Our world is changing rapidly and dramatically. In recent decades, the concept of globalization has become widely accepted as a framework for understanding many of these changes. In this seminar, we will examine different and often competing conceptualizations of globalization with particular attention to their implications for social inequality, utilizing theoretical perspectives from sociology and a range of other disciplines to aid our analysis.

This first part of the class focuses on the processes, ideologies, actors and institutions of economic globalization. In this context, the role of nation-states is changing in important ways, throwing into question long-held notions about national sovereignty and the role of government in relation to citizens and markets. We will look at the principal actors in the globalization process, including transnational corporations and key institutions of global governance, including the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

In the second section of the course, we’ll focus on how processes of economic globalization are transforming various areas of society, economy, polity, and environment, and how the costs and benefits of these changes are distributed. While these effects are sometimes quite clear—e.g., increasing polarization of wealth, heightened environmental degradation, weakening of organized labor—they can also be paradoxical and contradictory, and often differ along lines of gender, race, ethnicity, class and geography. We’ll also examine the shifting boundary between the public & private spheres.

In the final weeks we will look at some of the responses—and growing forms of resistance—that the predominant model of economic globalization has generated in both North and South, among a very broadly defined global civil society. We will also explore a variety of alternative models (both active and proposed), and assess prescriptions for reorganizing the global economy and changing the relationship between states, global institutions, capital, and citizens.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**1. WEEKLY RESPONSE POSTINGS:**

For eight (8) class sessions during the quarter, you should write a thoughtful response/reaction to that week’s assigned readings. These reactions should be very short papers, between 500-700 words. They should be posted to our course D2L site no later than 9:00 am on the day of class, so that everyone in the class can read each others’ comments and begin the discussion online before we meet.
• **Posting a Response:** (under “Course Content,” click on “Response Paper/Postings,” then on the folder for the appropriate date, and then “Compose” to start a new posting), so that everyone in the class can read each others’ comment before we meet. *NOTE: Please DO NOT attach your Word file to the posting; instead, please compose your response in a word processing program, then select the text of your response, copy it, and paste it into the text window for the posting.*

• **Responding to Others’ Postings:** In order to facilitate an online discussion, please read all the other postings after the deadline, and write/post at least one (but hopefully more) response to another student’s posting, before we arrive in class. To respond to a posting, click on that posting, then click “Reply,” and type your response into the box.

In these responses, you may criticize or praise the readings, tease out points of divergence or convergence, question key ideas, propose alternative approaches or clarifications, point out weaknesses, relate them to your own experience, examine or question their theoretical or methodological approach or underlying values and assumptions, pose questions they raise for you, and/or compare them to other readings. The key point is to give evidence of having critically and thoughtfully engaged with the main required readings. Regardless of the specific topics you choose to reflect on in writing, you are expected to come to class prepared to discuss all of the readings. I will read your responses, and respond to you by email with one of these comments:

++ Especially strong response—keep it coming!
+ Good response; you interacted meaningfully with the readings.
- Unsatisfactory; you didn’t seem to engage with the readings.

All reactions that receive either + or ++ will count equally toward this portion of the course grade.

2. **RESEARCH PAPER:**

This is a substantial (roughly 5,000-8,000 words, double spaced) individual paper. Depending on the stage and focus of your graduate work, the paper may be structured as either a draft journal article, a conference paper, part of your master’s thesis, a dissertation proposal or dissertation chapter, a research report for a non-governmental organization, or some other format (upon consultation). It should focus in depth on an aspect(s) of globalization relevant to your own research interests/goals, incorporating both readings from the course and additional bibliographic resources. *The paper should demonstrate critical engagement with the key course themes and analytical frameworks.*

By January 21, please send me a 2-3 page proposal memo outlining your proposed topic, approach, format, and an initial list of sources. I will respond and offer feedback/suggestions. By March 4, a complete initial draft will be due. I will then ask you to engage in a peer review process, reading and giving written comments on another student’s draft. During the last course meeting of the quarter (March 11), students will present the results of their research to the entire class, in approximately 15 minutes, in a conference presentation format. You are encouraged to use Powerpoint or other visuals to accompany your presentation. We will discuss this assignment further in the early weeks of the quarter. Feel free to consult with me individually about the paper. The final paper will be due on March 13.

A summary of the sub-deadlines for this paper:

- Peer Review Responses: due by Friday, March 7 (by email).
- In-Class Presentations: Tues., March 11.
- Final Paper: due by Thursday, March 13, 5:00pm (on D2L).
3. PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE

This is a small, discussion-based seminar. Your presence and active participation are essential for the learning experience of everyone in the course. You are expected to attend all class sessions, and actively participate in discussion. Everyone should arrive in class having completed all of the required readings, and having read the other students’ postings. Incomplete preparation deprives everyone of the benefit of your insights and analysis, and in a small seminar such as this one, that is especially detrimental.

EVALUATION

The final course grade will weigh the above assignments/requirements in the following way:

- **Response Papers/Postings:** 35%
- **Discussion Participation:** 25%
- **Research Paper:** 40% (including in-class presentation)

READINGS

**Required Books:**

These books are available for sale at the PSU Bookstore, and also available online (from Powell’s or other sources). The assigned readings from these books are designated with an asterisk (*) in the syllabus:


**Readings on D2L:** The remaining readings will be posted in electronic form on the course D2L website (under the “Course Content” tab, in “Course Readings”).

**Supplementary Readings:** The readings listed as “supplementary” for each week are optional, for those who want to read more deeply into a topic, or as potential research sources. If you are very unfamiliar with the topic or theory covered, you may benefit from reading one or more of these pieces. In most cases these will be posted on D2L, but a few will not, in which case I am happy to make copies available if you want them.

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PART I: Theoretical Foundations; Processes and Institutions of Globalization

JANUARY 7 (Week 1): Overview of Globalization Debates

On D2L:


JANUARY 14 (Week 2): Markets, Commodities, and Society; From Development to Globalization; Theories of Development


On D2L (or buy the book):

Also read the following if you are not familiar with Modernization, Dependency, and World-Systems theories:


JANUARY 21 (Week 3): Neoliberalism

*David Harvey, A Brief History of Neoliberalism. (Entire book)

On D2L:


Supplementary (on D2L):

**JANUARY 28 (Week 4): Globalization and Nation-States; Economic Globalization Proponents**


**On D2L:**


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**Supplementary:**


**FEBRUARY 4 (Week 5): Institutions of Economic Globalization (World Bank, IMF, WTO); Structural Adjustment**


**On D2L:**


[OVER→]


**Supplementary:**


**FEBRUARY 11 (Week 6): The Global Commons; Privatization and (De-)Commodification**


**On D2L (Choose 3 of the following readings):**


**Supplementary:**


**PART II: Effects of Economic Globalization**

**FEBRUARY 18 (Week 7): Labor in a Global Economy; Food and Agriculture**


**On D2L:**

**Choose 2 of the following:**


…and choose 2 of the following:


**Supplementary:**


FEBRUARY 25 (Week 8): Labor, Gender, Migration, and Urbanization


**On D2L:**


**Supplementary:**


**PART III: Alternatives and Responses to Economic Globalization**

MARCH 4 (Week 9): Countermovements; Transnational Activism; Globalization from Below


**On D2L:**
Choose 5 of the following readings:


MARCH 11 (Week 10): Challenges to Neoliberal Globalization: The Latin American Left; Global Crises; Ethnographic Approaches to the Global

(Student Research Paper Presentations)


On D2L:


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Supplementary:


