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., Sunday) 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.

Please note: I request that you not use laptop computers or other electronic devices during class time. Even if laptops might not be distracting to the user, they can be distracting to other students, and in a discussion-oriented seminar we want to give one another our full attention. (Plus, laptops, smart phones and all that other crap are made with sweatshop labor; see below.)

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 12.
- 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 14.
- an annotated bibliography, which identifies and evaluates a variety of research materials, due March 21.
- a 1-2 page introduction to your paper, including your thesis statement, due April 18.
- a detailed outline of your paper, due April 25.
- a meeting with the instructor to discuss your progress during the week of April 23.
- a complete draft of your paper, due May 2.
- a presentation of your “works in progress” to the class; the last three 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 no later than May 19.

Grades will be assessed in the following manner: Class participation, including your regular postings to the Blackboard discussion 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)


These books we will be reading substantial portions of, so their purchase is recommended:


The other reading will be available on Blackboard.
Class Schedule

February 6: Introduction
no assigned reading

February 13: Liberalism

Thomas Friedman, *Lexus and the Olive Tree*, "Opening Scene", chpts. 6-7
Martin Wolf, *Why Globalization Works*, preface, chapters 2-6

February 20: Mercantilism and the State

Ha-Joon Chang, *Bad Samaritans: The Myth of Free Trade and the Secret History of Capitalism*, chpts. 1-6, and 8

February 27: Marxism and Globalization

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* [part 1, "Bourgeois and Proletarians"]
Immanuel Wallerstein, *World Systems Analysis*, chapt. 2
David Harvey, *The Enigma of Capital*, pp. 8-66; 88-116; 119-121; 140-172; 204-214

March 5: Globalization and State Sovereignty

Joseph Stiglitz, *Globalization and its Discontents*, chpts. 1-2; 4-5
March 12: Globalization and the Commodification of Labor

Frances Moore Lappe and Joseph Collins, "Why Can't People Feed Themselves" in Robin Broad, ed., *Global Backlash*
AFL-CIO, "The Condition of the Working Class in China, Dissent, Summer 2004
“Mr. Daisy and the Apple Factory,” *This American Life*, Jan. 6, 2012.

March 14: Paper proposal due

March 19: 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

March 21: Annotated bibliography due

April 2: Global Culture and Inequality


April 9: The View from Below

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

April 16: Reaction and Resistance

Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, “Activists Beyond Borders,” in *The Politics of Globalization*

April 18: Introduction due

Week of April 23: Individual meetings to discuss your work in progress

April 25: Paper outline due

April 23, April 30 and May 7: presentations of draft research papers

Draft paper due: May 2

May 19: Final research papers due