

UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT  
GLOBAL STUDIES PROGRAM

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Fall 2008  
427 Waterman  
Time: TTh 12:30-1:45pm  
Office Hours: W 12:30-1:45, Th 3:30-5pm

***AIS 95B: Introduction to Global Studies***

Course URL: <http://www.uvm.edu/~lvivanco/global.html>

*Course Description*

The world in which we live is experiencing an apparently unprecedented movement of money, goods, ideas, information, and people across national boundaries. This movement and the technologies that enable it brings us a lot of the cheap food and goods we consider necessary for our lifestyles, helps us make sense of what is going on elsewhere on the planet, and exposes us to different people and divergent cultural values. It also changes our sense of scale, effectively blurring traditionally-understood lines between “here” and “there.” This situation feels so natural that it is easy to assume that everybody around the world is having the same kind of experience, or as Marshall McLuhan famously said, living in the same “global village.”

But what does it actually mean to say we live in a global village, and is that metaphor adequate to explain contemporary human cultural, political, and economic dynamics and experiences? The fact is, just as these global flows of goods, ideas, and money feel natural to you and me, they are surprisingly limited in their scope, the result of specific historical processes that are still unfolding in myriad and unpredictable ways. These processes are also experienced and understood differently in other socio-cultural contexts. Depending on how you define globalization and where you stand to observe it, you are likely to see a number of complex, even contradictory, processes and systems at work that do not lend themselves easily to simplistic slogans like the “global village.”

Nevertheless, globalization processes touch on so many aspects of so many peoples lives that we cannot ignore their contemporary importance, nor can we ignore debates over the impacts of these processes on local cultures, biological diversity, national security, and economic prosperity, if not the very future of the planet itself. Yet often lost in these debates—where positions typically fall into polarized positions between those who view globalization as inevitable, even a moral imperative, and others who view it as a singularly destructive force—are a number important intellectual and practical problems, around which this course is organized:

*As the bumper sticker says, we can “Act Locally.” But can we really “Think Globally?”  
Hasn’t globalization happened before? What’s so different about the contemporary era?  
How does globalization create prosperity for some and inequality and poverty for others?  
If the world is not becoming culturally homogenized, what is it becoming?  
Are we facing imminent global environmental collapse, and is it possible to avert it?  
Is global governance necessary? Is it even possible?*

In exploring these problems, the goal of this course is NOT to cover the current state of “the globe” in its entirety. To attempt this is a recipe for tremendous oversimplification. Rather, the goal is to develop a number of useful intellectual tools that will help frame your future learning about global problems and processes. The best way to do this is to take a problem-centered approach. This approach frames learning about global problems and globalization processes as an active process of asking questions about real world problems and weaving disciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary insights to understand

them. This pedagogy emphasizes the importance of active learning, asking relevant questions, critical thinking, familiarity with theoretical concepts, and the impossibility of simple answers to the highly complex issues it raises.

*The following required texts are available for purchase at the University Store:*

1. Robbins, Richard. (2008) *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism*. 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.
2. Robbins, Richard. (2004) *Global Issues: A Reader*. Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.
3. Sije, Dai. (2002) *Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress*. Anchor Books.

### *Course Format and Requirements*

This course is organized around lectures, guest lectures, films, and interactive class discussion and small group activities. Active learning and discussion of problems are crucial elements in helping you gain a critical understanding of globalization processes. Because much of this will happen in class, **attendance is mandatory. The only excused absences are for family or health emergencies (with proof), and you must report your absence to me, or it will be considered an unexcused absence.**

You will be graded on the following:

ASSIGNMENT	% OF GRADE
Attendance and Participation	10
Quizzes	25
Summit Participation and Brief	15
“This I Believe” Assignment	25
Final Exam	25

I will not always refer to the readings in our discussions, but it is essential that you keep up on the reading assignments because they provide crucial background on the issues we will cover in class. We will have *five* brief (15 minute) open-note (but not open-book) quizzes. The first will be a map quiz and the following quizzes will focus on all the readings completed since the previous quiz. If you miss class and have not cleared it ahead of time with me, you **cannot** make up the quiz. If it is an excused absence, you can retake the quiz during one of the times I hold office hours.

We will also have a final exam that will test how well you have learned the basic concepts and debates in Global Studies. This exam, which is scheduled for 12/16 from 9-11am, will combine key word definitions, short answers, and essay questions.

Throughout the semester, we will periodically hold an in-class “summit” to examine and debate key global issues and dilemmas. Each summit will consist of small groups who have been assigned to present a particular position. This assignment requires some basic collaborative research and planning in these groups. I highly recommend that at least one person from your group meet with me to get help with sources, arguments, etc. sometime before your summit. Within a week after your summit presentation, everyone who participated in that particular summit will independently write a **three-page brief** on his/her assigned position explaining why he/she agrees or disagrees with it or offering further analysis/criticism/perspectives on the debate itself. I will not assign a grade to this assignment; if you obviously take it seriously, offering well-researched and defended positions and writing a thoughtful analysis paper, you will receive full credit (15% of your overall course grade). If you don’t, you will receive no credit for this assignment (or I may ask you to rewrite a longer analysis paper).

In order to provide you with the opportunity to develop your own perspectives on how you relate as an individual to globalization processes, each of you will write and then read to the rest of the class a short statement modeled on statements prepared and read for the NPR radio program “This I Believe.” The statement will be between 300 and 500 words, and the central theme for you to address is what it means to you to be a “global citizen.” Note: I do not want you to simply mouth truisms about how wonderful it is to be a “citizen of the world” – I am looking for a reflective piece rooted in critical thinking about what you think your place is in the broader world and what you consider is your responsibility to it.

We will work steadily on this assignment throughout the semester. There will be at least one opportunity for a peer evaluation. I will grade you on each step in that process, which include:

Credo Exercise (non-graded): Sept. 23  
 First Draft (30% of overall grade): Oct. 28  
 Peer-review draft (non-graded): Nov. 20  
 Final Draft (55% of overall grade): Dec. 2  
 Presentation/reading (15% of overall grade) Dec. 4, 9, 11

#### *Policy on Religious Holidays*

If you will miss a class because of a religious holiday, the University policy is that you must submit in writing to me by the end of the second full week of classes your documented religious holiday schedule for the semester. I will permit students who miss work for the purpose of religious observance to make up this work.

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#### *Schedule of Classes and Readings*

READINGS WITH AN (‘R’) NEXT TO THEM WILL BE ON RESERVE. Reserve readings are available online through Bailey-Howe Library’s Voyager online catalog under “Course Reserves.” If you prefer to not access the reserve readings in this way, a hard copy will also be available in the Area and International Studies reading room (407 Old Mill Annex, open Monday-Friday 8am-4:30pm). The readings are due on the date under which they are listed – in other words, come to class that day prepared to discuss those particular readings.

### **Problem #1: As the bumper sticker says, we can “Act Locally.” But can we really “Think Globally?”**

Tues. Sept. 2: Introduction to the course, instructor’s expectations, etc.

*No reading*

Thurs. Sept. 4: Globalization’s Many Faces

*Activity: Brain Dump*

*Reading:* 1. Friedman, Thomas. “While I was Sleeping.” *The World is Flat*, pp. 3-11. (R)  
 2. Brecher, Jeremy, Tim Costello, and Brendan Smith. (2000) “Globalization and Its Specter.” In *Globalization from Below: The Power of Solidarity*. Cambridge: South End Press, pp. 1-17.

Tues. Sept. 9: The Limits of “One Worldism”

*Guest: Laurie Kutner, Reference Librarian*

*Activity: Walking*

*Reading:* 1. Ghemawat, Pankaj. (2007) “Why the World Isn’t Flat.” *Foreign Policy*. March/April

- (R) 2007: 54-60.  
 2. Wendell Berry (1991) "Out of your Car, Off your horse." *Atlantic Monthly*, Feb.  
 (R) 1991, 61-3.  
 3. Traven, B. (1966) "Assembly Line." (R)

Thurs. Sept. 11: Class is CANCELLED (Luis is at a conference), but please do the reading anyway

*Readings:* 1. Kolodziej, Edward. (n.d.) "Why Global Studies?" Essay prepared for Global Studies

- (R) Workshop, Center for Global Studies, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.  
 2. "Charter for Transdisciplinarity." Adopted at the First World Congress of  
 (R) Transdisciplinarity, Convento da Arrábida, Portugal, November 2-6, 1994.

Available at: <http://nicol.club.fr/ciret/english/charten.htm>

### **Problem #2: Hasn't globalization happened before? What's so different about the contemporary era?**

Tues. Sept. 16: Globalizing History and Historicizing Globalization

*Handout:* Periodizing Globalization

*Quiz #1:* A map quiz, based on Oxfam International's "Mapping our World" interactive website, available at:

[http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/mapping\\_our\\_world/mapping\\_our\\_world/l/home/index.htm](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/mapping_our_world/mapping_our_world/l/home/index.htm)

*Reading:* 1. Bentley, Jerry. (2004) "Globalizing History and Historicizing Globalization."

- (R) *Globalizations* Vol. 1, no. 1: 69-81.

Thurs. Sept. 18: Elements of the Global Culture of Capitalism, Part 1

*Reading:* 1. Robbins, *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism*. Ch. 1.

2. Robbins, *Talking Points on Global Problems*, pp. 1-20.

Tues. Sept. 23: Special Guest Lecture by Gustavo Esteva: Beyond Globalization

*Reading:* 1. Robbins, *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism*. Ch. 2.

Thurs. Sept. 25: Elements of the Global Culture of Capitalism, Part 2

*Film:* "The Story of Stuff"

*Reading:* 1. Robbins, *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism*. Chs. 3-4.

Tues. Sept. 30: Summit: Follow that Commodity!

*Reading:* 1. Packer, George. (2002) "How Susie Bayer's T-Shirt Ended up on the Back of Yusuf

- (R) Mama." *New York Times Magazine*, March 31, 2002, pp.

### **Problem #3: How does globalization create greater prosperity for some and inequality and poverty for others?**

Thurs. Oct. 2: What's Happening to the Global Economy?

*Quiz #2*

*Reading:* 1. Oppenheimer, Michael. (2008) "The End of Liberal Globalization." *World Policy Journal*. Winter 2007/2008.

Tues. Oct. 7: "Globalization Floats All Boats" vs. "Globalization Increases Poverty and Inequality"

*Reading:* 1. Robbins, *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism*, Chs. 6, 8.

Viewing: "Why Globalization Works," Video Interview with Martin Wolf, available at:  
<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/video.jsp> (\*Need to ensure your computer has RealPlayer)

*Recommended but not required:* Robbins, *Talking Points on Global Problems*, pp. 31-40, 71-8.

Thurs. Oct. 9: Dynamics of Labor Migration

*Film:* Selection from *Oaxacalifornia*

- Reading:* 1. Cohen, Jeffrey. (2004) "Studying the Culture of Migration in Oaxaca's Central Valleys." *The Culture of Migration in Southern Mexico*. University of Texas Press, pp. 1-27.  
 2. Ehrenreich, Barbara and Arlie Russell Hochschild. (2003) "Introduction." *Global Woman: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy*.

Tues. Oct. 14: Summit: The Politics of Redistributing Global Wealth

*Reading:* TBA

**Problem #4: If the world is not becoming culturally homogenized, what is it becoming?**

Thurs. Oct. 16: Frameworks for Thinking About Globalization and Culture

*Quiz #3*

*Film:* Begin "In and Out of Africa"

- Reading:* 1. Robbins, *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism*, Ch. 9.

Tues. Oct. 21: Cultural Hybridity

*Film:* Finish "In and Out of Africa"

- Reading:* 1. Nederveen Pieterse, Jan. (2000) "Globalization as Hybridization." *Globalization and Culture: Global Mélange*.

Thurs. Oct. 23: Summit: Grassroots Movements and the Rise of Global Indigenism

- Reading:* 1. Robbins, *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism*, Ch. 10  
 2. Kuper, A. (2003) "The Return of the Native." Available at:  
 (R) [http://www.newhumanist.org.uk/volume118issue3\\_more.php?id=68\\_0\\_21\\_0\\_C](http://www.newhumanist.org.uk/volume118issue3_more.php?id=68_0_21_0_C)

Tues. Oct. 28: Globalization, Literature, and Film

Guest: Prof. John Waldron

- Reading:* 1. Begin reading Dai, *Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress*.

Thurs. Oct. 30: Discussion of *Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress*

*Quiz #4*

- Reading:* 1. Finish reading Dai, *Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress*

**Problem #5: Are we facing imminent global environmental collapse, and is it possible to avert it?**

Tues. Nov. 4: Is population growth really the problem?

- Reading:* 1. Robbins, *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism*, Ch. 5  
 2. Robbins, *Talking Points on Global Problems*, pp. 66-70.

Thurs. Nov. 6: Perspectives from Political Ecology

- Reading:* 1. Robbins, *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism*, Ch. 7.

2. Robbins, *Talking Points on Global Problems*, pp. 80-92.

Tues. Nov. 11: Summit: We Need an International Agreement on Climate Change (Mock Kyoto Protocol)

*Reading:* 1. Begin “Global Issues” website “Climate Change and Global Warming”

(<http://www.globalissues.org/issue/178/climate-change-and-global-warming>)

Thurs. Nov. 13: The Politics of Global Environmental Knowledge

*Quiz #5*

*Reading:* 1. Taylor, Peter and Frederick Buttel. (1992) “How Do We Know We Have Global

(R) Environmental Problems?: Science and the Globalization of Environmental Discourse.” *Geoforum* 23(3): 405-16.

2. Finish “Global Issues” website “Climate Change and Global Warming”

(<http://www.globalissues.org/issue/178/climate-change-and-global-warming>)

### **Problem #6: Is global governance necessary? It is even possible?**

Tues. Nov. 18: The Problem of “Global Security”

*Reading:* 1. Rudolph, Christopher. (2003) “Globalization and Security: Migration and Evolving

(R) Concepts of Security in Statecraft and Scholarship.” *Security Studies* 13(1):1-32.

2. Annan, Kofi. “What I’ve Learned.” *Washington Post*. Monday, December 11, 2006;

(R) Page A19.

3. Taljaard, Raenette. (2003) “The Bigger Problem: Weapons of Individual

(R) Destruction.” *YaleGlobal*, 15 October 2003. Available at:

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/display.article?id=2632>

Thurs. Nov. 20: Summit: Globalization and Human Rights

*Reading:* 1. Brysk, Allison. (2002) “Introduction: Transnational Threats and Opportunities.” In

(R) Brysk, ed. *Globalization and Human Rights*. University of California Press. pp. 1-18.

Nov. 25-27: Thanksgiving Recess (no class)

Tues. Dec. 2: The Politics of “Global Citizenship.”

*Reading:* 1. Robbins, *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism*, Ch. 11-12.

Thurs. Dec. 4: What does it mean to be a Global Citizen?: “This I Believe” Presentations

Tues. Dec. 9: What does it mean to be a Global Citizen?: “This I Believe” Presentations

Thurs. Dec. 11: What does it mean to be a Global Citizen?: “This I Believe” Presentations

Final Tues. 12/16: 9-11am