316-01-02 Globalization: Ecological Stress (Climate Change, Energy, Soil and Water)

James Buchanan

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Welcome to Globalization! You must be interested in big ideas and complexity! So are we. But understanding big ideas and complexity while benefiting from interdisciplinary treatment (as will occur in this class) also requires some grounding in disciplinarity and some sort of shared focus.

Our disciplinary foci will be: global systems (Buchanan), international political economy (Malik), and history from below (Smythe). As we explore globalization from these perspectives we will be trying to understand the following: What is sustainable development? What are global problems? What are sustainability problems? What is the relationship between the local and the global? What is “growth” compared to “development”? What do common measures (such as GDP, Gini coefficient, etc.) actually measure? What works as solutions/effective strategies?

Our thematic focus is ecological stress in terms of climate change, energy, soil, and water.

What we will strive to do is to think about globalized ecological stresses in terms of our disciplinary foci returning again and again to the above questions. While this might seem like too many layers of questions/themes/disciplines, we are laying them all out here for you so that you know precisely how we are thinking about the course design and so that you, from the very beginning, can think about how what you are reading (both in and out of class) fits into one or more pieces on one or more of the layers. It is our mutual task to strive to make connections between disciplines, between questions and the focus of ecological stress, between the disciplines and the focus of ecological stress, etc.

Just as importantly, you have your own disciplinary perspectives, personal experiences, and intellectual questions to bring to the conversation. Both as a full class and in our smaller sections, we will be in dialogue with each other and with you as we proceed in the course.

**Course Objectives:**

To gain familiarity with perspectives on globalization from the disciplines of history, international political economy, and ethics.

To gain familiarity with and participate in interdisciplinary dialogue around critical issues of globalization and sustainability

To critically assess arguments about global issues of sustainability, particularly around climate change, water, soil, and energy

To synthesize readings from different disciplines in addressing overlapping issues of globalization and sustainability
To address challenges of sustainability and globalization using concepts and perspectives from different disciplines

**Course Readings:**
These are outlined on the syllabus below.

**Assignments and Grading:**
Participation and Reading outlines/questions (15%): Every class period (save the first) you will be expected to complete the assigned reading and either an outline of the reading or an answer to a question and submit your work to Canvas before class begins. These outlines and answers will provide a useful means to review the material for both the midterm and final exam as well as help you to digest the material as we move through it. You will likely want to bring a copy of your outline/answer to class as well.

Midterm (20%): This will be in the form a take-home essay and will be due February 20. You will receive the question February 11.

Final exam (30%): This will be a take-home essay as well and will be due Tuesday, May 6 by 12:20.

Small group assignments (to be described elsewhere) (35%).

**Grading**

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**Class Schedule** (12 small group including final exam period/17 big (6 Global systems; 5 IPE; 5 HFB))

**January 14** Group Introduction

**January 16** Small groups (Start in CLC 412 from 11:30-12:45)

**January 21 Global** Systems - T-Shirts to Satellites
Reading: Watch PBS documentary “Earth from Space” [http://m.video.pbs.org/video/2334144059/](http://m.video.pbs.org/video/2334144059/)

January 23 International Political Economy: what it is, origins as a discipline, prominent approaches).

January 28 Small groups

January 30 Small groups

February 4 History from Below (what it is, what we learn (globalization or no? global apartheid), focus on climate change (global agreements, Africa’s role, impacts), soil (global ag and land grabbing) and energy (transnational oil and solar), brief 20th c. historical review
Questions: What is sustainable development? What do common measures actually measure?
Readings:
Smythe, The Dangers of Globalization, globalization.icaap.org/content/v8.1/Smythe.pdf.
Global systems

February 6 Small group

February 11 Global system: Techno – Economic Systems

February 13 Global systems: Techno –Economic Systems

February 18 Small group

February 20 International Political Economy. Long cycles in world political economy, hegemonic stability theory, evolution of global governance (Thompson and Modelski, 1999

Feb 24 Midterm due

February 25 International Political Economy. The logic of collective action, and new institutional economics, managing common pool resources. Sustaining the Commons Preface, Part 1 (pps 3-44)

International Studies Quarterly 52, 579-605; Kurzweil http://www.kurzweilai.net/the-law-of-
March 3-8 SPRING BREAK

March 10 Energy Justice: Leading the Way to a Third Industrial Revolution, Jeremy Rifkin, 7 pm, Cintas Banquet Center

March 11 Processing Rifkin lecture (we can do this in small group is we want to add one more)

March 13 Small Group

March 18 History from Below (focus: climate change)
Questions: What is sustainable development? What are global problems? What are sustainable problems? What is the relationship between the local and the global? What is “growth” compared to “development”? What works as solutions/effective strategies?
Readings: Jeffrey Goldberg, “Drowning Kiribati: This Entire Country is about to be Wiped Out by Climate Change. It Won’t Be the Last” Bloomberg Business Week, November 21, 2013, http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2013-11-21/kiribati-climate-change-destroys-pacific-island-nation. Also watch the video embedded in the article.

March 20 History from Below (focus: soil)
Questions: What is sustainable development? What are global problems? What are sustainable problems? What is the relationship between the local and the global? What is “growth” compared to “development”? What works as solutions/effective strategies?

March 25 Small groups

March 26 “Sanctity of Sanctuary” Screening, Kennedy Auditorium, 7 pm

March 27 Small groups

April 1 History from Below (focus: energy)
Questions: What is sustainable development? What are global problems? What are sustainable problems? What is the relationship between the local and the global? What is “growth” compared to “development”? What works as solutions/effective strategies?
Readings:
Global Systems - The challenge of Integrating global and local Systems

**April 3** Small groups

**April 8** Small groups

**April 10** Global Systems—the challenge of integrating global and local systems

**April 15** Small Group

**April 17-21** EASTER BREAK

**April 22** Global Systems – Rethinking, Redesigning Global Systems?


**April 29** History from Below
Questions: What works as solutions/effective strategies?

**May 1** Small groups

**May 6** (10:30-12:20) FINAL EXAM PERIOD (in small groups)