Global Capitalism
SOC 324 Winter 2016

Professor: Elizabeth Onasch
Teaching Assistant: Magda Boutros
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Office Hours: (Onasch): Tuesdays 3-5 pm, Thursdays 10am-12pm, or by appointment
(Boutros): Mondays 2-4
Class Meeting: Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:30-1:50 pm
Location: University Hall 121

Course Description

This course will examine global capitalism from critical, historical, and sociological perspectives. We will compare the development and contemporary forms of capitalism in different regions, tracing them through to neoliberal globalization. The course will pay particular attention to the role of colonialism and neo-colonialism in these developments, as well as the sexual division of labor and other resulting social inequalities. Through-out the course, we will also consider social movements and other forms of resistance and alternatives to capitalism.

Course Goals

After completing the course, students will be equipped to:

- Describe the core characteristics of global capitalism
- Explain how and why capitalism developed in Europe, especially in relation to other regions
- Analyze the effects of global capitalism from liberal, neoliberal, feminist, and postcolonial perspectives.
- Argue for the positive or negative roles of global institutions in development and financial regulation
- Evaluate alternatives and resistance to global capitalism

Course Materials

We will be reading articles and book chapters throughout the quarter, which will be available on Canvas and, when applicable, through the course reserve at the library.

Course Format

Most class sessions will include lecture and discussion, and some sessions will include structured reading group meetings. The course will incorporate multi-media materials, such as film and news clips.
**Course Requirements:**

Class Attendance and Participation (15%)

Class discussions are an important part of the course and these discussions will be much more productive if students are present and prepared to share their thoughts and questions on the readings. The participation grade will be based on the quality of your comments and questions in class.

Students may miss one class with no penalty. If you need to miss class more than once, please let me know ahead of time. After the first absence, each addition class that you miss without an excuse that I have approved ahead of time will cost 3% of your total course grade. A student who misses four or more classes will fail.

If you miss class, please consult your fellow classmates for notes on what we covered in that session. You may also come to office hours (or make an appointment) to discuss what you missed.

Reading Group Work (30%)*

Students will meet with their reading groups for 25 minutes during six of our Monday class sessions. For each meeting, students will perform one of six roles:

- **Discussion facilitator:** When performing this role, students should develop at least two discussion questions per reading, write brief potential responses to these questions, and facilitate the discussion by the group.

- **Passage Master:** Students should identify one or two key passages from each reading that summarize the readings’ key points, or are particularly interesting or controversial, and write a brief explanation of the passages in layman’s terms.

- **Creative Connector:** In this role, students will make at least two connections between the readings and other class material, current events, cultural objects, or other experiences.

- **Devil’s Advocate:** Students should write at least one question or argument per reading that challenges the author’s arguments or evidence, and provide brief justifications for these points. If you find yourself in agreement with the readings, it may be helpful to try and write from someone else’s perspective- what kinds of arguments can you imagine others making?

- **Reporter:** When performing this role, students should observe (and participate in) the group discussion, record moments of confusion or disagreement during the group discussion, and write a brief summary of the discussion to be shared with group members.

- **Participant:** Students performing the “participant” role should be prepared to discuss the readings, but are not required to post their preparations online.
Students must post their respective preparative work for the group on the canvas course website before the start of class (with the exception of the reporter, who will post notes from the discussion online by Wednesday at noon, and the participant, who will not post preparations).

This assignment will be evaluated based on adequate completion of preparative work each week and through peer evaluation at the end of the course.

*This exercise was developed and tested by Heather Macpherson Parrott and Elizabeth Cherry, see Parrott, Heather Macpherson and Elizabeth Cherry (2011) “Using Structured Reading Groups to Facilitate Deep Learning” in Teaching Sociology, 39(4): 354-370.

Midterm (25%)

The mid-term exam will be an in-class written exam, consisting of short and long essay questions. The exam will test students’ comprehension of concepts that we have explored up to this point.

Final Take Home Exam (30%)

This exam will consist of prompts for essays (3 pages each). Students will respond to their choice of three of four possible prompts. The prompts will be handed out in class on March 7th and the responses must be submitted by 7 pm on March 14th.

Grading

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<td>Final Take-Home Exam</td>
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Grading scale:

- A 93-100
- A- 90-92
- B+ 87-89
- B 83-86
- B- 80-82
- C+ 77-79
- C 73-76
- C- 70-72
- D 60-69
- F < 60

Late work

Please speak to me in advance of a deadline if you believe you will not be able to turn in an assignment on time. All assignments that are turned in late without any an approved excuse will automatically lose half a grade for each of the first three days they are late (e.g., an A paper that is one day late will become an A- paper), and then a full grade for each day after that.
**Academic Integrity**

Students are required to abide by Northwestern University's academic integrity policy. Student work in this class may be analyzed electronically for violations of this policy and may also be included in a database for the purpose of testing for plagiarized content. We will discuss the Northwestern policy, as well as rules for citation during the course. You may also find more information at:

- http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/policies/academicintegrity
- http://www.weinberg.northwestern.edu/handbook/integrity/

**Student Accommodations**

Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with AccessibleNU (accessiblenu@northwestern.edu; 847-467-5530) and provide the professor with an accommodation notification from AccessibleNU, preferably within the first two weeks of class. All information will remain confidential.

**Laptop and Cellphone Policy**

Students may use laptops in class to take notes and refer to course readings. Students may not surf the web, chat, skype, or use the computer for other non-class related activities during the class session. Students should also refrain from using their cellphones during the course; please have your phone on silent and do not read or send text messages. Using a computer for non-class related activity or using cell phones in class disrupts everyone’s engagement will negatively affect your participation grade.

**Course Schedule and Readings**

Please read all assigned readings. Any changes to the reading list, which may be made if we need to move more quickly or spend more time on any topic, will be announced ahead of time in class and on Canvas.

**Week One: Introduction- What is Global Capitalism?**

January 4: Introduction to the Course

January 6: What is Globalization?

**Reading:**


**Week Two: Historical Developments of Global Capitalism**

January 11: Why Europe?

*Practice* Prep work for reading groups
Reading:


January 13: Rise of World Systems and The Market Society

Reading:


Week Three: Race and Capitalism in United States History

January 18: Martin Luther King Jr. Day- NO CLASS

January 20: Race and Capitalism in United States History

Reading:


Week Four: Varieties of Capitalism

January 25: Varieties of Capitalism

Prep work for reading groups

Reading:


January 27: Capitalism in South and East Asia

**Reading:**

**Week Five: Coloniality and Capitalism**

February 1: Coloniality and Capitalism

**Prep work for reading groups**

**Reading:**

February 3: **MIDTERM**

**Week Six: Global Institutions, and Development and Foreign Aid in Latin America and Africa**

February 8: The World Bank, IMF, and WTO

**Prep work for reading groups**

**Reading:**

February 10: Development and Foreign Aid

Reading:


**Week Seven: Commodifying and Decommodifying**

February 15: Commodification in the Global Economy

Prep work for reading groups

Reading:

• Newell, Peter and Matthew Paterson. (2010). *Climate Capitalism: Global Warming and the Transformation of the Global Economy*. Chapter 1

February 17: Welfare States- A Solution?

Reading:


**Week Eight: Whither Goes the Nation-State?**

February 22: Transnational Elites and Corporate Governance

Prep work for reading groups

Reading:
Gourevitch Peter and James Shinn. Political Power and Corporate Control: The New Global Politics of Corporate Governance. Chapters 1,2.

February 24: Space Globalization, Global Cities

Reading:


Week Nine: Resistance and Alternative Futures

February 29: Counter Hegemonic Globalization and Transnational Activism

Prep work for reading groups

Reading:


March 2: Social Movements

Reading:

- Various Authors. (2012). “Understanding Occupy.” Contexts 11:2: 12-21

Week Ten READING WEEK
March 7: Class Conclusions (No Readings)

Receive Prompts for Take-Home exam

March 14th: Take Home Exam Due at 7pm