

ENGL/GEOG 316H

Crossing Boundaries: Globalization

Monday 3:00 – 5:50 P.M. O’Connell 239

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Thur: 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

NOTE: Syllabus subject to change. Effective date: January 26, 2009

Course Description:

Increasingly we are confronted with references to living in an era of globalization; increasingly in education we are tasked with appeals to become global citizens aware of the intricate ways in which our life choices and inheritances connect us with people in every corner of the world. But how do we understand a term like globalization? How do we approach the demands of increasingly complex cultural awareness and understanding?

This semester Crossing Boundaries will lead us on a two pronged exploration of the issues surrounding globalization. Drawing upon social science we will examine a variety of relationships with a special attention to the interrelationships between people and places; between nature and society, the interdependence between the global and the local, and the ways that development is uneven at all spatial scales from the local to the global.

Our readings from the social sciences will be complimented by readings of literary texts. Surely one way of knowing the world or understanding its people is to study the stories they tell, their narratives which reveal perspectives and insights at once foreign yet so often reflective of those dreams and fears humanity holds in common. We will sample a growing body of contemporary writing including immigrant/migrant histories, memories of exile and refuge as well as the fiction of imagined homelands. While one goal in reading across culture is to gain a better understanding of ‘the other,’ ultimately it is our hope to gain a more complex understanding of our own cultural paradigms.

Honors Program Goals and Objectives for Theme Classes

- To engage Students in an interdisciplinary studies experience in an interactive setting.
- To invite students to think reflectively about course connections
- To explore the interrelationship of roles as local, national and world citizens
- To give students an understanding of the modern global community
- To allow students to pursue their own research interests within the framework of interdisciplinary studies.

GE Course Goals and Objectives

- To analyze & synthesize a variety of materials reflecting different cultures
- To sharpen writing and oral presentation skills
- To become familiar with the basic concepts of social science concerning the functioning of gender relations and families, immigration, the construction of identity, and the interrelationship between people and places
- To better appreciate how different cultures within the US have responded to and been affected by the challenges of globalization

Required Texts

- Roy, Arundhati. *The God of Small Things*
- Viramontes, Helena: *Under the Feet of Jesus*
- Hosseini, Khalid: *The Kite Runner*
- Lahiri, Jhumpa. *The Namesake*
- Lyson, Thomas: *Civic Agriculture*
- Smith, Neil: *The Endgame of Globalization*
- Assorted shorter readings on Electronic Reserve (ERes) & Vista

Policies:

Attendance is mandatory. Anyone who misses more than one class meeting will likely not make sufficient progress to earn a passing grade. Similarly, please come to class on time and do not plan to leave early. Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the specified date. Unless an extension has been granted, papers will be marked down 1/3 of a grade for each day they are late. There will be no extensions (barring catastrophic circumstances) during the last two weeks of the semester.

We expect a high standard of academic integrity. Academic dishonesty, generally, is taking credit for work which is not your own or attempting to receive credit or improve a grade through fraudulent or deceptive means. Examples include taking information from or providing information to another student, plagiarism, etc. Please consult the guide on *Ethical Standards and Disciplinary Procedures* for complete definitions. Answers to additional questions regarding academic honesty may be obtained from the office of Student Judicial Affairs. If you plagiarize your work, you will receive an "F" in the course and may also suffer university discipline which could result in your being suspended or expelled.

Assignments:

Each week students will write a one page writing journal in response to their reading. Topics will be assigned early in the semester; as we go on, we will have open topics. Students will write four formal essays, each approximately four to six pages. Students will work either individually or in small groups to present an aspect of original research culminating in a presentation. This presentation may take many forms but must offer a rigorous and detailed contribution to your classmates' learning. In lieu of a final exam, students are asked to assemble a portfolio of their work for this course.

Grades:

Reading Journals	15%
Attendance/Participation	10%
Project #1	20%
Project #2	20%
Project #3	10%
Project #4	25%

Tentative Schedule

Week 1: January 26 Course Introduction

Introductions, course overview, key concepts, vocabulary

Week 2: February 2 Backgrounds in Geography & Literature

- Arundhati Roy: *The God of Small Things* (through Chapter 6)
- Knox & Marston ERes: Chap 1: pg 5-13, 16-19, 30-36 and Chap 2: pg 43-48, 50 (vocabulary)

*Optional Public Event: Feb 3rd University Film Series in Ayres 106: The Real Charlie Wilson's War: Documentary that lays the groundwork for the war in Afghanistan and the turmoil in the Middle East

Week 3: February 9 Colonialism, Post Colonialism and Introduction to India

- K&M: Chap 2: pg 50-63, 66-69 & Chap 9, pg 356-363
 - Arundhati Roy: *The God of Small Things* (through Chapter 13)
- Human Geography video "Untouchable?"
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Week 4: February 16 Globalization and Interdependencies between people and places

Contemporary Globalization

- K&M Chap 2: pg 69-82
- Geographies of Welfare, Care & Home
- Lawson, Victoria (2007) "Geographies of Care and Responsibility" in *Annals of Association of American Geographers*, 97(1), pg 1-11.
 - Haylett, Chris (2003) "Class, care and welfare reform: reading meanings, talking feelings" in *Environment and Planning A*, 35, pg 799-814.
 - Arundhati Roy: *The God of Small Things* (complete)

[Project #1 Due](#)

Week 5: February 23 Food and Society

Industrialization of Agriculture

- Thomas Lyson: *Civic Agriculture* Chap 1, 2 & 3, pg 1-60
- McDowell, Linda (1999) "Home, Place and Identity" in *Gender, identity and place*, pg 71-95.
- Helena Viramontes: *Under the Feet of Jesus* (1st half)

Guest Speaker: TBA

Week 6: March 2 Food & Society

Engaging with the Food System as More than Just a Consumer

- Helena Viramontes: *Under the Feet of Jesus* (complete)
- Thomas Lyson: *Civic Agriculture* (Chap 4-7, pg 61-105)

Alternative Political Economies

- Cameron, Jenny, J.K. Gibson-Graham. 2003. "Feminizing the Economy: metaphors, strategies, politics" *Gender, Place and Culture* 10(2): page 145-157.
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Week 7: March 9 Food & Society

[Project #2 Due](#) Students to present in class

Week 8: March 16 Spring Break No class

Week 9: March 23 the Middle East

Backgrounds on history, culture, politics of the Middle East

Khalid Hosseini: *The Kite Runner* (to p. ____)

[Project #3 Due: A Collage](#)

http://www.rethinkingschools.org/just_fun/games/mapgame.html

Week 10: March 30 The Middle East

Guest Speaker: TBA

Kinship, Tribal Relations & Cultural Nationalism

- K&M: Chap 5: pg 190-201
 - Khalid Hosseini: *The Kite Runner* (to p. ____)
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Week 11: April 6 The Middle East

Space and Place: Religion, Politics, & Gender

- Chap 9: pg 343-355, 366-374
- Khalid Hosseini: *The Kite Runner* (complete)

* Optional Public Event: 7:30 p.m. PAC 134: The View from Pakistan & Afghanistan
Speakers with ties to these two countries share insights about life, culture, politics and the bridges to be built between our countries.

Week 12: April 13 Endgame Geographies

- Neil Smith: *The Endgame of Globalization* Chapters 1-3, pg 1-81
 - Read Jhumpa Lahiri: *Namesake* for April 27
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Week 13: April 20 Liberalism & the Monroe Doctrine

- Neil Smith: *The Endgame of Globalization* (Chap 4 & 5, pg 82-148)
 - Video: Poem of Calcutta from *Namesake* video
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Week 14: April 27 Endgame of Globalization

- Neil Smith: *The Endgame of Globalization* (Chap 6 & 7, pg 149-end)
- In class writing on Jhumpa Lahiri's novel
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Week 15: May 4 Roundtable

Student presentations

Week 16: May 11 Roundtable

Student presentations

Week 17: May 18 Finals Week

Assignments

Project 1: Personal Migration & Meditations on “Home.”

Due: February 16

Interview your parent(s) and/or at least two other older relatives about your family's origins. How did they end up in California or wherever your family currently calls home? Talk about your family's roots and cultural heritage/lineage? What motivated them to migrate? Were your family's migrations due to conflict, war, or other hardships? Has your family maintained any elements of their cultural heritage/lineage from their homeland? Feel free to include photographs, artwork, maps etc. Your project should be 12 to 15 pages.

Or

Tell a story

What is the place (city, state, other) you consider home? Are you living there now? What is your personal historical relationship with this place? Tell us about the history of the place—first occupants, settlements, development, etc. Discuss your sacred place(s). Are they in the same place that you consider home? Do you plan to return “home”? Why or why not? Given the mobility we experience today, what does it mean to be at home

someplace (i.e. to belong)? Reflect on your thoughts about “home.” Feel free to include photographs, artwork, maps etc. Your project should be 12 to 15 pages.

Project 2: A Food Commodity Chain

Due March 9

Keep a food diary for 4 days. What do you eat? Where does your food come from? Take one food product and trace its commodity chain.

Or

Select a local business that produces food or beverages. Research that business: its origins, its growth and development, where its products are shipped, methods of distribution, etc.

Your completed project will be shared in an oral presentation of approx 5 minutes, and you will turn in a written report on your work.

Project 3: A Middle East Collage

Due March 23

Using a poster board, collect clippings from newspapers or journals that pertain to the Middle East (Video presentation also acceptable). Arrange them artistically; feel free to include small photographs. You will share your collage with the class and spend about 5 minutes or so making some remarks about the substance of the Board reflecting on key concepts we have studied throughout the semester.

Project 4: Aspects of Globalization in my Field

Due May 18

Over the course of the semester we have examined Globalization from numerous contexts: geography, art (including literature), socio-economics, gender, consumption, migration, etc. Think about how any of these issues we have discussed in class relate to your major field of study or career aspirations. Explore some aspect where globalization intersects your topic, and draft an approximately ten page paper on your topic of choice. For example, if you are in nursing, you might explore a global health epidemic, etc. A music major might look at the fusion of Brazilian and Caribbean music, etc. Or your project might include a visual representation or performance. Be creative! You will present an oral version of your paper during the last few weeks of the semester. Your paper should be at least about six pages.