papers in (October 3, November 14, November 28). You must choose two dates from among these to turn in two discussion papers. In these papers, you should pull out a specific concept, an issue, or a question that enables an entry point into a meaningful and vigorous set of reflections that compare, contrast, and synthesize the readings of that section of the syllabus. The goal here is a well conceived, substantive

discussion paper. It will therefore be important to balance breadth and depth in choosing authors to compare. Each of these papers must include discussion of at least 2 but no more than 4 of the authors that were assigned for that section.

**A final paper, 8-10 pages in length** (again, typed, double-spaced, 12 point) will be due at the end of the course. This paper is an opportunity for you to explore and elaborate on a theme or issue in the class that is of particular interest to you. There are two parts to this assignment.

In preparation for the final paper, write a paragraph that explains what you are attempting to explore in your final paper (what issue? What problem?) and identify the key sources that you will use in researching and writing your final paper. Name at least three sources and provide full bibliographic information (using whichever system of citation you choose: Modern Languages Association (MLA) or University of Chicago Style).

The final paper: This paper resembles the shorter discussion essays you will have turned in throughout the semester and might even build on one of them, but it must incorporate at least 5 outside sources to provide additional background, evidence and support. This paper must reflect some of the readings and issues we have discussed during the semester, but should also extend beyond them to explore issues in more depth and/or breadth.

Note about Blackboard: This class makes use of the Blackboard course platform. All students are required to know this program and use it. I have created a **discussion forum** on blackboard for use by the class. I encourage you to use it and supplement our in-class discussions. I am not requiring that you post to the forum, but your participation on this forum will be incorporated into your participation grade if you do and I will be monitoring the forum to see what kinds of issues come up. Also, **all** written work must be submitted electronically via blackboard. Please use the “assignments” tab on the left hand bar.

Breakdown of grade: 30% participation, 40% shorter discussion papers, 30% final paper.

Plagiarism is an increasingly important and difficult issue in college teaching that I take very seriously. If you have any questions about plagiarism, there are many guides about plagiarism and how to avoid it (see for example:

<http://gethelp.library.upenn.edu/guides/engineering/ee/plagiarize.html>).

## COURSE SCHEDULE

September 12 – Introduction

### **Debating Globalization**

September 19

Read: Thomas Friedman, “It’s a Flat World, After All”  
 Subcommandante Marcos, “Tomorrow Begins Today”  
 World Social Forum, “Porto Alegre Call For Mobilization”  
 International Forum on Globalization, “A Better World Is Possible!”  
 Vandana Shiva, “Ecological Balance in an Era of Globalization”

**Due:** 2-3 page paper on own understanding of globalization and concentration.

September 26 **No Class.** I am out of town for a conference.

October 3

Read: Joseph Stiglitz, “Globalisms Discontents”  
 Jagdish Bhagwati, *In Defense of Globalization*, pp. 1-35  
 Amartya Sen, “How to Judge Globalism”  
 J. Mickelthwait and A. Wooldridge, “The Hidden Promise: Liberty Renewed”  
 Benjamin Barber, “Jihad vs. McWorld”  
 Samuel Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?”

**Due:** 3-5 page discussion paper, turn in the day before class (October 2)

### **Historicizing Globalization**

October 10

Read: Janet Abu-Lughod, “Discontinuities and Persistence: One World System or a Succession of Systems?”  
 Amitav Ghosh, “Mangalore” from *In an Antique Land*  
 Immanuel Wallerstein, “The Modern World-System”

Anthony Giddens, “The Globalizing of Modernity”

Start *Sweetness and Power*

October 17 Sydney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power* (entire book)

**Due:** 3-5 page analytical summary of *Sweetness and Power*, turn in the day before class, October 16

### **The Political Economy of Globalization**

October 24 Miguel Korzeniewicz, “Commodity Chains and Marketing Strategies: Nike and the Global Athletic Footwear Industry”

Saskia Sassen, “Spatialities and Temporalities of the Global: Elements for a Theorization”

Suzanne Bergeron, “Political Economy Discourses of Globalization and Feminist Politics”

October 31 David Harvey, *A Short History of Neoliberalism*

**Due:** 3-5 page analytical summary of *A Short History of Neoliberalism*, turn in the day before class, October 29

### **Globalization and Culture**

November 7 Stuart Hall, “The Question of Cultural Identity”

Monica Ali, *Brick Lane*

November 14 Arjun Appadurai, “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy” and “The Production of Locality”

Thomas Bestor, “How Sushi Went Global”

James Ferguson, “Of Mimicry and Membership: Africans and the New World Society”

**Due:** 3-5 page discussion paper, turn in the day before class, November 13

### **Citizenship and Globalization**

November 21 Martha Nussbaum, "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism" and various respondents

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Righting Wrongs"

Peter Redfield, "Doctors, Borders and Life in Crisis"

**Due:** Paragraph and bibliography about final paper

November 28 Susan Strange, "The Declining Authority of States"

Jessica Mathews, "Power Shift"

Sangeeta Kamat, "The Privatization of Public Interest: Theorizing NGO Discourse in a Neoliberal Era"

Arjun Appadurai, "Deep Democracy: Urban Governmentality and the Horizon of Politics"

**Due:** 3-5 page discussion paper, turn in the day before class, November 27

### **Difference and Inequality in a New World Order**

December 5 Cindi Katz, *Growing up Global*

**Due:** 3-5 page analytical summary of *Growing Up Global*, turn in the day before class, December 4

December 12 Anna Tsing, *Friction*

**Due:** 3-5 page analytical summary of *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Interconnection*, turn in the day before class, December 11

Final Paper due December 19 (Monday) by 5pm.