Political Science 390: Globalization in the Crosshairs

Northwestern University
Fall 2009
Tuesday & Thursday 11:00 AM - 12:20 PM
University Hall 318

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Course Overview
Globalization is arguably the most powerful force shaping international and domestic politics today. When observers discuss the effects of globalization, they may refer to any of a number of its different facets: economic, political, social, and environmental. In this course we will focus primarily on economic globalization – the increase in the cross-border flows of goods and services, workers, firms, and money.

This is a critical time for the global economy. The financial system has experienced a profoundly destabilizing shock. The distribution of international economic and political power is shifting. Policymakers increasingly question the efficacy and fairness of the international institutions that underpin modern economic globalization. This course is intended to take stock of globalization in light of the global economic meltdown. What is globalization? Are its effects on the economic fortunes of individuals in wealthy democracies different than in developing countries? Does the reduction of barriers to economic exchange harm national cultures? Is terrorism linked to globalization? Does globalization erode or enhance American military power? Has globalization gone too far – or has it not gone far enough? These are the kinds of questions that will be discussed in the course.

Globalization is the object of both misplaced ire and adulation. The intense public debate about it has, for this reason, generated more heat than light. To get a better handle on globalization we will draw on a variety of theoretical approaches and a wide range of evidence provided by political scientists, economists, sociologists, historians, and journalists. Globalization is such a massive topic that it is impossible to address all of its manifestations in a nine week course. This syllabus is my attempt to cover as much territory as possible given the constraints.

The course is organized around seven topics: (1) definitions of globalization and a comparison of the two eras of modern economic integration; (2) the constituent parts of economic globalization (immigration, trade, foreign direct investment, and finance); (3) the impact of globalization on governments, workers, and the poor in advanced industrial and developing countries; (4) the consequences of increasing economic integration for national cultures; (5) the links between globalization and transnational terrorism and interstate conflict; (6) the international institutional architecture that provided the undergirding for economic globalization in the post-World War II
era; (7) the future of globalization in the wake of the financial crisis that erupted in September 2008.

There are no prerequisites for this course. A background in international economics and/or international political economy is helpful but not essential. If you find that the terminology and concepts are confusing, any of the three introductory texts listed below are likely to prove helpful. These texts may be of use to you, but are not required readings for the course.


**Course Requirements and Grading**

Your final grade will be composed of two assigned papers and class participation (which includes the two short response papers described below). The first paper will resemble a take-home essay: on October 27, I will distribute a set of questions; you will pick one from the list to answer. The second major assignment is a research paper on a topic that falls within the purview of the course. The research paper is due on Monday, December 7. More details on both papers will follow.

I included a short list of additional readings following the required readings; if you find that a particular topic discussed in class generated an idea, the recommended readings provide a direction for starting your research for the final paper.

The weighting of the course requirements is as follows:

- Take-home essay: 30%
- Research paper: 45%
- Participation: 25%

Late papers will be penalized by a half grade (from a B+ to a B, for example) for every 12 hour period after the announced deadline.

Class participation accounts for a large proportion of the grade. This is an upper-level course with limited enrollment. The reading load is substantial but not excessive (averaging 87 pages per week) and the course will be driven by discussions rather than lectures. For these reasons I strongly urge that you come regularly, on time, and well-prepared – you must keep up with the readings and be ready to contribute to the conversation. Missing class more than two times (without reasonable documentation of the reason for the absence) will adversely affect your participation grade.

A significant portion of your participation grade will include completing two short (1-2 pages) **response papers** which provide critical engagement of the reading. A sign-up sheet will be circulated during the first week to assign readings. The response papers are to be circulated via
the course website to the rest of the class. More details will be provided regarding the response papers during the first week of class.

Caveat: I understand that students’ comfort with speaking out in class varies. If you do not feel entirely comfortable speaking up, you can send me an email with some of your thoughts after class. However, I expect that my sections will be an environment where everyone feels comfortable speaking.

**Required Book (for purchase)**

There is one book that you should purchase for the course:


Wolf’s book is available in the campus bookstore. I placed a copy of the book on reserve in the main library.

**Electronic Reserves**

Aside from the book, all of the required course readings have been forwarded to the library to be placed on electronic reserves. Links – either directly to a PDF of the scanned article/chapter or to the e-journal that contains the reading – should appear on the blackboard page.

**Respect and Discussion Rules**

Every participant brings a different perspective to the classroom. Part of my job is to make sure that one viewpoint is not privileged over others. Dialogue in my course is expected to always be respectful. We all reserve the right to respectfully disagree with one another; we do not have the right to intimidate anyone. Your professor observes and will enforce all university policies concerning racial, ethnic, gender, sexual preference, or religious discrimination and harassment.

**Academic Integrity**

Plagiarism is a serious offense at Northwestern. If we suspect that you have knowingly misrepresented someone else’s work as your own, this is grounds for suspension or dismissal from the university.

What constitutes misrepresentation? Obviously, purchasing a paper from the internet is one way. Not that any of you would, but this is a very bad idea. Failing to give credit where credit is due – appropriating quotes from published authors as your own or representing authors’ ideas as your own – also constitutes plagiarism. If you are having trouble assimilating outside information into your own ideas, make an appointment to visit the Writing Place (University Library, room 2304), or come to my office hours.

Northwestern’s official policy regarding academic integrity is found at:
http://www.northwestern.edu/uaac

**Student Disability Services**
Students that require any special academic accommodations must provide a letter prepared by the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities detailing the arrangements to me by the end of the second week of classes.

**News Resources**
I will often draw on current news stories related to some aspect of globalization in classroom discussion. You will also want to follow the news and bring important stories to my and your classmates’ attention via the course website’s discussion board. The best single source of news and analysis related to international politics and economics is *The Financial Times*, available in electronic and paper form. There are deep student discounts available for FT subscriptions; if you can afford it, I strongly recommend that you purchase a subscription. For current news you should make it a habit to read major daily newspapers (such as *The New York Times, Washington Post*, and *The Wall Street Journal*) and a weekly policy-oriented publication (*The Economist, Foreign Policy, The National Interest, The Atlantic*).
Section I: Globalization – What Is It?

Topic 1: Globalization, Past and Present.

Tuesday, September 22: the first meeting will be devoted to introducing the course and covering administrative issues.

Thursday, September 24: approaches to conceptualizing globalization.


Further reading on this topic…


Total pages of required reading for this week: 35

Tuesday, September 29: the “engines” of globalization (technological change, interest groups, power, and ideas); comparing the two eras of modern economic integration.


Further reading on this topic…

**Topic 2: Economic Globalization, Disaggregated.** What are the components of economic globalization?

**Thursday, October 1:** immigration – what drives the flow of people across borders? What are the consequences for workers in recipient and sender countries?


*Further reading on this topic…*

**Total pages of required reading for this week: 105**

**Tuesday, October 6:** consequences of greater worldwide trade in goods and (increasingly) services.


*Further reading on this topic…*

**Thursday, October 8:** footloose firms – why do corporations move production across borders?

Further reading on this topic…

Total pages of required reading for this week: 108

**Tuesday, October 13**: money on the move, part I – innovation in global financial markets.

Further reading on this topic…

**Thursday, October 15**: money on the move, part II – turbulence in financial markets.

Further reading on this topic…


Total pages of required reading for this week: 75

**Section II: Globalization and its Consequences**

**Topic 3: The state, workers, and the poor.**

**Tuesday, October 20:** pressures for convergence – can the state survive globalization? Is there a race to the bottom in terms of regulation and social protection?


*Further reading on this topic…*


**Thursday, October 22:** economic globalization and the fortunes of skilled and unskilled workers in rich democracies.


*Further reading on this topic…*

Total pages of required reading for this week: 105

**Tuesday, October 27**: worldwide inequalities – does globalization help or harm the poor?


*Further reading on this topic…*


**III**TAKE-HOME ESSAY IS ASSIGNED AT THE END OF THE OCT. 27 MEETING***

**Topic 4: National culture in question.**

**Thursday, October 29**: do reduced cross-national barriers to economic exchange signal the end of unique national cultures?


*Further reading on this topic…*


Total pages of required reading for this week: 93

**Topic 5: Security and conflict.**

**Tuesday, November 3:** exploring the links between globalization, terrorism, and ethnic conflict.


*Further reading on this topic…*


**Thursday, November 5:** consequences for interstate war and American military power.


*Further reading on this topic…*


Total pages of required reading for this week: 98

**Section III: Managing Globalization**
Topic 6: Institutional underpinnings of economic globalization.

Tuesday, November 10: integration of markets for labor, goods, and finance does not imply the breakdown of international regulatory regimes and rules – in this meeting we will focus on the international organizations that define the rules of the game.


Further reading on this topic…

Thursday, November 12: in this meeting we will focus on two powerful international institutions – the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.


Further reading on this topic…
- Paul Blustein, And the Money Kept Rolling In (and Out): Wall Street, the IMF, and the Bankrupting of Argentina (New York: Public Affairs, 2005).

Total pages of required reading for this week: 115

Topic 7: The financial crisis and the future of globalization.

Tuesday, November 17: globalization, the financial crisis of 2008-09, and the lessons from the Great Depression.


Further reading on this topic…


**Thursday, November 19:** is globalization going out of style?


Total pages of required reading for this week: **49**

**Tuesday, November 24:** final meeting of the term – summing up and discussion of research papers.


***RESEARCH PAPERS DUE BY 5PM ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 7***