This seminar will examine what is arguably the dominant trend of the post-Cold War world: the increasingly global nature of capitalism, together with the compression of the world through new technologies, and the consequences and reactions these trends have spurred throughout the world. We will ask how novel these trends really are, and examine how competing theoretical perspectives on globalization help explain why this issue has generated such conflict and controversy. We will explore the impact of globalization on the Third World, on labor, the environment, state sovereignty and world culture, before asking what possible alternatives to globalization exist.

Course Requirements

The seminar will involve reading and discussing a number of different perspectives and debates about both globalization and the conflict it has generated. Through these we will jointly explore and debate theoretical models, ideas, and hypotheses that should prove fruitful in the writing of your research paper. Since this is a seminar, you are expected to complete the weekly reading and come to class prepared to discuss the issues raised.

The first ten sessions will involve critical discussion of the readings. The day before each class (i.e., Tuesday) you are to post critical comments about the week’s reading on the seminar’s Blackboard discussion forum. These will form the basis for our collective discussions and are essential for the success of that enterprise.

The extended research paper (approximately 20-25 pages) will compromise a major part of this course, and is due no later than the scheduled exam time for this class. To make completing the paper more manageable, we will break the research and writing into a number of components, according the following schedule:

- a meeting with instructor to define a topic sometime before class on March 17.
- a 1-2 page proposal for your research topic, which should include a statement of your research question(s); justification of the topic in terms of its interest and importance; any anticipated problems and proposed solutions, due March 19.
- an annotated bibliography, which identifies and evaluates a variety of research materials, due March 26.
- a 1-2 page introduction to your paper, including your thesis statement, due April 9.
- a detailed outline of your paper, due April 23.
- a meeting with the instructor to discuss your progress during the week of April 28.
- a draft of your paper, due May 3.
- a presentation of your “works in progress” to the class; the last two sessions will be devoted to these presentations and discussion of your papers in progress.
- the final paper, along with your draft(s) and the other above materials, will be due May 22.

Grades will be assessed in the following manner: Class participation, including your regular postings to the Blackboard forum and the in-class presentation, will be 50% of the grade. The remaining 50% will be based on the research paper.

Reading:

The following books have been ordered for purchase at the Oberlin College bookstore:


Aravind Adiga, *White Tiger* (Free Press, 2008)


The other reading will be available on Blackboard.

Class Schedule

February 10: Introduction

no assigned reading
February 17: Liberalism

Thomas Friedman, *Lexus and the Olive Tree*, "Opening Scene", chaps. 6-7
[excerpts]

Martin Wolf, *Why Globalization Works*, preface, chapters 2, 4, 6, and 9-12

February 24: Mercantilism and the State


Ha-Joon Chang, *Bad Samaritans: The Myth of Free Trade and the Secret History of Capitalism*

March 3: Marxism and Globalization

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* [part 1, "Bourgeois and Proletarians"]

David Harvey, *The New Imperialism*

Leo Panitch, “Thoroughly Modern Marx,” *Foreign Policy*, May/June 2009

March 10: Globalization and State Sovereignty

Joseph Stiglitz, *Globalization and its Discontents*

March 17: Globalization and the Commodification of Labor


Frances Moore Lappe and Joseph Collins, "Why Can't People Feed Themselves" in Robin Broad, ed., *Global Backlash*


[March 19: Paper proposal due]
March 24: Labor Revisited

Charles Tilly, “Global Flows of Labor and Capital,” *International Labor and Working Class History*
Beverly J. Silver, *Forces of Labor: Workers’ Movements and Globalization Since 1870*

[March 26: Annotated bibliography due]

April 7: The Environmental Critique

Jonathon Porritt, *Capitalism as if the World Matters*, Introduction, chapt. 1, 3-4
Clive Hamilton, *Affluenza* chapt. 1
T. Friedman, *Hot, Flat, and Crowded*, chapt. 1

[April 9: Introduction due]

April 14: The View from Below

Thomas Friedman, *The World is Flat* (pp. 3-36) [skim]
Aravind Adiga, *White Tiger*

April 21: Reaction and Resistance

Sidney Tarrow, *The New Transnational Activism*

[April 23: Paper outline due]

April 28

Individual meetings to discuss your work in progress

[May 3: Draft paper due]

May 5 and May 12: presentations of draft research papers

May 22: Final research papers due