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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF GLOBAL & SOCIOCULTURAL STUDIES

**GEO 3502: ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY**

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Hours:

**About the Course**

In this course we explore how the abstraction that we term “the economy” is grounded in the material world. Economic Geography focuses on the ways in which economic activities are organized, how they impact regions, and how they change over time. We are concerned with understanding processes and impacts of economic change at multiple geographic scales, including restructuring at the global level, processes of regional transformation, and the ways in which changing spatial divisions of labor transform places and impact households and individuals. In particular, we examine what is old and what is new about economic globalization as we experience it and how this matters to people, places and environments. We use a political economy approach, meaning that we concentrate on the relationship among economic processes, political institutions, and sociocultural structures. First, we will analyze the spatial dynamics of the global economy, focusing on the changing geography of production, industrial location, trade, and investment. Then we examine how local and national policies link individuals and communities to regional and global economies, using a series of case studies to illustrate. Finally we consider who ‘wins’ and who ‘loses’ through processes of uneven development in the global economy.

**Learning Goals**

We will examine how the world economy transformed from an international to a global system and what that means for nation-states, communities, individuals, corporations, and the environment.

**Learning Outcomes**

Students will demonstrate awareness of global interconnectedness, beyond merely recognizing increasing ease of communication, to understanding how global production networks create linkages among disparate places and people and change the scale at which political-economic and socio-cultural processes operate.

Students will gain perspective of the increasing complexity of the global economic map by tracing the intricate interconnections of production, consumption and distribution networks.

Students will demonstrate engagement through case studies that link south Florida to the global economy, by uncovering, through their own original research, how processes of globalization work.

**Grading and Requirements**

First Exam	33.3%
Second Exam	33.3%
Economic Geography Project	<u>33.3%</u>
	100%

### **Required Text**

Dicken, P. (2010) *Global Shift: Mapping the Changing Contours of the World Economy*. 6<sup>th</sup> Edition. New York: The Guilford Press.

In addition I will assign readings that will be available either on Moodle OR on-line (through the FIU library or another website). You are required to register for on-line access to *The New York Times*, which is a free subscription service. Simply go to [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com) and log in as a new user.

### **A Note on Requirements**

All of the assigned readings are mandatory. You are responsible for all information, materials, and instructions disseminated during the class period. Lectures, films, and readings are complementary but not identical and the exams will be based on all sources. Therefore, attendance is essential to doing well in this class. At various times throughout the semester I will take attendance at the beginning of class.

### **Important Dates**

First Exam

Due: Bibliography & Research Questions

Second Exam

Due: Economic Geography Project Portfolio

Economic Geography Final Project Presentations:

XXXX

XXXX

XXXX

XXXX

XXXXXXXX

### **A Note on the Assignment: Economic Geography Projects**

You will form small groups—of approximately four students each—to "do" economic geography. Each group will select an economic sector to research. You will prepare and present a case study that links the "local"—that is, the south Florida region—to the global economy. The final product will be a **collectively** conceptualized project including **individually** written sections of at least 8 pages per student accompanied by any illustrations, maps, and/or charts that help to illuminate the topic. The project should engage with and demonstrate understanding of the language and concepts of economic geography; that is, you should employ ideas and terminology from this class.

Although you are working in groups, the project is structured so that your grade is based on your work, that is, the portion of the project for which you are responsible. By the fifth week of the semester, you should have identified a research topic. We will spend time in class discussing possible topics and we will attend several library sessions to develop research strategies.

“Doing” economic geography requires that you use a variety of research methods and data sources, including **secondary sources** such as newspapers, journal articles, and books, and **primary sources** such as government documents, published statistics, and, possibly, visits to your site of study and/or interviews with people involved with the sector you are studying.

We undertake this research project in collaboration with Stephanie Brenenson, Coordinator of Library Instruction, who has developed a set of instruction modules for this economic geography project, which she will present on dates specified below. As you go about enhancing your research skills, she will provide you with feedback on your search strategies. She has also developed for a library guide for this course, which you can access at the following link:

<http://libguides.fiu.edu.ezproxy.fiu.edu/content.php?pid=197026>

## **Project Timeline:**

**Week 5:** identify research topic and form groups

**Week 9:** Working Bibliography is due. At the beginning of class on XXXX, **EACH** member of the group will hand in—as an individual—a typed list of the research materials that they are using for their portion of the project. This is a “working bibliography”—that is, a bibliography in progress. EACH bibliography MUST list at LEAST one scholarly book and TWO scholarly articles and TWO popular articles (newspaper or magazine).

**Week 15:** Final Project due in class XXXX.

**Weeks 15 and 16:** Every group will present the highlights of their research. Each member of the group will take part in the presentation of the Economic Geography Projects.

## **Project Evaluation**

1. Organization: Does the project demonstrate knowledge of processes operating at multiple scales?
2. Significance: Does the project reveal aspects of the connections between local, regional, national and global scales that are unique and original?
3. Research: Is the primary and secondary research adequate to the topic, demonstrating skilled use of the FIU library resources and initiative beyond the classroom?

## **Policy on Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is cheating. Don't do it. The disciplinary action that will be taken in the case of plagiarism is explained in the section on “Academic Misconduct” in the *Student Handbook*. If you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism, check out the FIU library website:  
<http://library.fiu.edu/assistance/plagiarism>.

## **Weekly Schedule**

Week 1: Introduction to Economic Geography/Globalization  
READ: Dicken, Introduction: Chapter 1

Week 2: Geographic dynamics of change  
READ: Dicken, Part I and II: Chapters 2 & 3  
Film: *The Corporation*

Week 3: Technology and Social Change  
READ: Dicken, Part II, Chapter 4

Week 4: The Transnational Corporation & the State  
READ: Dicken, Part II, Chapters 5 & 6  
FILM: *The People's Republic of Capitalism*, Parts 1 & 2

Week 5: Transnational Corporations & States  
READ: Dicken, Part II, Chapter 7 & articles as assigned

Week 6: Review

Week 7: Exam 1/Fashion & Clothing

READ: Dicken, Part III, Chapter 10 and articles as assigned

NOTE: Class meets in library Tuesday, February 24, Room GL 280

Week 8: Automobile Industry

READ: Dicken, Part III, Chapter 11 and articles as assigned

FILM: *The People's Republic of Capitalism*, Parts 3 & 4

Week 9: Finance and Business Services/Miami as a World City

Film: *Inside the Meltdown*

READ: Dicken, Part III, Chapter 12 and articles as assigned

Week 10: SPRING BREAK!! NO CLASSES

Week 11: Extractive Industries

READ: Dicken, Part III, Chapter 8 and articles as assigned

NOTE: Class meets in library Thursday, March 24, Room GL 280

Week 12: Winning & Losing in the Global Economy

READ: Dicken, Part 4, Chapters 14 & 15 and articles as assigned

Week 13: Economic Geography of Suburbia/Review

READ: Dicken, Part 4, Chapters 16 & 17

FILM: *The End of Suburbia?*

Week 14: April 12/14: Exam Two /Library Room 280

Week 15: April 19/21: Final Project Presentations (Attendance will be taken!)

Week 16: Finals Week: Final Project Presentations (Attendance will be taken!)