

Political Science/Women's Studies 341: Globalization, Social Struggle and the Environment

College General Education Requirements: This course fulfills a Social Sciences Liberal Arts Foundations (LAF) requirement at Augsburg College. It also meets the culture requirement for Spanish majors/minors at Augsburg.

Cross-Listings and Credit Options: This course is cross-listed as a Political Science (POL) and a Women's Studies (WST) course. Students may choose to register for either discipline.

Course Rationale and Description

In recent years economic globalization has increased migration to Cuernavaca from southern states of Mexico and has had a tremendous impact on the environment and access to resources in general, which has led to many serious social conflicts. Women bear the primary share of domestic responsibilities, and they and their children are the first to be affected by scarce and/or contaminated natural resources and insufficient urban infrastructure under new conditions created by the forces of globalization.

Today, Mexican groups formed by peasants, students, indigenous peoples, neighbors, ecologists, pacifists, feminists, among others, continue to raise serious questions about land ownership, resource management, political participation, and democracy. These groups challenge current development plans from governments and international organizations in various ways.

Mexico's position as the third most biologically diverse nation on Earth, as well as neighbor and strategic economic partner to the U.S., has important implications for U.S.-Mexico relations. Thus, Mexico provides a unique setting for students to learn about politics, migration, globalization, social movements and the environment.

During the course we will discuss indigenous, *campesin@, and feminist ways of understanding environment, from other perspectives that do not consider the Earth as resources, assets or commodities to be use, but as a living entity that is not subject to the market laws.

The use of a gender perspective is an axis that crosses the whole analysis of globalization and immigration, instead of serving as just one topic in the course. The basic idea is to supersede male-centered studies of reality, history and social movements, in particular. Therefore, gender is a central theme and lens we will use throughout the whole course.

*Please note that in Spanish @ is often used to be gender inclusive by designating a/o feminine and masculine endings.

Instructional Objectives/Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Define economic globalization and key concepts of neoliberal economic policies.
2. Debate the impacts of economic globalization on women, indigenous people, and the environment.
3. Articulate the relationships between economic globalization and immigration, migration within Mexico, and undocumented emigration to the United States.
4. Analyze U.S. trade and immigration policies and their impacts on diverse sectors of Mexican society and the environment.
5. Discuss the roles that social movements play in Mexican politics.
6. Explain the relationship between gender oppression and economic globalization

7. Critically reflect upon your own positionality and cultural perspectives and the ways these influence their understanding of the issues in this course.
8. Articulate ways in which you can become a more responsible global citizen as a result of what you have learned in Mexico.

Teaching Methodology

I will use an experiential methodology designed to assist you in increasing your knowledge base about the course topics, to develop critical thinking skills and to deepen your respect for and understanding of political perspectives that differ from your own. We will form a community to learn from each other with respect for everyone's contribution to the class.

By engaging in direct dialogue with activists, academics, feminists, politicians, businesspeople, and members of grassroots social movements about the course topics, you will be exposed to a variety of perspectives about similar issues in high-context settings. At the end of the course, you will consider new forms of political and social participation for yourselves in your communities in your country of origin.

Teaching and learning strategies include lectures, field trips, discussions with individuals and organizations representing diverse political and philosophical perspectives, films, essays, debates, oral presentations, and group discussions of experiences and required readings.

Due to the fact that approximately half of class time is spent listening to guest speakers, you will develop your strategic questioning and listening skills. It is very important that you ask informed questions and share your own interests, opinions, and experiences with speakers so that you are not just educational consumers but partners in a common quest to learn more about social change.

Migration and Globalization Lab Groups

Since this course is taught as an integral part of the "Migration and Globalization: Engaging Our Communities" semester program, you will be asked to consider your own group of co-learners as a community "laboratory" because many of the same issues that require positive engagement in society at large can be found within the smaller microcosms of student groups. Therefore, in addition to our regular weekly internal class sessions, "engaging our communities" lab groups" facilitated by your T.A. will meet throughout the semester. Active participation in the lab group includes planning and facilitating (or co-facilitating) at least one hour of a lab group session in coordination with the T.A. You will sign up near the beginning of the semester. At least 48 hours prior to the lab group session, you must submit a short proposal that outlines the topic(s) you plan to address and the specific lab group objectives you will fulfill. You will then meet with your T.A. to discuss the proposal and plans for the session. At the time of the session, you must submit a one-page outline. The T.A. and other students will be asked to complete a short feedback form at the end of the session, and you will be expected to submit your own completed self-assessment form. Be sure to read the separate handout.

Required Readings

Bacon, David. *Illegal People: How Globalization Creates Migration and Criminalizes Immigrants*. Beacon Press, 2008.

Prieto, Nora Iglesias. *Beautiful Flowers of the Maquiladora: Life Histories of Women Workers in Tijuana*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997.

Stiglitz, Joseph E. and Andrew Charlton. *Fair Trade for All: How Trade Can Promote Development*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Wallerstein, Immanuel. *Historical Capitalism*. London: Verso, 1983. (You can also purchase more recent editions, but many include his second text *Capitalist Civilization*.)

Wise, Timothy A., Hilda Salazar and Larua Carlsen. *Confronting Globalization: Economic Integration and Popular Resistance in Mexico*. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press, 2003.

Course Requirements (100%)

- 1. Class Participation (20%):** Effective class participation involves active participation in class sessions involving guest lectures, other experiential activities, internal class sessions, and lab group sessions. Please note that class participation is required for a passing grade. Because participation is essential to the learning process, if you miss class activities for any reason, you must speak to the instructor prior to class and make arrangements to complete a short assignment. After 1 absence, your participation grade will be affected. Absences due to religious holidays and illness are considered excused absences. However, you still must inform the instructors of such absences in advance and discuss how to make up the missed session/s; otherwise your class participation grade will be affected. You are also responsible for obtaining notes, handouts, and announcements from other students if you arrive late to class or miss a class session. Absences for personal travel or visits from family or friends are not excused absences. Class participation includes:
 - **Active Participation in Class Sessions Involving Guest Speakers and/or Excursions:** This includes engaging in informed dialogue with speakers, asking probing questions related to required readings or other speakers, and sharing your own thoughts and experiences, as appropriate. Be sure to take notes that respond to the following types of questions: What are the speaker's main points or arguments? What insights have you gained from this talk? What is confusing to you? What do you need clarified? What inspires you and/or angers you? How does it support and/or contradict previous notions you have had and/or articles and books you have read? About what would you like to learn more? What questions for further exploration do you have as a result of this talk?
 - **Active Participation in In-House Class Sessions:** You will be expected to demonstrate your comprehension of assigned readings by participating in class discussions, debates, role plays, in-class writing exercises, and/or completing other assignments in class that will not receive a specific grade but are considered part of class participation. Failure to come prepared to class by completing required readings in advance will affect your class participation grade.
 - **Active Participation in Lab Group and Facilitation of a Lab Group Session:** Details will be provided on a separate handout later.
- 2. Essay on Globalization (20%):** You will write an 8-10 page essay covering basic concepts related to economic globalization, divergent perspectives regarding the pros and cons of globalization and its impact in Mexico.
- 3. Essay on Immigration, Environment OR Gender Inequalities as Consequences of Economic Globalization (30%):** You will write an 8-10 page essay on the effects of globalization on one of the three topics: 1) immigration, 2) the environment, or 3) gender issues, using real cases from your experience in Mexico and connecting the examples with the literature included in the course.
- 4. Independent Research Paper and Oral Presentation on a Contemporary Social Struggle: (30%):** You will be expected to conduct independent research on a contemporary social struggle in Mexico that interests you. You will develop a creative and/or engaging oral presentation to educate people back home about the topic, and write a 2 page abstract about it to be distributed among your audience. The purpose is to articulate connections between the issue in Mexico and issues at home that would make it relevant to people there. You will be given more detailed information about each assignment and a schedule of required readings, class discussion topics, and assignments on the first day of class