

GOVT 641: Seminar in Global Systems

George Mason University
Spring Semester
January 21 – May 13, 2009

Mondays: 7:20 pm - 10:00 PM, Robinson Hall A203

Professor Eric McGlinchey
Office: Robinson Hall A 219
Email: emcglinc@gmu.edu
Phone: 703.993.2960

Office Hours: M, 1-2 PM ; W, 1-2 PM or by appointment

Course Description:

The state has occupied a privileged role in social science analysis. The conceptualization of the state as *the monopoly of the use of force within a territory* has long shaped how we study politics and political change. Increasingly though, social scientists are questioning this definition of the state. Few claim that the state—as an institution—will cease to exist. As politics enters the 21st century, though, it is clear that state leaders no longer maintain the monopoly of power they once enjoyed. New *global level* institutions and actors claim our allegiance and shape our identities as much if not more than the states in which we live. The goal of this course is to explore these new global institutions and actors and assess their origins, influence and future.

Course Objectives:

By the close of this course, students will be able to

- Identify the origins of globalization
- Define globalization's many dimensions
- Engage and critically debate both the proponents and detractors of globalization
- Evaluate the extent to which globalization presents challenges to state authority
- Understand how globalization shapes transnational mobilization
- Evaluate how globalization influences domestic and foreign policy

Course Readings:

1. Books—we will read the following books:

- Chua, Amy. 2009. *Day of Empire: How Hyperpowers Rise to Global Dominance--and Why They Fall*. Anchor.
- Bhagwati, Jagdish. 2007. *In Defense of Globalization*. Oxford University Press, USA.

- Krugman, Paul. 2008. *The Return of Depression Economics and the Crisis of 2008*. W. W. Norton.
- Collier, Paul. 2008. *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*. Oxford University Press, USA.
- Kotkin, Stephen. 2001. *Armageddon Averted: The Soviet Collapse, 1970-2000*. Oxford University Press.
- Kara, Siddharth. 2008. *Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery*. Columbia University Press.
- Keck, Margaret E., and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Cornell University Press.
- Friedman, Thomas L. 2008. *Hot, Flat, and Crowded: Why We Need a Green Revolution--and How It Can Renew America*. 1st ed. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

These books are available through online book retailers. They are also available through the GMU Library 2 Hour Reserve.

2. E-Journals—Readings followed by a double asterisk, **, are available through Mason Library E-Journals
3. Current Events—Understanding current events is central to our study of globalization. I encourage you to read at least one major news source (for example, the [New York Times](#) or the [Global Post](#)) as part of your daily routine

Course Requirements:

1. Students are required to attend all classes.
2. Students are expected to have completed the assigned readings *prior* to class and to be prepared for seminar discussion.
3. Students will complete *one mid-term exam*.
4. All students are required to write a final *15 page research paper*. We will discuss this paper in greater detail in class. Students should note the following deadlines for research and writing:
 - i. Research question to be presented in class, March 2
 - ii. Detailed paper outline to be presented in class, April 6
 - iii. Papers submitted through Blackboard by 9am, Monday, May 4
5. All students are required to write 4 précis of *approximately* 500 words each.
 - Précis should critically analyze one the week's readings and will be graded on students' clarity of writing and understanding of central issues. Students should pay particular attention to:
 - i. The author's central argument—what is the *question, outcome* or *puzzle* the author is directly or indirectly addressing?
 - ii. What variables does the author cite as the *cause* behind the outcome he or she is investigating?
 - iii. What *empirical evidence* does the author provide to support his or her argument?
 - iv. How does the article relate to the literature more broadly?

- v. What are some of the potential shortcomings of the author's argument?
- Brief student presentations of the précis (10 minutes) will serve as the starting point for seminar discussion. Students will present two times during the course of the semester.
- Précis are to be submitted and “self-published” through Blackboard by 9 am, Monday (the day of class).
- Students are required to submit a minimum of one précis for each of the following time periods:
 - i. (Weeks 2-3)
 - ii. (Weeks 4-6)
 - iii. (Weeks 8-9)
 - iv. (Weeks 11-13)

*****Make-up exams and paper extensions will be given only if students have proper documentation. In place of an email, please see me during office hours to discuss missed/late work. If you anticipate you will have a conflict due to travel, please inform me within the first three weeks of class.***

*****This syllabus may change as the semester progresses.***

Honor Code:

The written work for this class will be submitted electronically through Blackboard. Essays may be processed through on-line databases so as to access the originality of work.

The George Mason University Honor Code states: “Cheating and attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing of academic work and related materials constitute Honor Code violations. To maintain an academic community according to these standards, students and faculty must report all alleged violations to the Honor Committee.” Students are encouraged to read the full Honor Code in the 2008-9 University Catalog (http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/pdfs/catalog_0809.pdf) and to remain vigilant against any violation of the Code in their own work. Any cases of academic dishonesty in this course will be pursued according to the guidelines detailed in the University Catalog.

Please do see me if you have any questions regarding the honor code.

Special Needs:

Please address any special needs or special accommodations with me at the beginning of the semester or as soon as you become aware of your needs. Those seeking accommodations based on disabilities should contact the Disability Resource Center (703) 993-2474.

Enrollment:

Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class. Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes. The last day to add is February 4. The last day to drop is February 20. After the last day to drop, withdrawing from this class requires the approval of the dean and is only allowed for nonacademic reasons.

Grading

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|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Seminar Discussion | 60 |
| Mid-term | 100 |
| Written Précis | 120 |
| Oral Presentation of Précis | 80 |
| Research Paper | 140 |
| | |
| Total | 500 points |

Grading Scale:

| | | |
|------------------|------------|-------------|
| A+: 490-500 | A: 460-489 | A-: 450-459 |
| B+: 440-449 | B: 410-439 | B-: 400-409 |
| C+: 390-399 | C: 360-389 | C-: 350-359 |
| D+: 340-349 | D: 310-339 | D-: 300-309 |
| F: 299 and below | | |

Week 1, January 26—Globalization and the New Administration

1. Keohane, Robert O., and Joseph S. Nye Jr. 2000. "Globalization: What's New? What's Not? (And So What?)." *Foreign Policy* (118): 104.**
2. N. Haass, Richard, and Martin Indyk. "Beyond Iraq: A New U.S. Strategy for the Middle East." *Foreign Affairs* 88(1): 41. **
3. Weber, Steven et al. 2007. "How Globalization Went Bad." *Foreign Policy* (158): 48-54.**

Week 2, February 2—Whither the Nation State?

1. Wolf, Martin. 2001. "Will the Nation-State Survive Globalization?" *Foreign Affairs* 80(1): 178-190.**
2. Evans, Peter B. 1997. "The Eclipse of the State? Reflections on Stateness in an Era of Globalization." *World Politics* 50(1): 62-87. **
3. Huntington, Samuel P. 1993. "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* 72(3): 22-49. **

Week 3, February 9—2,500 Years of Globalization

1. Chua, Amy. 2009. *Day of Empire: How Hyperpowers Rise to Global Dominance—and Why They Fall*. Anchor.

Week 4, February 16—In Defense of Globalization

1. Bhagwati, Jagdish. 2007. *In Defense of Globalization*. Oxford University Press, USA.

Week 5, February 23—Globalization’s Challenge to Developed Economies

1. Krugman, Paul. 2008. *The Return of Depression Economics and the Crisis of 2008*. W. W. Norton.

Week 6, March 2—Globalization’s Challenge to Developing Economies

1. Collier, Paul. 2008. *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*. Oxford University Press, USA.
2. In Class Peer Review of Research Questions

Spring Break March 9-15

Week 7, March 16—In Class Midterm

Week 8, March 23—1989 in Global Perspective

1. Kotkin, Stephen. 2001. *Armageddon Averted: The Soviet Collapse, 1970-2000*. Oxford University Press.

Week 9, March 30—Enslaved to Globalization

1. Kara, Siddharth. 2008. *Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery*. Columbia University Press.

Week 10, April 6—In Class Peer Review of Research Paper Outlines

1. No Reading—come prepared to present your research

Week 11, April 13—Transnational Activism

1. Keck, Margaret E., and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Cornell University Press.

Week 12, April 20—Global Eco-nomics

1. Friedman, Thomas L. 2008. *Hot, Flat, and Crowded: Why We Need a Green Revolution--and How It Can Renew America*. 1st ed. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Week 13, April 27—Religion on the Global Stage

1. Philpott, Daniel. 2007. “Explaining the Political Ambivalence of Religion.” *American Political Science Review* 101(03): 505-525.**
2. Ross, Michael L. 2008. “Oil, Islam, and Women.” *American Political Science Review* 102(01): 107-123.**
3. Collins, Kathleen . 2008. “Ideas, Networks, And Islamist Movements: Evidence From Central Asia And The Caucasus.” *World Politics* 60(1): 64-96.**

Week 14, May 4—Research Papers Due