Soc. 604: Theories of Globalization

Sociology Department, UMass Boston
Semester/Year: ________
Class Hrs.: _______
Class Location: ________

Prof. Mohammad Tamdgidi
Office Hrs:
Office Location: 3 Wheatley Bldg., 4th fl.
E-mail: mohammad.tamdgidi@umb.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The central purpose of this graduate course on the theories of globalization is to understand the major, still emerging, sociological theories, controversies, debates and perspectives on “globalization.” According to the sociologist George Ritzer, “Globalization is a transplanetary process or set of processes involving increasing liquidity and the growing multidirectional flows of people, objects, places, and information as well as the structures they encounter and create that are barriers to, or expedite, those flows” (2010; italics in the original). Differently stated, one may regard the basic premise of “globalization” as a social process to be that there is such a marked shift, despite encountering resistance, in the multidirectional pace, intensity, and integration of flows of people, labor, technologies, goods, structures, powers, ideas, and values across traditional nation-state boundaries that one can no longer understand the nature of any parts or processes of society today without understanding the nature of global society as a whole. But what the nature of globalization is, its origins, its processes, resistences to it, its significance and its implications for understanding the world and ourselves today, are still matters of considerable debate among scholars. Some have argued that the human species has from its very beginnings been a global phenomenon, others posit that its proper analysis should focus on the record of the so-called “written history” chronicling the invention of ancient political empires, the advent of medieval cultural empires and the rise of modern economic empires still prevalent today albeit in new forms. Others argue that the study of the world as a singular unit of analysis may best be attributable to the rise of the modern world-system in the long sixteenth-century Europe and its subsequent incorporations of various regions of the world in ensuing centuries. And yet, others conducting “new global studies” argue today that globalization is rather a very recent historical phenomenon that originated with the rise of the Information Age in the late 1970s and gained increasing momentum in the 1990s and beyond.

Our explorations in this course will focus on the theoretical contributions in the scholarship to understanding globalization from a sociological perspective, while maintaining a three-fold analytical interest and framework that is simultaneously applicative, imaginative, and comparative/integrative. Our exploration of globalization theories will be applicative, in the sense that throughout we will be continually concerned with specific thematic and applicative implications of various theorizations of globalization in understanding and dealing with concrete social problems. The exploration will be imaginative, in the sense that we will continually maintain a simultaneously global and personally self-reflective micro-macro explanatory framework in the C. W. Millsian sociological imagination tradition—according to whom the sociological imagination is that mode of thinking that enables its beholder to relate one’s intra/interpersonal troubles to increasingly global and world-historical public issues. And our exploration of globalization theories will be itself “global” and comparative/integrative in its approach, in the sense that we recognize that an adequate understanding of globalization cannot itself remain parochial, localized, one-sided and ethnocentric in its epistemic, disciplinary, cultural, traditional, theoretical and paradigmatic borderlines and must be, in the words of Edward Said when studying Fanon, “traveling” in nature. This will require a globally and personally self/critical approach to all the views and perspectives advanced on the part of all parties in the ongoing debates.

To facilitate the above three-fold framework, we will conduct readings and discussion via parallel reading and discussion of various theoretical literature that are applicative, imaginative, and comparative/integrative in nature. Our explorations of the theoretical debates on globalization will be pursued in the course through a 25-30-page paper developed along three drafts (topic ideas/bibliography, first draft, and final draft). The aim will be to write, by the end of the semester, a publishable paper that can be submitted to any relevant academic journal per student’s choice. To achieve this end, we will pursue two lines of inquiry throughout the course: 1-class readings, lectures, presentations, and discussions will provide us with collective experiences and conceptual tools and methods necessary for our individual/collective self-studies; 2-the research paper will focus our attention and explorations on a topic that self-reflectively engages the theoretical perspectives and discourses on globalization using the three-fold analytical framework as explained above. In addition, one or more film excerpts incorporated into the course will provide us with a common audiovisual medium in popular culture through which we can share our theoretical reflections on the world and ourselves alongside class and outside readings. In addition to the major research paper, grading will be based on class attendance, class participation, and three written and oral reading reports.
COURSE ORGANIZATION

The course is organized in a “research working group” format where “teacher-student” and “student-teachers” explore with one another common subject matters [see Paulo Freire (1970/2000) on pedagogy]. Students are expected to view everything, every text, and every viewpoint, especially their own predispositions, perspectives, and biases with a (self) critical eye. You are in this class to learn beyond what you already know, not simply to prove what you already know. This necessarily means being open to question your own existing views and knowledge in order to critically move beyond and/or enrich them with new insights. You will not be graded on whether you agree or disagree with a certain viewpoint. You will be graded on whether you substantively engage with and demonstrate an understanding of the views you agree or disagree with, and self-critically develop your own viewpoints in a well-rounded, researched, and coherent way.

While the instructor will introduce and guide class readings and discussions, students also contribute to class via presentations and discussions, raising in-depth and substantive questions about readings in class as discussants, sharing their insights and critical comments with one another. The students’ work will be evaluated on the basis of the following:

1. Attendance (20%): Attendance is a foundational requirement in this class, because everything else is derived from the few hours we spend together every week. Therefore it constitutes an important part of student grading. Participation can range from active listening to raising questions and engaging in discussion. Please note that attendance is not simply physical presence. It means being attentive. This requires having read the material assigned for the session, being prepared with pertinent questions or comments to raise in class, coming on time to class, being engaged during class, and not leaving the room during the class before it is over. Attendance grade points will not be given for absences; however, absences may be made up by writing a reading/report on the readings/films and subject matter of the missed class session. Although attendance will be taken in class, it is also the student’s responsibilities to send an email to the instructor for each session missed, including date of absence, for record keeping purposes and to indicate whether you intend to make-up for the absence. At the end of the semester when calculating the final grade, points will be taken off the student’s total grade for each unmade-up absent session (for once-per-week classes 3% per session). Students can make-up for their absences by writing 4-5 page critical commentaries on the readings/films/subject matter of the session they missed, demonstrating they have read the readings for the session and can list, define, and apply some of its most important concepts (format may follow the regular presentation report assignment below).

2. Oral Presentations and Written Reading Outlines (6x5%=30%): [Note: the number and assigned grade for presentation reports per student may end up varying according to how many actually enroll in the course. In that case, the number of and assigned grade points for each presentation will be adjusted such that the total of such reports/presentations will be attributed 30% of the grade for each student in the course.] At the beginning of the semester, students will be randomly assigned 6 (6) presentation numbers corresponding to six bracketed numbers assigned to readings (preceding each reading item on the schedule below; this will be explained in class). For each assigned reading prepare a written, detailed outline of about 2-3 pages to be copied for everyone and distributed in the same class in which it is to be orally presented and discussed (remember to clearly indicate the citation for the reading, your name, and the date of presentation). The outline should include a listing of the most important summary points, a list of important concepts with their quoted definitions (with cited page numbers), a list of linkages of how various important concepts or ideas in the reading relate to other readings discussed in class, or to your own life or issues in the news, or film excerpts watched in class, etc., and a set of 3-4 questions to generate productive discussion in class. The oral presentations should not exceed 5 minutes. We assume all students have read the reading, so the point of the presentation is to refresh the class about issues brought up in the reading and the particular critical reading of the text the presenter wishes to share with everyone as outlined above. Presenters must maintain an active part in the session in generating and guiding class discussion, helping to make the discussion lively, informed, and interesting. Please note that excessively long presentations take important time away from other students and the instructor in making their contributions, and from the class as a whole to have open discussions about the readings of each session. So, please make sure to limit your presentation to 5 minutes, and save any additional thoughts to share during the general class discussion.

3. Sociological Self-Research Paper (50%, 25-30 pages): This is the heart of your work in the course, devoted to the serious sociological exploration, within a applicative, imaginative (globally self-reflective), and comparative/integrative framework of a topic of your choice related to the theoretical debates and controversies on globalization. The paper will be progressively developed throughout the course along a 3-4 page topic ideas/bibliography essay,
a 10-15 page first draft and a 25-30 page final paper. They must be typed, double-spaced, in Times font, size 12; relevant charts/tables are encouraged but will not be counted towards paper length requirement. The paper length requirement does not include any title pages or reference/bibliographies. For the due dates of the first drafts and final papers, see the weekly schedule further below [note: these will be identified in a final syllabus when the course is offered].

**A-Paper Topic Ideas/Preliminary Bibliography (5%, 5 pages):** 2-3 full-pages of explorative writing, plus a 2-3 page bibliography of potentially useful and relevant scholarly sources for your topic.

**B-The First Draft (20%, 10-15 pages, not including title/bibliography pages):** Involves exploring the topic based on the readings and discussions in the first half of the course alongside reading and explorations of some of the outside scholarly literature listed in your bibliography previously proposed for your paper. The breakdown of percentage points for the first draft (20% total) are roughly as follows:

- **4%:** The rigor and clarity of applicative engagement with the theories, debates, and controversies read and discussed in the first half of the course in terms of exploring specific social problems.
- **4%:** Engaging with the sociological imagination, adopting a globally self-reflective and self-exploratory approach toward your topic.
- **4%** Demonstrating sensitivity and self/critical ability in comparative/integrative sociological engagement with various theoretical orientations and debates in a cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural framework.
- **4%** The extent of substantial and substantive engagement with specific required COURSE readings read and discussed in class, as demonstrated by many quoted/cited conversations in your paper with the required readings and literature covered in the first half of the course.
- **4%** The extent of substantial and substantive engagement with specific OUTSIDE scholarly readings listed in your paper bibliographies, as demonstrated by many quoted/cited conversations in your paper with such outside readings/literature drawn from your proposed bibliography for your paper.

**C-The Final Paper (25%, 25-30 pages including reworked and further revised/improved pages of the first draft).** The final paper is to demonstrate in a purposeful and meaningful way your applicative, imaginative (globally self-reflective), and comparative/integrative study begun in the first draft, with both the rest (in second half) of class readings and the rest of sources cited in your bibliography of outside scholarly readings compiled for your paper. The breakdown of percentage points for the final paper (25-30 pages, including reworked pages of the first draft) are roughly as follows:

- **4%:** Continued rigor and clarity of applicative engagement with the theories, debates, and controversies read and discussed in the second half of the course in terms of exploration of specific social problems.
- **4%:** Continued and deepened engagement with the sociological imagination, adopting a globally self-reflective and self-exploratory approach toward your topic.
- **4%** Demonstrating sensitivity and self/critical ability in comparative/integrative sociological engagement with various theoretical orientations and debates in a cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural frameworks.
- **4%** The extent of substantial and substantive engagement with specific required COURSE readings discussed in class, as demonstrated by many quoted/cited conversations with the required readings and literature covered in the second half of the course.
- **4%** The extent of substantial and substantive engagement with the remainder of specific OUTSIDE scholarly readings listed in your paper bibliographies, as demonstrated by many quoted/cited conversations with such outside readings and literature drawn from your proposed bibliography for your paper.
- **5%:** Overall quality of writing and creativity of paper. Spell checking, proofreading, and proper and accurate citation of sources will be considered in applying this part of the grade. All papers must include a title and bibliography, consistently formatted according to a bibliographic style of your choice. The quality of your writing and the care you have taken to spell check and proofread it are indicators of the extent to which you have taken your paper seriously and spent the time going over it in both content and form. So, make sure you proofread at least 3 times the paper that you hand in to me. The stated goal and criteria for evaluation of the paper is to hand in what may be regarded as a publishable paper, one that can be submittable to any academic journal of your choice for peer review and publication, whether or not you choose to actually do so.
Grading Policy and Final Grade Curve: The grading system used in this course is based on the accumulation of percentage points you receive for each requirement/assignment of the course. In other words, for each graded requirement/assignment, instead of receiving a letter grade (A, B, C, etc.) you will receive a percentage point grade up to the total assigned for that part of the course expectations. The only letter grade you will receive will be your final course grade submitted at the end of semester, per grade curve system listed below. To see where your course grade stands at any time, add what percentage points you’ve received so far, and assume you will do perfectly for the rest; then look up the total below. Note that you can miss a few sessions and still receive an A, without doing a makeup for the session (93 out of 100 still brings A); however, by not making up absences, you increase the risk of other grading shortfalls affecting your course grade. So try to makeup for absences as much as you can.

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<th>Percentage Points</th>
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<td>100-93</td>
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<td>92-90</td>
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Revision Options: Please note that in this course, the grades you receive prior to the final paper can be improved with additional make-up work. You never lose a chance to do the best you can until the course is over. If you miss any points in your written presentation reports, your topic ideas essay, or the first 10-15-page draft of the paper, you have an opportunity to revise and resubmit based on the instructor’s feedback and commentaries given. Depending on the quality of the revisions made, the grade may be adjusted to reflect the extra work done to improve the report/paper. At the end of the course, for students who have made additional efforts and progress in their final papers (beyond prior assignments or revisions) throughout the course additional percentage points may be added to their accumulated total before calculating their final grades. When submitting revised texts, you will need to submit the originally graded text (with my notes on it) with your revised version so that I can compare new work you have done on the text in order to give you proper credit for your additional work, if merited.

Office Hours: Based on past experience, those students who regularly consult during office hours with the instructor regarding their progress in the course and their papers have done better than those who don’t. Each student is encouraged to meet with the instructor during office hours to discuss the topic and progress of her/his research paper. The meetings should indicate serious and active engagement by students with their papers, readings, and discussions of the course.

Plagiarism: No plagiarism will be allowed in student papers. All quoted and borrowed texts and ideas must be properly credited to their authors and sources. Any ideas or texts you quote from your sources must be clearly referenced, and supplied with an accurate bibliography. Each and every citation and passage quoted must be properly cited, and the reason for its use in text must be clearly elaborated in your own words before and/or after the quotation. Students are therefore required to adhere to university policies on academic honesty and student conduct. The current Code of Student Conduct, including information about academic dishonesty and plagiarism is available online at: http://www.umb.edu/academics/undergraduate/ office/students/CodeofStudentConduct.html.

Accommodations of Special Needs. Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 offers guidelines for curriculum modifications and adaptations for students with documented disabilities. If applicable, students may obtain adaptation recommendations from the Ross Center for Disability Services, CC 2-2100, (617-287-7430). If this applies to you, you must present these recommendations to each professor within a reasonable period, preferably by the end of the Add/Drop period.

Student Referral Program: If it appears to the instructor that you might not pass this course, and if the instructor cannot find a way to support your success in the course, the instructor might inform the director of the Student Referral Program (CC-1100; 287-5500). The staff in this program will attempt to help you address the difficulties that are interfering with your success in the class. If you do not want your instructor to let the Student Referral Program know that you are having difficulty, please let your instructor know.
COURSE SCHEDULE

**Important Note:** Readings chosen for each session have been purposely designed to cover a diversity of themes while also focusing on a specific topic, so as to encourage non-reductivist conversation and discussions across various analytical frameworks and substantive issues raised in readings. The three books to be parallel-read represent efforts to maintain the three-fold applicative, imaginative, and comparative/integration analytical framework for the exploration of globalization theories in this course. For each session, students will prepare an oral/written presentation report on one or another chapter of the three books being parallel-read/discussed. Other student will volunteer to specifically read and report on one of several articles listed as additional readings for that session. Please note that all students (including each presenter) must read all the required readings assigned for each session. Presenters basically go further in reading their particular assigned chapter/article more in-depth while preparing their written reports and oral presentations.

Required Readings: (to be available *in bookstore and †on reserve in hard copy)


Articles/Chapters: A majority of articles read and discussed for class (as listed in the schedule) are accessible via the Indexes and Databases link of the Healey Library, in particular in the database SocINDEX with Full-Text. Those articles/chapters not available as such will be sent to you as pdf file attachments at the beginning of the semester.

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**WEEK ONE: Course Objective, Organization, and Schedule**

First Day of Class. Introduction to the Syllabus: Course Objective, Organization, Schedule. Assignments of Readings/Introductory questionnaire. Film (TBA)

**WEEK TWO: Globalization Debates and the Sociological Imagination**

Required Readings:

[2] Introduction (Hermans & Hermans-Konopkapp. 1-20)
[3] Introduction to Globalization Debates. (Ritzer, pp. 3-18) [1 Is Globalization Civilizing, Destructive or Feeble? A Critique of Five Key Debates in the Social Science Literature (Mauro F. Guillén).]

Additional Selective Readings:


**WEEK THREE: Conceptualizing Globalization in Self and World-Historical Contexts**

**ASSIGNMENT DUE: 5-PAGE PAPER TOPIC IDEAS/BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Additional Selective Readings:

[9] Chapter 1. The impact of globalization and localization on self and identity (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, pp. 21-81)
[10] Chapter 2. Civilizations. (Ritzer, pp. 19-42) [2 The Clash of Civilizations? (Samuel P. Huntington); 3 Global Utopias and Clashing Civilizations: Misunderstanding the Present (John Gray); 4 Can Civilizations Clash? (Jack F. Matlock, Jr); 5 History Ends, Worlds Collide (Chris Brown); 6 If Not Civilizations, What? Paradigms of the Post-Cold War World (Samuel P. Huntington).]
Additional Selective Readings:

WEEK FOUR: Coloniality and the Structures and Processes of Globalization

Required Readings:

Additional Selective Readings:

WEEK FIVE: Nationalism and Neoliberalism in the Age of Globalization

Required Readings:
[23] Chapter 3. Positioning theory and dialogue (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, pp. 120-199)
[24] Chapter 4. Neoliberalism. (Ritzer, pp. 72-116) [11 Freedom versus Collectivism in Foreign Aid (William Easterly); 12 The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time (Karl Polanyi); 13 Freedom’s Just Another Word . . . (David Harvey); 14 Neoliberalism as Exception, Exception to Neoliberalism (Aihwa Ong).]

Additional Selective Readings:

WEEK SIX: Culture and the Political Economy of Globalization

Required Readings:
[29] Chapter 5. Globalization, Culture and Cosmopolitanism (Turner and Khondker, pp. 67-81)
[31] Chapter 5. Structural Adjustment. (Ritzer, pp. 117-156) [15 Structural Adjustment in East and Southeast Asia: Lessons from Latin America (Jim Glassman and Padraig Carmody); 16 The Social Consequences of Structural Adjustment: Recent Evidence and Current Debates (Sarah Babb); 17 The Human Rights Effects of World Bank Structural Adjustment, 1981–2000 (M. Rodwan Abouharb and David L. Cingranelli); 18 How International Monetary Fund and World Bank Policies Undermine Labor Power and Rights (Vincent Lloyd and Robert Weissman); 19 Who Has Failed Africa?: IMF Measures or the African Leadership? (Gerald Scott).]
Additional Selective Readings:


**WEEK SEVEN: Religion, Emotions and Politics in the Age of Globalization**

**Required Readings:**


[37] Chapter 6. Nation-State. (Ritzer, pp. 157-181) [20 Sociology and the Nation-State in an Era of Shifting Boundaries (Donald N. Levine); 21 The Westfailure System (Susan Strange); 22 Globalization and the Myth of the Powerless State (Linda Weiss); 23 Globalization and the Resilience of State Power (Daniel Béland); 24 Beyond Nation-State Paradigms: Globalization, Sociology, and the Challenge of Transnational Studies (William I. Robinson).]

**Additional Selective Readings:**


**WEEK EIGHT: Migration, Transnationalism, and Globalization**

**Required Readings:**

[41] Chapter 7. Migration and Transnationalism (Turner and Khondker, pp. 102-118)


**Additional Selective Readings:**


**WEEK NINE: Medical Globalization in Comparative World-Systems Perspective**

**Assignment Due: 10-15-Page First Paper Drafts**

**Required Readings:**


Additional Selective Readings:

WEEK TEN: Terrorism and the Politics of Empire in the Age of Globalization

Required Readings:
[54] Chapter 9. Empire. (Ritzer, pp. 214-243) [30 Empire (Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri); 31 The Global Coliseum: On Empire (Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri interviewed by Nicholas Brown and Imre Szeman); 32 Retrieving the Imperial: Empire and International Relations (Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey); 33 Africa: the Black Hole at the Middle of Empire? (David Moore); 34 The New World Order (They Mean It) (Stanley Aronowitz); 35 Adventures of the Multitude: Response of the Authors (Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri).]

Additional Selective Readings:

WEEK ELEVEN: Global Disasters, Dependency, and the Network Society

Required Readings:
[59] Chapter 10. Network Society and Informationalism. (Ritzer, pp. 244-259) [36 Toward a Sociology of the Network Society (Manuel Castells); 37 Depoliticizing Globalization: From Neo-Marxism to the Network Society of Manuel Castells (Peter Marcuse).]

Additional Selective Readings:

WEEK TWELVE: Global Citizenship, Human Rights and Gender

Required Readings:
WEEK THIRTEEN: Multiculturalism, Race, and Globalization Theories

Required Readings:

[42 Jihad vs McWorld (Benjamin R. Barber); 43 Paris Is Burning: Jihad vs McWorld by Benjamin R. Barber (Fareed Zakaria); 44 Sovereignty and Emergency: Political Theology, Islam and American Conservatism (Bryan S. Turner); 45 On Terrorism and the New Democratic Realism (Benjamin R. Barber).]

Additional Selective Readings:


WEEK FOURTEEN: Popular Culture and the Global-Local Dialectic

Required Readings:

[73] Chapter 13. Religion, Media and Popular Culture (Turner and Khondker, pp. 188-202)  
[74] Chapter 13. Creolization, Hybridity, and Glocalization. (Ritzer, pp. 307-343)  
[46 Globalization and Culture: Three Paradigms (Jan Nederveen Pieterse); 47 The World in Creolisation (Ulf Hannerz); 48 Flows, Boundaries and Hybrids: Keywords in Transnational Anthropology (Ulf Hannerz); 49 Globalization as Hybridization (Jan Nederveen Pieterse); 50 Glocalization: Time–Space and Homogeneity–Heterogeneity (Roland Robertson).]

Additional Selective Readings:


WEEK FIFTEEN: The Globalization of War and Peace

Required Readings:

[51 Hybridity,
Additional Selective Readings:

WEEK SIXTEEN: The Globalization of Sociology and Social Theory

Required Readings:
[85] Chapter 15. McDonaldization. (Ritzer, pp. 380-407) [57 An Introduction to McDonaldization (George Ritzer); 58 McDonaldization and the Global Culture of Consumption (Malcolm Waters); 59 The McDonald’s Mosaic: Glocalization and Diversity (Bryan S. Turner); 60 Transnationalism, Localization, and Fast Foods in East Asia (James L. Watson); 61 Global Implications of McDonaldization and Disneyzation (Alan Bryman); 62 Glocommodification: How the Global Consumes the Local – McDonald’s in Israel (Uri Ram).]
[86] Chapter 16. World Culture. (Ritzer, pp. 408-424) [63 World Culture: Origins and Consequences (Frank J. Lechner and John Boli); 64 Norms, Culture, and World Politics: Insights from Sociology's Institutionalism (Martha Finnemore).]

Additional Selective Readings:

ASSIGNMENT DUE: 25-30-PAGE FINAL PAPER DRAFTS
C. Wright Mills on the Sociological Imagination

The Sociological Imagination

C. Wright Mills (1966)


C. Wright Mills (1959)

affers the promise that all such sensibilities—and in fact, human reason itself—will come to play a greater role in human affairs.