

SOCIOLOGY 2690  
INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY OF GLOBALIZATION  
WINTER 2002-03

**Instructor:** Oswald S. Warner, BSc., MLIR, Ph.D.

**Time/Place:** Mons. 1-2:20pm  
Frids. 11:30am-12:50pm Room: B301

**Office Hours:** Frids. 1-2:30pm and 3:30-4pm Room: C404  
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**Prerequisite:** Sociology 1000; Introductory Sociology

**Description:**

This course adopts a global (international ) perspective by examining contemporary local, national, and international processes and issues of globalization. It considers sets of global relations, economic, political, social/cultural, and technological and their profound implications for the dynamics of communities and the identities of their members. A decided focus will be on how these processes impact Canadian economy, society, and polity.

**Overview of Course Objectives:**

Since Canada, as elsewhere, is very much imbedded within this still-emerging global world or to be more apt, this globalizing world, it is subject to profound economic, political social/cultural, and technological changes. One question we need to address, therefore, is: What are the implications and effects of globalization to Canadian and other world societies? As a result, it seems important to provide perspectives on the emerging shape, nature, and role of Canadian, as well as other, societies, influenced as they are by globalization as well as by their influences on the globalization process itself. This course, then, will provide a global perspective on how to understand the economical, political, social/cultural, and technological changes within and between world societies.

In addition to acquiring specific knowledge, learners should gain some specific skills in this course. All courses you have been exposed to so far have a built-in bias, as does this course. Having an alternative way to analyze events helps learners to build their critical

thinking skills. In this course, we would therefore challenge common assumptions by formulating questions, identifying and weighing appropriate evidence, and reaching reasoned conclusions.

Among the major objectives of this course, therefore, are to allow students to develop and practice such critical thinking skills as:

- A: The abilities to identify, order, and "cut through" evidence.
- B: The ability to think on one's feet.
- C: The ability to create alternative interpretations, as well as to "see other sides of the argument."

Thus,

- A: the classroom process will be changed into a collective search for an analysis and/or solution to specific problems/issues.
- B: learners therefore will engage the material, digest it, think for themselves, and generate the classroom learning.
- C: the instructor will facilitate discussion and pose challenging, open-ended questions that invite learners to explore and interpret the material for themselves.

Other tangential but also important crucial skills to be gained from this course that will be of use to learners beyond the classroom are:

- A: Public Speaking Skills: the capacities to construct logical arguments and persuade others.
- B: Group Dynamics Skills: the ability to read and interpret group signals and moods.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cusimano, Maryann K.. Why You Do What You Do the Way You Do it?: Examining Teaching Goals and Teaching Methods. [Online] Available <http://data.georgetown.edu/sfs/ecase/resources/cusimano.cfm>

**Format:**

This course, therefore, will not be taught in the traditional lecture mode whereby instructors take the centre stage: That is, they do most of the talking and provide most of the information and analysis. When the class begins, learners tend to become stenographers, trying rapidly to take in the mass of data and interpretation flowing from the expert instructor. Learners engage in class through their pens and their ears, and if the instructor's monologue is particularly intriguing, this can be a satisfactory experience. But the experience is aimed primarily at the transfer of content from the instructor's mind to learners' note folders (and it is hoped, from there to their cranium). As such, learners only get involved in the act when assignments are required or when the occasional question is directed at them.<sup>2</sup>

An Alternative Approach:

Use of Case Studies: What is it like?

In this course, students will do most of the talking where they will act for themselves, learn for themselves, and here the instructor's role is to serve as a flexible and helpful guide. One effective way to get learners involved in the act of learning and to literally have them take responsibility and ownership of their learning is to use case studies as the foundation for discussion-based, interactive, and participatory learning. In this case-based, participatory learning, the goals are:

- A: Developing critical thinking skills.
- B: Learning through decision-making and role-playing situations.
- C: Developing confidence in defining, confronting, analyzing, and solving problems through interactive discussions.
- D: Exercising and developing skills in public speaking and group problem solving.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Foran, John. The Case Method and the Interactive Classroom. [Online] Available <http://data.georgetown.edu/sfs/ecase/resources/cusimano.cfm>

In addition, students are encouraged to bring questions about the readings, issues raised by the readings, etc. to the attention of the class for answer, discussion, and/or debate. Some class sessions will also include sessions where students will meet in small groups to discuss readings and create answers to discussion questions given. These sessions are designed to bring a large class down to human scale and allow all students to participate in active discussion and thought. Each group will also present a verbal report to the class. Discussions may also center on some videos or movies that may be shown from time to time.

Finally, this class will be taught from a largely critical perspective in order to provide students with an alternative to the structural functionalist perspective that pervades both social discourse and much sociological teaching. This perspective will be new and different to some students. However, you do not have to believe everything you read or hear in this course. But, you do need to learn the perspectives and learn the strengths and weaknesses of the ideas/issues/arguments. Disagreement is therefore welcomed, so long as it is educated disagreement. We all have opinions, but we need to find out how they stack up against social data. Feel free to debate points, but recognize that debates will ultimately be won based on empirical facts, rather than feelings.

#### **Readings:**

The readings for this course are contained in three (3) required texts available for purchase at the school bookstore, from a list of supplementary readings in the library, and from handouts provided by me from time to time.

Klein, Naomi. 2000. *No Logo*, Toronto, ON: Vintage Canada

O'Meara, Patrick, Howard D. Mehlinger, and Mathew Krain (eds.). 2000. *Globalization and the Challenges of a New Century: A Reader*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Watson, William. 2000. *Globalization and the Meaning of Canadian Life*, Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Supplementary, recommended reading material and short handouts.

Learners are expected to read assigned readings in advance of the dates they are listed for. Generally, readings are a manageable amount for junior classes.

**Course Requirements:**

**Examinations:**

- Two (3) written take home exams.
- Final in-class exam.
- Two (2) case studies in which students will evaluate each other's contribution.

**Individual Participation:**

Individual participation grades will be calculated based upon attendance. Attendance is important not only to your final grade but also to your understanding of what is being discussed. Therefore, I will from time to time give simple quizzes (or curve busters) and these would also be used as a measure of attendance, participation, and understanding of course material. However, if an occasion arises that necessitates your absence from class for a day or a period of time let me know in advance. I will arrange with you to go over what you have missed during one of our office hours.

**Grade Format**

Exam 1	20% (5% group evaluation, 15% individual paper)
Exam 2	25% (5% group evaluation, 15% individual paper)
Final Exam	30%
Case Study 1	10%
Case Study 2	10%
Attendance	05%
Total	100%

**Course Policies:**

**Attendance:** is important not only to your final grade but also for your understanding of what is being discussed.

Therefore, I will from time to time give simple quizzes and these would be used as a measure of attendance.

**Reconsideration of Grades:**

Students who are not satisfied with their grades have the option of having their paper re-evaluated. However, the following stipulations apply:

- a. Requests for reconsideration must be made within one week from the date that the graded paper was returned.
- b. I will consider your arguments and re-evaluate your paper. The grade will remain the same or it may go up. It will never be reduced but more times than not it will remain the same.