

Macalester College,

Autumn, 2021.

**Introduction to International Studies: Globalization
(INTL 110-01).**

T&TH 1:40– 2:50 p.m.

Carnegie Hall, Room 404

Instructor: *Professor Ahmed I. Samatar*

Preceptor: Paul Cosme '22

Office Hours: Tuesday, 3:15-4:30
Thursday, 3:15-4:30

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The intellect provides a guide to life by its capacity to draw us into the broad transhistorical and transnational community of human beings.

Zena Hitz, *Lost in Thought: The Hidden Pleasures of Intellectual life*.
2020.

Every hour that passes brings a supplement of ignition to the crucible in which the world is being fused. We have not had the same past, you and ourselves, but we shall have, strictly, the same future. The era of separate destinies has run its course.

Cheik Hamidou Kane,
Ambiguous Adventure, 1963.

. . . the problem for anyone tackling the world scene is to define a hierarchy of forces, of currents, of particular movements, and then tackle them as an entire constellation.

Fernand Braudel
On History, 1980.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

A. Substance

This is an introductory course to International Studies, or the study of major global phenomena. As Fernand Braudel and others instruct us, activities of this scale (e.g., ideas, technology and production, trade, citizenship and democratic ethos, migration and displacement, pandemics, and environmental transformation) are not unique to the twenty-first century. On the contrary, both current civilizational encounters and the large questions of the age have a pedigree of some historical depth. An acquaintance with the lineaments of this background is a useful companion to this course.

But the present has its own attributes, too. For, we live in a stirring "world time" with many old and new forces at work, and in peculiar combinations. Two that stand out seem to be pushing human societies in opposite directions. On the one hand, there is centripetal logic to the growth of such empowering developments as scientific information, technology, economic productivity, trade and travel, search for a pluralistic and democratic order, and the spread of ecological consciousness. In short, we seem to be witnessing the reconstitution of space and time, and the coming of intriguing, if not bewildering, juxtapositions, with revolutionary consequences for integration and interpenetration. On the other hand, there are other coexistent trends towards centrifugence and entropy. These include: acute alienation of the individual, a resurgence of ethnic and racial chauvinism, religious intolerance, deepening immiseration and marginalization of hundreds of millions of people, the collapse of polities, livelihoods and ecological systems, and war. This conundrum is the central concern of the course.

Understanding the nature of the contemporary world (materially, ideologically, and cognitively) and, consequently, designing a worthy life requires memory, retrieval, and analysis, but a correspondingly responsible engagement with a complicated and hidden future. For the burden of intelligence, as John Dewey reminds us, is to conceive and maintain "more and better values here and now." More specifically, this implies seeing through the intricacies of the present to discern possibilities conducive to individual efficacy and shared deliberations towards transnationalist civic culture. This makes up the finale of the course.

B. Strategy

Given the extraordinary range of the project and the commensurate ambition, International Studies suffers from a teasing affliction: a multiple intellectual schizophrenia. To turn such a condition into an asset and do justice to the assignment, even at a preliminary level, command transdisciplinary daring, scholarly fervor, conceptual and methodological creativity, in a spirit of constant humility. Operationally, then, the organizing and master concept of the semester is **globalization** and the approach

is **integrative thinking**. The first connotes that the world be treated as one unit; the latter requires thinking that keeps the diverse pieces and the whole together. Additionally, coming to grips with globalization through integrative thinking demands a dialectical oscillation between theoretical abstraction and historical concreteness. These constitute the *modus operandi* of the course.

In the end, the irreducible test of any course is how well it contributes to the pursuit of an integral liberal learning. Here, the key criteria include: the imagination to identify the central question(s); the urge to think deliberately; the capacity to read with discriminating discernment; the ability to write felicitously; the competence to speak coherently and with grace; and the cultivation of a civic and cosmopolitan mind. You, the student, will have the opportunity to make the judgment as to whether and how far this course has been successful in adding value to your liberal education.

The material for the semester is organized into the following sections:

1. Syllabus review and introduction.
2. The Globalization Phenomenon: Old and New.
3. The Global Economy and the Dominant Paradigm.
4. The Environment and the Subaltern.
5. What is to be Done – Hope vs. Cynicism?

Moral of the Semester: stay attentive, patient, participatory, and respectful of the intellect and other members of the course.

II. TEXTS

(All textbooks are available at the Lampert building)

1. Aronson, Ronald. *We: Reviving Social Hope*. University of Chicago Press, 2017.
2. Milanovic, Branco. *Capitalism, Alone: The Future of the System that Rules the World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019.
3. Nixon, Rob. *Slow violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011.
4. Steger, Manfred. *Globalization: A Very Short History*. Oxford: Oxford

III. COURSE FORMAT

The class meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays. With a modicum of formal lectures, the main frame is constituted of dialogic encounters, a brief autobiographical paper, class presentations, a mid-term examination on the main concepts of the course thus far, a final and comprehensive examination (both examinations will be conducted in-class), and a final scholarly comparative paper. Participation will include: a pair of students assigned to **summarize** the readings for the day by identifying: (1) the central argument(s); (2) how the argument(s) is (are) presented; and (3) three most paramount concepts. A *concept*, to borrow from the eminent political theorist, Charles Taylor, is precious because it serves: (a) as a condensation of meaning, (b) opens a new space, and (c) facilitates contact with the hidden or lost. This is to be followed by brief personal comments and one question for general discussion. All of this should **not** take more than **TWENTY** minutes.

NOTE: the team should distribute a copy of the outline to ALL the members of the course at the beginning of class time.

Every member of the class will be responsible for all of the assigned readings and is expected to fully participate in the life of the course.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- A. Attendance: more than **one** unexpected absence will result in the **deduction of three points for each absence**.

- B. Contributions to Class Discussion (20 points):
 - 1. Class Presentations.
 - 2. Semester-long Participation.

- C. First Paper (10 points). This should be about **2500** words and do the following:
 - 1. Give it an appropriate title.
 - 2. Offer a synopsis of the main contours of your biography and intellectual experience.
 - 3. Offer a definition and explanation of what “globalization” means to you.
 - 4. Articulate the reasons why you have chosen this course and what you hope to accomplish at the conclusion of the term.

***** Due Sept. 10th (Friday), No later than 3:00 pm in my mailbox by my the**

Door of my office.

- D. Mid-Term Examination (in class, 20 points): Major concepts of the course, thus far.
- E. Final Paper (30 points): comparison, analysis, and personal reflections (**4000 words**—excluding notes and bibliography—and double-spaced).
1. Chose **TWO** of the main readings and strive to:
 1. Give a general and appropriate title to the assignment;
 2. State the purpose and organization of the paper;
 3. Identify the main thesis of each work and the techniques that are used to support the thesis;
 4. Identify and discuss any *major* convergences and divergences of insights.
 5. Integrate other *relevant* materials (e.g. lectures) from the rest of the course; and
 6. Reflect on the *concrete* ways that the materials of this course have changed or re-confirmed your sense of International Studies and Globalization before you enrolled.

**** Due December 10th (Friday), No later than 3:00 pm in the mailbox by the door of my office.**

Reminder: The paper must be given a title page and be typed, double-spaced, and with pages numbered.

- F. FINAL EXAMINATION (20 points, IN CLASS): Comprehensive and on major concepts of the course. (**Tuesday, December 14th 1:30 – 3:30pm**)

NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

V. GRADING

100 --95	=	A
94 – 90	=	A-
89 – 85	=	B+
84 – 80	=	B
79 – 75	=	B-
74 – 70	=	C+
69 – 65	=	C

64 – 60 = C-
59 – 55 = D

Grading Standards for Writing and Other Course Assignments

"A" work: (1) Responds fully and on time to the assignment; (2) Expresses its purpose clearly and persuasively; (3) Begins and ends effectively; (4) Provides adequate supporting arguments, evidence, examples, and details; (5) Is well-organized and unified; (6) Uses appropriate, direct, and precise language; (7) Is free of errors in grammar, punctuation, word choice, spelling, and format; (8) Correctly acknowledges and documents sources; and (9) Maintains a level of superior performance throughout, and shows creativity and thoughtfulness in realizing the project.

"B" work: Realizes (1) through (9) fully and completely — and demonstrates overall excellence — but shows lower levels of creativity and insight.

"C" work: Barely realizes (1) through (9) — i.e., demonstrates a minimum degree of competence — but contains some serious errors or flaws. For instance, a "C" paper may show a modicum of creativity, but those qualities don't make up for carelessness or poor argumentation, writing, and organization.

"D" work: Does not competently realize most elements of (1) through (9) and is shot with major shortcomings.

"F" work: Fails on all accounts to realize (1) through (9).

VI. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

A. Introduction (Sept. 2) :

1. Small colleges v. big colleges.
2. Review of course philosophy and syllabus.
3. What are International Studies and Globalization?
4. How does one study them?
5. What is (are) the relationship(s) to liberal arts education?
6. What are the prospects for career development and life-long learning?
7. Class presentation Assignments.

B. The Hinterland: History and Globalization (Sept. 7) :

1. Why History?
 - a. History as time.
 - b. History as method.
 - c. History as structure and memory.

2. Why civilization?
 - a. Civilization as a concept vs. culture.
 - b. Single civilization or plurality of civilizations.

*** Required Readings, Steger, pp. 1-82

3. Globalization (*Sept. 9*):
 - a. Conceptual Debates.
 - b. Economic Features.
 - c. Political Features.

Required Readings: Steger, pp. 1-82.

Discussants: i. _____
ii. _____

3. Globalization Continued (*Sept.14*) :
 - a. Cultural Features.
 - b. Ecological Features.
 - c. Contradictions and The Future.

Required Readings: Steger, pp. 83-136.

Discussants: i. _____
ii. _____

LIBRARY DAY (THURSDAY, SEPT. 16TH).

Meet around the circulation desk promptly.

C. The Global Economy (*Sept. 21, 23*) :

1. The World After the Cold War.
 - a. Lasting Insights from Smith and Marx.
 - b. What is Capitalism?
 - c. Forms of Capitalism.

Required Readings: Milanovic, pp. 1 – 66.

Discussants: i. _____
ii. _____

2. Political Capitalism (*Sept. 28, 30*) :
 - a. Key Elements.
 - b. PRC

Required Readings: Milanovic, pp. 67--128

Discussants: i. _____
ii. _____

3. Capitalism and Globalization (*Oct. 5, 7, 12*) :
 - a. Labor and Migration.
 - b. Hyper Commodification.
4. The Future of Global Capitalism.

Required Readings: Milanovic, pp. 129-218).

Discussants: i. _____

ii. _____

***** R e v i e w (Oct. 14).**

***** MID-TERM EXAMINATION (TUESDAY, Oct. 19).**

***** FALL BREAK (Thursday, Oct. 21).**

D. The Environment and the Subaltern. (*Oct. 26, 28, Nov. 2*):

1. Source of Inspiration.
2. The contours of the Drama:
 - a. Slow violence, long dying, and Neoliberalism.
 - b. Structural violence.
 - c. The Anthropocene age and its ramifications.
 - d. Writer-Activism.

Required Readings: Nixon, pp.1x-102.

Discussants: i. _____

ii. _____

3. Environmental Justice (*Nov. 4, 9, 11*) :
 - a. Ken Saro-Wiwa and minority rights.
 - b. Gender and the poor.
 - c. Unimagined community.

Required Reading: Nixon, pp.103-198.

Discussants: i. _____

ii. _____

4. The Aftermath (*Nov. 16*) :
 - a. Weapons and War.
 - b. Environmentalism and the Academy
 - c. Good Stewardship.

Required Reading: Nixon, pp. 199, 280.

Discussants: i. _____

ii. _____

E. What is to Be Done? (**Nov.18, 23**).

1. What is hope?
2. Seriality.
3. Progress v. Hope.

Required Reading: Aronson, pp. 1-92.

Discussants: i. _____

ii. _____

***** THANKSGIVING BREAK (NOVEMBER 24TH-28).**

4. Cynicism v. Hope (*Nov. 30*).
a. WE and the Politics of Hope.

Required reading: Aronson, pp. 93- 179.

Discussants: i _____

ii _____

**** Reflections on the Semester (*Dec. 2*).**

**** Final Paper Due: December 10 (Friday), no later than 3:00pm, at my mailbox by the door of my office.**

**** FINAL EXAMINATION:**

Date: *Tuesday, Dec. 14th*
Time: *1:30 – 3:30pm*