



Mahidol University  
International College

## ICIR 211 Globalization and Social Change

### Course Description & Aims:

This course provides a critical introduction to globalization as a topic of academic investigation and debate. It examines the origins of globalization as well as the factors which have contributed to its acceleration in the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. The consequences and contemporary challenges posed globalization – economic, political and socio-cultural – serve as a focal point for lectures and discussions.

The global structures and transformations of the late twentieth century; the global economy; food supply; population; disease; environment, resources, and pollution; communications; geopolitics; national states, regional, and international organizations; minorities; the role of women; warfare and terrorism; migration and refugees; crime; culture. Students will understand; analyze; assess global structures and transformations in the world.

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### Assessment

Attendance/Participation	20%
Film reviews	10%
Take-home mid-term essay	25%
Group presentation	15%
Final exam	30%

### Course Learning Outcomes

At the completion of the course the student will be able to:

1. Explain what globalization refers to and assess related theoretical debates.
2. Discuss the relationship between industrial capitalism, technological change, the growth of transport networks, the acceleration of information flows, the spread of urbanization and the emergence of modern world.
3. Assess the impact of globalization in the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.
4. Discuss the main challenges posed by economic globalization at present.
5. Critically assess prevailing mechanisms for global governance, international cooperation and collective security.
6. Discuss the spread of international movements and the rise of identity politics.
7. Explain and critically assess transnational civil society, world culture and global public opinion.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1	Explaining globalization
2	World system theory: Industrial capitalism and global economy
3	Networks, urban centers and the modern world
4	Governance: empires, nation-states, and international communities
5	Development: paradigms, progress and problems
6	Global finance, transnational economy and global labor
7	New media, cross-border information flows and transnational civil society
8	Climate change and global resource scarcity
9	Cross-border migration and identity politics
10	Collective security arrangements
11	Globalization: future scenarios
12	Group presentations

### **Assessment Methods & Criteria**

- 1. Attendance/Participation (20%)**
- 2. Film reviews (10%)** - During the term, students must submit two, short review/critiques of one of the films recommended for student viewing.
- 3. Take home essay (30%)** - In week six, students will be given a take-home mid-term assessment. Completed (four-page) essay are due back in week seven.
- 4. Group Presentation (20%)** - In week twelve, students will present a ten minute presentation on some aspect of globalization and social change.
- 5. Final Exam (30%)** - Students will be given a choice of essays based on material covered in the latter half of the course.

### **Texts**

Reading will be assigned from three digital texts.

1. J.T **Roberts**, Amy Bellone Hite, Nitsan Chorev (eds). (2015). *The Globalization and Development Reader: Perspectives on Development and Global Change (Second Edition)*. Wiley Blackwell.
2. Mark **Juergensmeyer** (ed). (2014) *Thinking Globally: A Global Studies Reader*. Berkeley: U of California Press.
3. F.J. **Lechner** and John Boli (eds). (2015). *The Globalization Reader (Fifth Edition)*. Wiley Blackwell.

## Explaining Globalization

**Topic description:** Students will be introduced to the course, instructor expectations and assessment criteria. They will also be given an overview of globalization as a topic of historical investigation and theoretical debate.

**Expected learning outcomes:** an understanding of course requirements and a critical awareness of globalization as both a topic of study and a point of intellectual debate

### **Readings:**

- Required: Amartya Sen, “How to Judge Globalism” in Lechner, pp. 19-24
- Recommended: Thomas Friedman, “The World is Ten Years Old” in Juergensmeyer, pp 30-38.

### **Web resources:**

- <https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/mcat/society-and-culture/demographics/v/globalization-theories>
- <http://infed.org/mobi/globalization-theory-and-experience/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JJ0nFD19eT8>

### **Activities:**

- Student self-introductions
- Small group brainstorming on the meanings of globalization
- Discussion of Sen reading

## World System Theory: Industrial Capitalism and Global Economy

**Topic description:** In week two, students look at the role of industrial capitalism in the development of a global economy. Discussion will focus upon the consequences of the industrial revolution, its impact on social relations in Europe, its role in the advent of European imperialism and the growth of global trade and communications networks.

**Expected learning outcomes:** a critical understanding of globalization as an economic process as well as a better understanding of the impact of European imperialism in accelerating political, economic and cultural globalization

### **Readings:**

- Immanuel Wallerstein, “The Modern World System as a Capitalist World Economy” in Lechner, pp 56-62

### **Recommended films:**

- Globalization at the Crossroads <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gnh5MliG4gQ>
- The Globalization Tapes <https://topdocumentaryfilms.com/the-globalization-tapes/>

### **Activities:**

- Small group research on the rise of internationalism
- Discussion of Wallerstein reading.
- Classroom exploration of available resources on globalization at Princeton University <https://globalization.princeton.edu>

## Networks, Urban Centers and the Modern World

**Topic description:** In week three, we consider the role of cities in shaping contemporary understandings of global modernity. Nodes on overlapping transport, trade and communication networks, cities are where most of the world’s people now to dwell. They are also spaces of concentrated wealth and cultural hybridity that frequently have far more in common with each other than the hinterlands they serve to govern and define.

**Expected learning outcomes:** a critical understanding of how urbanization and cities contribute to globalization as well as an understanding of the problems posed by urban expansion.

**Readings:**

- Saskia Sassen, “Global Cities” in Juergensmeyer, pp 261-269
- Recommended: Mark Ravinder Frost, “Asia’s Maritime Networks and the Colonial Public Sphere” [http://www.nzasia.org.nz/downloads/NZJAS-Dec04/6\\_2\\_5.pdf](http://www.nzasia.org.nz/downloads/NZJAS-Dec04/6_2_5.pdf)

**Web resources:**

- Urbanization <https://ourworldindata.org/urbanization>

**Recommended films:**

- Urbanized (2011)

**Activities:**

- Small group discussion of readings and web resources.

**Governance: Empires, Nation States and International Communities**

**Topic description:** In week four we consider the rise (and fall?) of the nation-state and national governance. Focus will be upon decolonization and the end of empire, the efforts integrate scores of new national polities into an international community the ensuing problems that have emerged.

**Expected learning outcomes:** a critical understand of the nation-state paradigm and problem it poses for equitable and effective global governance

**Readings:**

- Susan Strange, “The Declining Authority of States” in Lechner, pp. 232-238.
- William Robinson, “The Transnational State” in Juergensmeyer, pp. 286-291.

**Web resources:**

- UN Membership [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XpQKoS\\_p8QY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XpQKoS_p8QY)

**Activities:**

- Small group discussion of readings and web resources.
- Debate on the merits and demerits of national governance.

**Development: Paradigms, Progress, Problems**

**Topic description:** In week five, we will consider how post-WWII economic development efforts contributed to the integration of global economic activity. We will also consider how approaches to development have changed over time and take stock of the problems that have arisen as a result of development efforts.

**Expected learning outcomes:** a critical understanding of the relationship between development, inequity and continued global poverty

**Readings:**

- Robert Collier, “The Bottom Billion, Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What can be Done about It” in Lechner pp 202-207.

**Web resources:**

- UN Sustainable Development Indicators

**Activities:**

- Small group assessment/critique of sustainable development goals

**Global Finance, Transnational Economy and Global Labor**

**Topic description:** With an eye on the promotion of equity and sustainability, students will consider the relative merits of leaving economy matters to the market and global institutions or managing local economies through state equity investment and ownership. In small groups they will also review material in preparation for their take-home midterm assessment.

**Expected learning outcomes:** an understanding that in matters of economic managements, nation-states can and do play a protective role in protecting local resources for the benefit of local publics.

**Readings:**

- Richard Appelbaum, “Outsourcing” in Juergensmeyer, pp 321-326.
- Branko Milanovic, “Global Income Inequality by the Numbers” in Lechner, pp 197-201.

**Web resources:**

- Transnational Institute <http://longreads.tni.org/state-of-power-2019/big-finance-key-players/>
- Global Financial Integrity <https://gfintegrity.org>

**Recommended films:**

- The Corporation

**Activities:**

- Small group discussion
- Small group review

**New Media, Cross-border Information Flows and Transnational Civil Society**

**Topic description:** In week seven, we consider how the advent of digital media, the Internet and stepped-up cross-border information flows have fostered transnational civil society and global public opinion.

**Expected learning outcomes:** an understanding of the extent to which global media networks shape public understandings and determine agendas in international relations

**Readings:**

- Mary Kaldor, “Social Movements, NGOs and Networks” in Juergensmeyer, pp 480-483.
- Anders Uhlin, “The Transnational Dimension of Civil Society”

**Web resources:**

- Pew Global Research <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/>

**Activities:**

- Small group assessment/critique of transnational media advocacy

## Climate Change and Global Resource Scarcity

**Topic description:** This week, students look at climate change, global warming and ocean acidification. They also consider the immediate consequences of global temperature rise: shifting weather and rainfall patterns; melting glaciers and polar ice caps; rising sea levels and attenuated coastal flooding.

**Expected learning outcomes:** an understanding of how climate change is affecting human populations and the ecosystems they rely upon for food security; an understanding that the principal responsibility for climate change sits with the developed – as opposed to the developing – world

### **Readings:**

- Catherine Gautier, “Climate Change” in Juergensmeyer, pp 417-425.
- Recommended: Davis Wallace-Wells, “The Uninhabitable Earth”  
<http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2017/07/climate-change-earth-too-hot-for-humans-annotated.html?gtm=top>

### **Web resources:**

- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change <https://www.ipcc.ch>

### **Recommended films:**

- The Age of Consequences
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### **Activities:**

- Small group discussion of Wallace-Wells.

## Cross-border Migration and Identity Politics

**Topic description:** Cross-border human flows and a seemingly concomitant resurgence of identity politics are the topics of discussion in week nine. Focus will center upon the factors giving rise to stepped-up migration and the impact that such population shifts are having on host communities.

**Expected learning outcomes:** recognition of migration as a historical process that is likely to accelerate due to changing climactic and economic condition; understanding of the difficulties this poses for both receiving states and the broader international community

### **Readings:**

- Seyla Benhabib “Citizens, Residents and Aliens in a Changing World” in Juergensmeyer, pp 213-216.
- Ulf Hannerz, “Cosmopolitans and Local sin World Culture” in Lechner, pp 486-491

### **Web resources:**

- Migration Data Portal [https://migrationdataportal.org/?i=inflow\\_total&t=2016](https://migrationdataportal.org/?i=inflow_total&t=2016)

### **Recommended films:**

- Ai Wei Wei’s Human Flows

### **Activities:**

- Small group analysis of case studies

## Collective Security Arrangements

**Topic description:** Weapons of mass destruction, global conflict management and security arrangements are the topics of week ten. With total warfare seemingly precluded by the development of ever-more potent weapons of mass destruction, the world has shifted towards

new types of conflict, conflict management strategies and weapons systems, most notably precision weaponry deployed against enemies without formal declarations of war.

**Expected learning outcomes:** a better understanding of modern warfare

**Readings:**

- Hardt and Negri, “Empire” in Juergensmeyer, pp 257-261.

**Web resources:**

- T. Barnett, The Pentagon’s New Map  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2H1QZRzG6No>
- Forensic Architecture <https://forensic-architecture.org/about/agency>

**Recommended films:**

- White Light, Black Rain <https://www.cultureunplugged.com/play/6651/White-Light-Black-Rain--The-Destruction-of-Hiroshima-and-Nagasaki>

**Activities:**

- Discussion of remote sensing, AI-backed weapon systems and drone warfare

### **Globalization Future Scenarios**

**Topic description:** In week eleven, we will consider where current political, economic and demographic trends in order to speculate upon where globalization might be heading. Students will be asked to critically assess best and worst case scenarios put forward by the Directorate of National Intelligence in Washington for government policy planning purposes.

**Expected learning outcomes:** A better understanding of the complexity involved in modeling global change as well as a recognition that prevailing political, economic and social arrangements are likely to be radically altered over the next several decades.

**Readings:**

- Global Trends - Paradox of Progress  
<https://www.dni.gov/index.php/global-trends/letter-nic-chairman>

**Web resources:**

- Key Global Trends <https://www.dni.gov/index.php/key-global-trends>

**Recommended films:**

- BBC, The World in 2050 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XeEYaX82jSE>

**Activities:**

- Small group critique of the scenarios outlined in the Paradox of Progress report.

### **Student Presentations**

**Topic description:** Week twelve will feature group presentations and a small group review session to prepare for a final essay examination.

**Expected learning outcomes:** Students will examine an aspect of globalization and social change in depth and share their research with classmates. Small group review will also help students to prepare for their final essays.

**Activities:**

- Group presentations
- Small group review session