HTS 4091
SEMINAR IN GLOBAL ISSUES:
NEW APPROACHES TO GLOBALIZATION
SPRING 2020

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Office Hours: 10 am – 12 noon on Thursday or by appointment.

Schedule of Classes & Location: 9.05-11.50 am, Wednesday,
Old Civil Engineering Building Room 104.

All the assigned readings are available through Canvas.

Course Description:

The ubiquity of the term globalization often lends a sense of obviousness to its meaning and scope. Globalization, according to the Cambridge Dictionary, implies ‘development of closer economic, cultural, and political relations among all the countries of the world as a result of travel and communication becoming easy.’ This definition of globalization makes sense, but it also raises many questions. Does developing closer relations result in better mutual understanding and respect for all societies? Is globalization a source of conflict or cooperation? When does it start? What are its linkages to colonialism? And equally importantly, how does our imagination of ourselves (as a nation or society) impact our understanding of global ‘others’ and vice versa. This course is aimed at critically interrogating these and related questions and through them it will explore different sociological aspects of globalization.

Course Requirements:

Each class will start with a short lecture through which the instructor will analytically and empirically situate the readings. Thereafter two students will present the articles that have been assigned for the day. Presentation should be around 10 minutes (for each article) and should highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the article(s). Student(s) should also highlight whether and how the assigned article(s) allows us to better understand the present-day processes of globalization. These presentations will form the basis for further discussions in which students will have to participate. This is very important because the aim of this course is to not just provide information about different theories and events concerning globalization but also to aid in a deeper understanding of the world in which we live today. Readings for the class have deliberately been kept at a minimum so that
we can have in-depth discussions and it will also give students time to do research for the assignments. Students will be evaluated for their presentations as well as contribution to discussion in the class.

All the assigned readings are available through Canvas.

Assignments include a research paper (~3000 words, excluding references) that each student would do individually and two group assignments. First group assignment will be preparation of a poster exploring how we can reimagine globalization through the history of modern slavery. Globalization has commonly been argued to emerge with capitalism and European expansion to the rest of the world. Modern slavery not only occurred parallel to these global processes, in significant ways, it undergirded them and defined the Western and American identity and economy. Many fascinating books, articles, and videos have been produced in recent years on slavery. One such source is http://slaveryandremembrance.org/. The aim of this project is to draw on such sources to prepare a poster (by a group of 3 students) that explores the centrality of slavery in globalization. The posters will be eventually presented in front of the class by the group.

Students (in groups of 3) will also make a 10-minutes video documentary on an object, an event, a person, or a social movement that symbolizes globalization. The main purpose of the video assignment, *Reimagining Globalization*, is to investigate the complex layering of social, economic, political, and technological elements of globalization. The aim of this assignment is to uncover our linkages with people and things from different parts of the world. Students can utilize clips of non-copyrighted videos that are available, pictures available in the public domain, and use voiceover to narrate the story. Students (each group) will at first write a short proposal (2-pages) for the video assignment. The proposal should highlight the topic on which the assignment will be focused. The topic can be an object e.g. a particular toothpaste, computer, or cell phone. It can also be a person or an event that highlights global connections. Hence, for example, we often forget how the struggle for American independence or the Civil Rights movement had deep global connections and impact.

The video assignment should be aimed at investigating these transnational and trans-societal connections. Students should, for example, explore whether transnational and trans-societal connections allow us to understand these events differently than the ways in which they are commonly portrayed. The issue, though, is not that global connections are necessarily good and useful, they could also be negative and the assignment should highlight those as well. Students can use sources such as Google, Wikipedia, etc. to find more information about that particular object, person, social movement, event, etc. This is a useful exercise also to find out whether there is enough information on that topic to do an assignment. In the first phase student groups will provide a brief description of the topic and present the sources – books, articles, news reports, blogs, etc. – that they will eventually use.

Poster and video assignments have to be collaborative work carried out by groups of 3 students. Each student in any particular group will get the same grade for these
assignments. Both, poster and videos, will have to be presented in front of the class (see the syllabus for presentation dates), when I will evaluate them as well. You do not need to submit the posters and videos separately to me.

Each student will also write a research paper of around 3000 words (around 12 double-spaced type-written pages, excluding the list of referenced cited). Students will choose a topic that is of interest to him/her/them and discuss it with the instructor. The paper needs to utilize original sources. Original source could be an archive that is available locally or online and can include interviews, press reports, government documents, etc. It could also be based on interviews that a student may conduct (minimum 5 interviews) to make his/her/their argument in the paper or a survey (survey requires a larger sample size – around 100 would be okay for the purpose of this course). The student can draw on any of the analytical positions presented in the readings assigned in the first section of the syllabus and illustrate, critique, or further develop that analytical position. The paper will be completed in three stages. First stage would involve a two-page summary of the topic on which the student wishes to write the paper. It should include the topic that the student wishes to explore and the method he/she/they is going to deploy (archival, interviews, or survey) and a short bibliography of secondary sources (books, articles, etc.) on that topic. Second stage would be preparation of a 5-page analysis/discussion on that topic. And the final submission will be 3000 words research paper.

The aim of these assignments is not only to make students write analytically, but also professionally. Hence how to present an argument, how to edit not only for spelling but also writing styles, and how to cite are important aspects on which students would be evaluated. Each student would also make a short (15 minutes) presentation on his/her/their Research Paper (see the syllabus for the schedule of the presentations). Students can use power-point for this purpose.

**Plagiarism** will result in the student getting an F in the course.

**Accommodations:** Students with disabilities needing reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor. The Office of the Dean of Students, ADAPTS Disability Services Program is available to assist us with the reasonable accommodations process. More information at: [http://www.adapts.gatech.edu/index.php](http://www.adapts.gatech.edu/index.php).

**Diversity and Inclusion:** Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts supports Georgia Institute of Technology’s commitment to creating a campus free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We further affirm the importance of cultivating an intellectual climate that allows us to better understand the similarities and differences of those who constitute the Georgia Tech community, as well as the necessity of working against inequalities that may also manifest here as they do in the broader society.
Grades:

Grades will be based on: (i) Research Paper (40%); (ii) Video Assignment (20%); (iii) Poster (20%); (iv) Class Participation, Presentation, & Attendance (20%).

No extensions will be allowed.

Syllabus

Locating Globalization

Week 1 (January 8): Introduction & Discussion of Syllabus.

Week 2 (January 15):

Students will form groups for the poster and video assignments.

Week 3 (January 22):

Discussion of student groups’ proposals for poster and video assignment.

Week 4 (January 29):

Discussion of poster and video assignments.

Week 5 (February 5):
First stage (2-pages) of Research Paper due.

Week 6 (February 12):

Week 7 (February 19):

Week 8 (February 26): *Poster presentations in the class.*

Life in the Age of Global Connectivity

Week 9 (March 4):

Week 10 (March 11):

Second stage (5 pages) of Research Paper due.

Week 11 – SPRING BREAK

Week 12 (March 25): *Video assignment presentations.*

Week 13 (April 1): *Video assignment presentations.*
Week 14 (April 8):

Week 15 (April 15): *Presentations on Research Papers.*