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GEO 3001 – Geography of Global Change

Department of Global & Sociocultural Studies, Florida International University
Fall Semester, 2017

Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:30-1:45
Green Library 165

Course homepage: fiu.blackboard.com

Instructor

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****email is the best way to contact me!*

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Course Overview

In 1848, Karl Marx characterized life in industrializing capitalist societies with the pithy phrase, ‘all that is solid melts into air.’ Over a half century later, Joseph Schumpeter coined the term ‘creative destruction’ to understand the periodic boom-and-bust cycles that characterized economic growth in capitalist societies since the industrial revolution. Even though Schumpeter and Marx were writing from different political leanings, they nonetheless both grappled with the relentless pace of change in their respective societies. They also shined light on the way this change was driven through the circulation and interaction of people, goods, and ideas – circulation made possible through the development of key infrastructure systems such as factories, roads, utilities, communications, and so forth. Since the time of their writing, continued colonialism, development, and post-Cold War globalization have extended the spread of capitalist infrastructure across the world. These processes have intensified social, economic, political, and environmental change.

This course seeks to develop a critical understanding of how change occurs across the globe. While some popular contemporary authors paint globalization as a process that flattens out difference, this course seeks to develop a geographic sensibility that focuses on the difference space and place make. Far from making the world ‘flat’, in Thomas Friedman’s terms, a geographic understanding of global change focuses on the uneven, socially and spatially differentiated spread of infrastructure systems, and the variegated rather than homogenized geographies of change they give rise to. In other words, it recognizes that people and places are differentially affected by the processes of globalization, and that globalization is creating new kinds of differences rather than obliterating difference.

Learning Objectives

1. *Gain an understanding of contemporary global changes.* Most of the foundations of today’s seemingly new “global” phenomena date back at least to the period of colonialism, sometimes earlier. Furthermore, many “global” problems are exceedingly complex and display great spatial variability, thus meaning there are no easy solutions. Understanding and accepting this complexity will be part of this course. (Global Awareness)

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2. *Critically assess multiple perspectives concerning global issues.* Given the complexity of many global issues, there are often multiple perspectives on what drives these processes and how best to address them. Part of the goal of this course is to understand and learn to critically assess these multiple perspectives, what their particular historical geographies are, and how these perspectives shed light on ways students can get involved in changing their world. (Global Perspective and Global Engagement)
3. *Gain the ability to analyze global issues from a geographic perspective.* Though geographers analyze many of the same issues people from other disciplines do, there is a difference in how geographers approach things. Terms like space, scale, systems analysis and materiality are extremely important to geographers – this course will help you understand why. Similarly, it will focus on the research and communication processes through which geographic knowledge is produced and disseminated.

Readings

Textbook: Sheppard, E., Porter, P., Faust, D. and Nagar, R. 2009. *World of Difference: Encountering and Contesting Development*, 2nd edition. New York: Guilford Press.

Supplemental readings will be passed out in hard copy in class and posted electronically on the course Blackboard page.

Grading

There will be 500 total points available in this class, broken down as follows:

- 50 points: Six 10-point in-class activities and/or quizzes (lowest grade is dropped)
- 125 points: Midterm exam
- 125 points: Final exam
- 200 points: Group research project, consisting of:
 - 100 points: final paper
 - 50 points: presentation
 - 50 points: research activities (in-class and out-of-class)
- 500 points total

The grading scale is:

A = 100-93%,
A- = 92.9-90%,
B+ = 89.9-87%,
B = 86.9-83%,
B- = 82.9%-80%,
C+ = 79.9-77%,
C = 76.9-70%,
D = 69.9-60%,
F = 59.9-0%,

which translates to, in points:

A : 500 thru 465 points
A-: 464 thru 450 points
B+: 449 thru 435 points
B: 434 thru 415 points
B-: 414 thru 400 points
C+: 399 thru 385 points
C: 384 thru 350 points
D: 349 thru 300 points
F: 299 thru 0 points

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Assignments

Exams

Each exam will consist of a combination of multiple choice, matching, short answer, and essay questions drawn from lectures, readings, videos, etc. – basically anything covered in class or assigned. Each exam covers only material covered since the previous exam. This includes the final. That does not mean major concepts should be completely forgotten after first tested – indeed some concepts will be covered again and again. *NB: essays will be worth a significant amount of points on the test, because this is a largely conceptual class.*

Group Research Project

This assignment will enable you to work with two to three other peers to conduct research on the history of change and infrastructure of a specific city of your choosing. It is divided into four parts, which will give you experience conducting and presenting research: preparing an annotated bibliography, conducting research using secondary sources, preparing a written text, and designing and giving an oral presentation of your findings. While these are important for academic research, they are also skills and techniques you will utilize in a number of relevant career paths, whether this involves GIS work, policy analysis and advocacy, urban planning, locational analysis, and so forth.

Quizzes and attendance

During the course of the term, we will have six unscheduled quizzes and/or activities relating to readings and/or material we covered previously in class. Each quiz will be worth 10 points, and the lowest grade will be dropped. Note that this is a total of 50 points – or 10% of your final grade. This is one letter grade – so the easiest way to ensure a strong grade is to make sure you come to class and get these points.

All students are expected to attend class, take notes, and participate. There are no excused absences or assignments except in the case of hospitalization or a religious holiday, both of which require hard copy documentation. If you are not present when materials are collected for points, you will forfeit these points.

Important Dates

Oct. 10 – Midterm exam
Oct. 24 – Annotated bibliography due
Nov. 15 – Group research papers due
Dec 5 – Final exam (12:00-2:00)

Academic Integrity, Cheating and Plagiarism:

Cheating and plagiarism are done by pathetic and desperate people – don't be one of them. If you plagiarize on your research assignment, or cheat on an exam – you will receive *at minimum a zero on that assignment*, which instantly drops your score for the course by about two full letter grades. If you find yourself in a desperate situation while taking a test or up against a deadline – turn in the best work you can do at the time. Getting an F usually means you will get some points – getting caught cheating means you get zero. Furthermore, depending on the severity of the case, I can choose to pursue harsher penalties, including assigning an F0 for the course or pursuing your expulsion from the university.

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It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the FIU student handbook's sections on cheating and plagiarism. Also, if you need to know more about how to not plagiarize, please check out the following websites:

- 1) "Plagiarism: What It is and How to Recognize and Avoid It (Indiana University)" at <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/plagiarism.html>
- 2) "Paraphrase: Write it in Your Own Words (Purdue University)" at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_paraphr.html

Absences & Make-Up

Excused absences include serious illness; illness of a spouse or dependent; death of an immediate family member; University-sponsored trips; and major religious holy days. It is your responsibility to *inform me of the absence in advance of class* by e-mail (and within 2 weeks of the start of class if it is a university trip or holy day), but no later than two class sessions after the missed class. In order to have an absence excused, you must provide original documentation which I can keep. If this is done, and I determine the absence to be excused, I will do my best make sure you make up what you missed.

Make-up exams will only be given in extreme circumstances. The make-up exam will not necessarily be the same one given to those who took the test on the established date, and will be given during the final examination period, during which time you will take both the make-up exam and the final. To sit a make-up exam, you must 1) provide documentation to me in class within two class periods of the missed exam addressing why your absence qualifies as excused 2) have that documentation accepted by me 3) email me asking to be given a make-up exam and 4) receive back an email from me confirming a make-up exam will be given.

Your choices to attend or not attend have consequences – just like they would at work. I take my responsibilities and role as a teacher seriously; I hope you hold your role and responsibility as a student in equal respect.

Disability Clause

Students with disabilities, as defined by law, have the right to receive needed accommodations if their disabilities make it difficult to perform academic tasks in the usual way or in the allotted time frame. In order to receive accommodation, however, students with must register with Disability Resource Center.

University Park Campus, GC 190 Voice: 305.348.3532 TTY: 305.348.3852
Fax: 305. 348.3850 Email: drcupgl@fiu.edu

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Course Schedule

***This schedule is subject to change at the instructor's discretion. If it changes, the changes will be announced in class. It is the student's responsibility to mark changes on the schedule.

Week	Topics	Readings	Assignments
1 – Aug 22 & 24	Introduction: Welcome to the Anthropocene!	Ch. 19 (Aug 24)	Aug 24 - Assign groups
2 – Aug 29 & 31	Anthropocene and planetary urbanization	Davis 2004 (Aug 29) Malm and Hornberg 2014 (Aug 31)	
3 – Sep 5 & 7	*** <i>Conducting academic research (Sep 5)</i> *** Development Discourse	Cowen and Shenton 1995, Ch. 3 (Sep 7);	
4 – Sep 12 & 14	Othering difference; Colonial development	Said 1978 (Sep 12) Ch. 13 (Sep 14)	
5 – Sep 19 & 21	Othering and colonial development; Cold War development	Ch. 14 (Sep 19); Ch. 4 (Sep 21)	
6 – Sep 26 & 28	Development and poverty Measuring development	Escobar 1999 (Sep 26) Ch. 2 (Sep 28)	
7 – Oct 3 & 5	Alternative modernizations Exam review (Oct 5)	Ch. 17 (Oct 3)	
8 – Oct 10 & 12	Exam 1 – February 27 Neoliberal economic theory	Klein 2007 (Oct 12)	Oct 10 – Midterm
9 – Oct 17 & 19	Neoliberal development	Ch. 5; Ch. 20 (Oct 17) Ch. 23 (Oct 19)	
10 – Oct 24 & 26	Actually existing development	Rogers 2005 (Oct 26)	Oct 24 – Annotated bibliography
11 – Oct 31 & Nov 2	Actually existing development – Peru; Neoliberal warfare	Gregory 2010 (Nov 2)	
12 – Nov 7 & 9	Infrastructure and development: <i>Big Man</i>	-	
13 – Nov 14 & 16	Resilience and development in the Anthropocene	TBD	
14 – Nov 21 <i>Thanksgiving break – Nov 23</i>	Exam review (Nov 21)	-	
15 – Nov 28 & 30	Group Presentations	-	Nov 30 - Group paper
16 – Dec 5 Exam Week	Final Exam – Tues, Dec 5, 12:00-2:00	-	