

Global issues

BSGC102v1.0

T3:30-4:45

Th sections

Spring 2012

Chem 2108



Course Description

My aim in offering this course is to foster awareness of a range of global problems and issues, viewed from personal, local, national and global perspectives. The course builds on what you learned in BSGC101, but expands to new issues.

How do the wider scope, faster speed, and heightened inter-connections in the world create both constraints and opportunities to resolve some of the most pressing issues of our time? How do local viewpoints influence our understanding of global problems? What creative opportunities exist to address global dilemmas?

We will look at both global and local perspectives, and use concepts and models drawn from different disciplines. One goal is to help you learn the skills, knowledge and confidence to engage in dialogue and collaboration, sharing ideas, reflecting on what you have learned, and developing a personal viewpoint. Although the course is about global problems, we will also look at local solutions to address these dilemmas.

The prerequisite for this course is BSGC101. The course will include a custom-designed international negotiation simulation; guest lectures by leading experts in their fields; and multi-media content

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Fine Print

Readings:

Available on ELMS under Documents or Library

Course ELMS website at www.elms.umd.edu

People often ask, "What is the single most important environmental problem facing the world today?" A flip answer would be, "The single most important problem is our misguided focus on identifying the single most important problem!"

--Jared Diamond

Wicked problems are ill-defined, ambiguous and associated with strong moral, political and professional issues. Since they are strongly stakeholder dependent, there is often little consensus about what the problem is, let alone how to resolve it. Furthermore, wicked problems won't keep still: they are sets of complex, interacting issues evolving in a dynamic social context. Often, new forms of wicked problems emerge as a result of trying to understand and solve one of them.

--Tom Ritchey

How to Take this Course

How deep can you go? How far do you want to take this course?

Each of you arrives here with a different degree of interest and preparation. It is possible to do well in the course without being transformed by your newly acquired understanding of globalization—but it would be a shame.

This course operates on three levels (thanks to Tona Hangen for this idea).

Snack

You need the basics on globalization—key terms, major actors, and small morsels of knowledge.

There is nothing wrong with taking small bites, if this is your only course on globalization or you are totally new to it all.

"Snackers" tend to look at the readings and professor as mutually reinforcing, telling the same story, and are concerned with the WHAT of things.

Dine

You understand the basics and are ready to savor a more nourishing level of detail.

You have taken other courses or plan to major in something related to this topic. You know the diversity of perspectives on globalization.

"Diners" notice contradictions and respectfully challenge assumptions through debate. They want to know the WHY and HOW of things.

Banquet

You want to have more than one dish, tasting each with a critical view informed by scholarship.

You are aware of competing arguments, and how to gather and assess evidence. You seek alternative interpretations and sources.

"Banqueters" do not see the course's structure or content as fixed or authoritative. They wonder about GAPS, new THEORIES, and EVIDENCE.



Course Requirements

Reading—Students should read assigned material before class, and be prepared to share questions and comments.

Participation (15%)—Attendance, discussion, and general engagement; medical absences require a signed note from you; prolonged illness or absence during an exam must be documented by a health care practitioner.

Simulation (15%)—Groups research and represent a role in a food security negotiation simulation (2-4 pages)

Symposium (5%)—Attend either the Social Entrepreneurship Symposium on campus or the Limits to Growth Symposium at the Smithsonian on March 1; prepare a 1-2 page response/ reflection paper

Group project (10%)—You have been given \$50,000 to found a non-profit to do good in the world—what would you do? Prepare a class presentation on your proposal.

Individual project (15%)—Analyze the impact of globalization in an area of interest for you; 5-8 page paper OR propose an alternative but equivalent project

Mid-term exam (20%)

Final exam (20%)

Your Instructors:

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SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment
Jan 26	Welcome back!		If the world had \$50 billion to do good in the world, what should it do?
Jan 31	Setting global priorities/ deciding who will act	Kenny, "Despite Everything..." The Observer Dec 21, 2011 (Documents) Light, "Driving Social Change," (Library) (optional) Conklin, "Wicked Problems and Social Complexity" (Documents)	
Feb 2	Millennium development goals	Lomborg, "Setting Priorities" (Docs) Read about the MDGs at http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/	
Feb 7	How the media shapes our view of the world NOTE: meet in Eaton Theatre (1208) in Knight Hall (Journalism School)	Moeller, "Considering the Media's Framing and Agenda-setting Roles" (Documents) http://merrill.umd.edu/directory/susan-moeller	Guest speaker: Susan Moeller, Journalism School, expert on global media
Feb 9	Media framing: Japan, Norway and the US on international whaling and culture	Find three articles on international whaling from the NY Times, Japan Times, the Norway Post, BBC online, Al-Jazeera English and/ or other media outlets	Compare news coverage of one issue in different countries and different news sources Assign teams for simulation, research assigned roles
Feb 14	Food security—crisis and opportunity (background to simulation)	Golay, "The Food Crisis and Food Security," (Documents) Rio+20, "Food Security for a Planet under Pressure" (Docs)	
Feb 16	<i>Food security negotiation simulation part one</i>		Provide background on the issue and your role/ position for the simulation 2-4 pp
Feb 21	Valuing the planet: sustainability and intergenerational ideals	Dubos, "The Pursuit of Significance," Ch. 5 <i>So Human an Animal</i> (Library) See also http://ocean.nationalgeographic.com/ocean/barton-seaver/	Guest Lecture: Barton Seaver, chef, author and National Geographic Fellow
Feb 23	<i>Food negotiation simulation part two</i>		Conclude negotiations and assess results
Feb 28	Valuing the planet: sustaining the seas--overview	Monterey Bay Aquarium, "Turning the Tide" pp.1-29 (Docs) Walsh, "The End of the Line," (Library)	
Mar 1	Symposia—attend one; no class today; must register for the Social Enterprise Symposium	See http://www.rhsmith.umd.edu/ses/ and http://www.clubofrome.org/?p=3392	Attend Social Enterprise Symposium OR the Limits to Growth Symposium
Mar 6	Sustaining the seas: trash and toxicity	Monterey Bay Aquarium, "Turning the Tide" pp. 30-40 Read http://www.earthisland.org/journal/index.php/eij/article/charles_moore/	Guest Lecture: Jacqui Ignatova, Global Communities GA

Mar 8	Local culture and global pressure in Italy	Emery, "Tonnare in Italy" (Library)	Reflection on symposium (1-2pp)
Mar 13	Valuing the planet, valuing lives: fresh water	Rogers, "Facing the Freshwater Crisis" (Library) Specter, "The Last Drop" (Library) Patel, "Getting Safe Water..." See www.water.org	
Mar 15	Valuing the planet: application and review	TBD	Hand in a paragraph on the topic of your individual paper
Mar 20	Spring Break		
Mar 22	Spring Break		
Mar 27	Mid-term exam		
Mar 29	Valuing lives: the problem of global health	Garrett, "The Challenge of Global Health" (Library) Gray, "Recipe for Food Safety" (Docs) Huang, "Food Safety in China" (Docs)	
Apr 3	Valuing lives: Global disease		Guest Lecture: Sangeetha Madhavan, Maryland Population Research Center
Apr 5	Global/ local interventions: evaluating cases	Levine, <i>Case Studies in Global Health</i> (Docs)—you select which case to read	Choose a case and be prepared to discuss global/ local aspects of problem-solving
Apr 10	Valuing lives: gender, citizenship, and commerce	Kristof and WuDunn, "The Women's Crusade" (Library) Christoffersen, "Unintended Consequences" (Library) Vital Voices, "Stateless and Vulnerable in Thailand" (Docs)	
Apr 12	Social entrepreneurship		Group project presentations
Apr 17	Valuing lives: migration and culture	Martin/ Zuerker, "Managing Migration" (Docs) Goldin, "A Global Migration Agenda," <i>Exceptional People</i> Ch.8 TBD	
Apr 19	Social entrepreneurship part one		Group project presentations
Apr 24	Valuing lives: diasporas in a digital age	Brinkerhoff, "What does a goat have to do with development?" (Library)	
Apr 26	Immigrant views		Individual project due

May 1	Valuing the planet, valuing lives: energy choices	Yergin, "New Energies," <i>The Quest</i> Ch.5 (Library) Lynas, "Geo-engineering, Nuclear Power and Climate Change," <i>The Telegraph</i> 12 July 2011 (Docs)	
May 3	Choices: Canada and Brazil	McKibbin, "Canada and its Tar Sands," <i>The New Republic</i> 21 July 2011 (Library)	
May 8	Looking to the future		
May 10			

FINAL EXAM Friday May 18 10:30-12:30



Fine Print!

Doing your own Work:

All assignments must be your own work, and when you use ideas and information that someone else put together, you must cite it properly using standard citation formats (Chicago, MLA). I hold you all to high standards of integrity—so don't try to pass off something from the Internet or a friend as your own. It's just not right, and I'll be very disappointed if you try it. Cases of plagiarism or cheating will be referred to the Student Honor Council immediately: <http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu>

Tech Use in the Classroom:

Go ahead and use it for notes or to look up something related to the class... but please don't be playing around—texting, checking Facebook, etc. It's distracting to everyone—including me. And please turn off anything that might ring, sing, or otherwise make a noise.

Need Help?

Please let me know immediately if you have any disabilities that I can accommodate. Need help with something? Check out:

McKeldin Library—Reference librarians want to help you! Ask! And check out the website.

Learning Assistance Center—Advice on study skills, 1-credit courses to help you succeed—they have a lot to offer so take advantage!

The Counseling Center—If you are struggling to adjust to college life, or are dealing with personal problems that appear overwhelming, don't hesitate—the Counseling Center staff can help you.

"We cannot live for ourselves alone. Our lives are connected by a thousand invisible threads, and along these sympathetic fibers, our actions run as causes and return to us as results."

Herman Melville

Interstellar cloud from our own galaxy