

HS2007 Understanding Globalization

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This course promotes a broad understanding of globalization from its beginnings in the 1500s through today with an emphasis on contemporary processes of cultural, economic, and political integration.

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Lecture times: Mondays 2:30-4:30 pm, LT4

Tutorial times: T1: Thursdays 1:30-2:30 pm, TR+153
T2: Thursdays 2:30-3:30 pm, TR+153
T3: Thursdays 3:30-4:30 pm, TR+153
T4: Thursdays 4:30-5:30 pm, TR+153

NOTE: Due to the National Day replacement holiday on August 10, the first lecture for this class will be held on Monday, August 17. Tutorials will begin on Thursday, August 20.

Consultation: By appointment only (available most days and times)

Course description

Globalization means many things to many people, but at heart globalization is a process of increasing interconnectedness of people and societies throughout the entire world. This course promotes a broad understanding of globalization from its beginnings in the 1500s up until the present day, with an emphasis on contemporary processes of cultural, economic, and political integration. Special emphasis is placed on the roles of Singapore and China in the emergence of today's globalized world. Focus topics also include indigeneity, diasporas, and of course the internet. After completing this course students will have a much deeper understanding of global social processes that have an enormous impact on contemporary Singapore and that almost totally shape their daily lives.

Assessment

10% Individual tutorial participation
10% "Four Corners" group presentation activity

10%	Paper exercise (500 words maximum)
20%	Research paper (2000 words maximum)
50%	Final exam

Academic integrity

All members of the NTU community are responsible for upholding the values of academic integrity in all academic undertakings. Students should not plagiarise or pass off as their own, the writing or ideas of another, without acknowledging or crediting the source from which the ideas are taken. NTU takes a serious view of any form of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty are considered serious offences for which disciplinary penalties will be imposed.

Week-by-week schedule and tutorial preparation

The weekly schedule for HS2007 Understanding Globalization is summarized below. Each week's lecture notes will be posted online Sunday before noon so that they can be downloaded Sunday or Monday before the lecture. Students are not required to review lecture notes before coming to class, though they should read the short weekly summaries below so that they know what to expect before coming to class each week.

Students **are expected** to review the assigned readings and media **before coming to tutorial** each week. The readings assigned for this class -- one or two per week -- are relatively short and not very difficult. Each week's assigned reading can be read in less than one hour. Students are not expected to "study" the readings; simply reading them is sufficient. A media assignment (audio or video) is also included for each week. Each week's media assignment is also less than one hour in length. Thus the assigned tutorial preparation for each week requires a total of about two hours of work. Students are expected to set aside two hours each week for this important preparation work.

Tutorial discussions will be much more interesting (much less boring) for students who have completed the assigned preparation.

The final exam questions will draw extensively on the tutorial readings and media, and students will be required to answer all questions posed on the final exam (not allowed to pick the questions for which they happen to be prepared). Thus students who want to do well on the final will have to review these materials anyway. It makes most sense to review the assigned materials when they are assigned, rather than cramming them immediately before the exam. Students are most likely to do well on the exam if they have reviewed the assigned readings and media before attending tutorial, discussed them in tutorial, and then reviewed them again just before the exam.

Week 1

No lecture (due to holiday) and no tutorials

Week 2 (August 17 / August 20): Before globalization

Before the world became a single, interconnected place there were already many processes of globalization occurring. Phenomena like the spread of the alphabet, the consolidation of large societies, the adventures of long-distance travelers, large-scale migrations, the spread of disease, and trade along the silk road are all forms of proto-globalization in Afro-Eurasia. Similar processes (though less well-documented) seem to have occurred in what would become the Americas. Though the world was not yet globally connected, globalization as a process was already well underway.

Readings: Thorley, John. 1971. "The Silk Trade between China and the Roman Empire at Its Height, Circa AD 90–130." *Greece and Rome* 18: 71-80.

Wade, Geoff. 2005. "The Zheng He Voyages: A Reassessment." *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 78: 37-58.

Media: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0054950>

Week 3 (August 24 / August 27): The emergence of the modern world

In 1492 Christopher Columbus accidentally landed in what would become the Americas and in 1521 Ferdinand Magellan reached what would become the Philippines. In the 1500s Portugal and Spain established permanent settlements all around the world and the first era of globalization began. The European genocide of native Americans underwrote dramatic shifts in the global distribution of ideas, resources, and power as Asia became fully incorporated into the modern European world.

Readings: Hamilton, Earl J. 1929. "American Treasure and the Rise of Capitalism (1500-1700)." *Economica* 27: 338-357.

Ringmar, Erik. 2006. "Audience for a Giraffe: European Expansionism and the Quest for the Exotic." *Journal of World History* 17: 375-397.

Media: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lpXRvfdy9VE>

Week 4 (August 31 / September 3): The first globalization + **Assignment of papers**

The first globalization that solidified in the early 1600s and continued to deepen over the next 150 or 200 years was centered around the technology of sailing ships. These small ships spread empires, enslaved entire populations, and brought massive ecological and dietary changes to the world. If you've eaten potatoes, tomatoes, or chocolate you've tasted early globalization. During this period all major regions of the world experienced dramatic upheavals as a result of global integration -- leading some countries (like China and Japan) to attempt to close their borders to outside influences. The first great wave of Chinese migration to Southeast Asia occurred during this period.

Readings: Brockway, Lucille. 1979. "Science and Colonial Expansion: The Role of the British Royal Botanic Garden." *American Ethnologist* 6: 449-465.

Ho, Pint-Ti. 1955. "The Introduction of American Food Plants into China." *American Anthropologist* 57: 191-201.

Media: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RGGQJZsCog4>

Week 5 (September 7 / September 10): The industrial era

Before the industrial revolution European traders were the central drivers of globalization but European countries did not dominate the world. All that changed with development of steam power and the industries it made possible. After 1820 European powers started to conquer vast areas of the world until by 1920 nearly every place on Earth was ruled by Europeans or their descendants. In the industrial era the world became truly globalized, connected by instantaneous communication (even if primitive by today's standards). Later communism and decolonization tended to reduce global interconnectedness but after 1990 globalization bounced back to create the global world we live in today.

Readings: Frank, Andre Gunder. 1969. "The Development of Underdevelopment." *Monthly Review* 18(4): 17-31.

So, Alvin, and Stephen Chiu. 1996. "Modern East Asia in World-Systems Analysis." *Sociological Inquiry* 66: 471-485.

Media: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-LzatfgOQ9c>

Week 6 (September 14 / September 17): The information era

The internet. Nothing could be more global. The internet is the epitome of globalization. The internet has existed for barely 25 years but it has become the major orienting tool of nearly all aspects of human social activity outside the family. It is impossible to "cover" the internet in one class session but we are going to try!

Reading: Konieczny, Piotr. 2014. "The Day Wikipedia Stood Still: Wikipedia's Editors' Participation in the 2012 Anti-SOPA Protests as a Case Study of Online Organization Empowering International and National Political Opportunity Structures." *Current Sociology* 62: 994-1016.

Media: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/united-states-of-secrets/#united-states-of-secrets-%28part-two%29>

Week 7 (September 21 / September 24): Diaspora and indigenous communities

Nearly everyone in Singapore has roots in one or more diasporas: culturally distinct communities of people descended from immigrants who live among larger host populations. Indigenous communities are in many ways the mirror image of diaspora communities; they are culturally distinct communities of people descended from original inhabitants to live among larger host immigrant populations. Diaspora and indigenous communities existed

before globalization, but the globalizing world of the modern era (1500-2000) created many more of them -- and the internet is now helping many members of these communities maintain their identities and reconnect with their roots.

Reading: Zhou, Min, and Hong Liu. 2015. "Transnational Entrepreneurship and Immigrant Integration: New Chinese Immigrants in Singapore and the United States." *Research in the Sociology of Work* 27: 169-201.

Media: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h_uFEfDbxyM

Recess week

No lecture and no tutorials

Week 8 (October 5 / October 8): Theories of globalization + **Paper exercise feedback**

Two major theoretical approaches to interpreting globalization are world-systems analysis and world society theory. World-systems analysis is a materialist approach to understanding globalization that focuses on the economic integration of the modern world starting in the 1500s. World society theory is a phenomenological approach to understanding globalization that focuses on the recent homogenization of world culture starting in the 1990s and gaining momentum with the spread of the internet. There are many other approaches to interpreting globalization but these two approaches supply flexible lenses through which other approaches to globalization can be viewed.

Readings: Babones, Salvatore. Forthcoming. "Global Sociology." Accepted for publication in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociology*, edited by Kathleen Korgen. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tokatli, Nebahat. 2013. "Doing a Gucci: The Transformation of an Italian Fashion Firm into a Global Powerhouse in a 'Los Angeles-izing' World." *Journal of Economic Geography* 13: 239-255.

Media: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Xm0HNbvtgQ

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k-xSP_T0VqU&index=5&list=PLrQu8dSg1bHYkML0N34B9TsdLxX0ptE9r

Week 9 (October 12 / October 15): Cultural globalization

Cultural globalization involves the spread of norms, ideas, ideologies, and everyday practices around the world in ways that tend toward the creation of a single global culture. Though the internet has accelerated cultural globalization, cultural globalization is as old as the alphabet and even today mostly occurs offline. Cultural globalization can be homogenizing but it can also support "glocalization" or even the promotion of local over global cultures. Universities are key agents of cultural globalization, so in this week we will reflect on the ways in which our own class contributes to the formation of global culture.

Readings: Giulianotti, Robert, and Roland Robertson. 2012. "Glocalization and Sport in Asia: Diverse Perspectives and Future Possibilities." *Sociology of Sport Journal* 29: 433-454.

Kobayashi, Futoshi. 2012. "Eating Fast Food Slowly? Cultural Usage and Meaning of Fast Food in America and Japan." *Nutrition & Food Science* 42: 405-411.

Media: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MPWacF8Noxg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhaCi8CKYrs>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DxY42Y9lqYw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7MPRTSJ3htk>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/College_and_university_rankings

Week 10 (October 19 / October 22): Economic globalization

Economic globalization is characterized by the increasing global integration of production and consumption processes. Global trade relationships have been transformed from linear chains (a product is produced in one country to be consumed into another) into complex webs (components are produced and assembled in many countries to be consumed globally). Economic globalization also creates the conditions for the flow of migrants both rich (e.g., China to the US) and poor (e.g., India to the Persian Gulf). Rising inequality may also be related to economic globalization -- though this is much debated!

Reading: Gereffi, Gary. 2014. "Global Value Chains in a Post-Washington Consensus World." *Review of International Political Economy* 21: 9-37.

Media: http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/ghana804/video/video_index.html

Week 11 (October 26 / October 29): Political globalization

Political globalization is a hotly contested phenomenon. Do new forms of global governance like the United Nations constitute a global government? Does an unregulated web of non-governmental organizations control the political options available in much of the world? Or does the United States ultimately control the world's politics? Whatever form it takes, political globalization operates behind the curtain of the modern nation-state. Everyone agrees that sovereignty is no longer absolute (if it ever was) but no one knows for sure how much sovereignty countries really have -- or whether countries' levels of sovereignty are decreasing or (perhaps) increasing.

Reading: Boli, John and George M. Thomas. 1997. "World Culture in the World Polity." *American Sociological Review* 62: 171-190.

Media: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V32tABM0fyQ>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-raqX4KKY1Q>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YWNWi-ZWL3c>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A8B-VBcX7LY&index=3&list=PL5BY9veyhGt46KMmgAJYi1LF0EUkpcrX>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W4nSjPdT788>

Week 12 (November 2 / November 5): Focus on China

One country exemplifies globalization more than any other, even more than Singapore; the People's Republic of China. The scale of China's transformation since 1978 defies all description. In many ways globalization itself can be thought of as the increasing connection between the Chinese world and the rest of the world. The reintegration of China into the larger world, accelerating in every decade since the 1970s, has redefined the contours of the social (and even physical) world. In 2015 that integrative process may finally be slowing down. The implications of this slowdown for China and the world are likely to be just as staggering as those of China's global integration.

Reading: Babones, Salvatore. 2011. "The Middling Kingdom: The Hype and the Reality of China's Rise." *Foreign Affairs* 90(5):79-88.

Media: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MhIZ50HKIp0>
(watch all 8 segments!)

Week 13 (November 9 / November 12): Global futures + **Exam review**

What is the future of globalization? Will it continue? If so, for how long? Forever? No one knows what the future will bring but good social scientists can make well-informed guesses. For example, it seems obvious that global warming will continue. Social scientists can help prepare their societies for the likely impacts this will bring. Even where social scientists cannot predict the future they can help interpret it. Whatever the future brings, Singapore is sure to be at the forefront of globalization.

Reading: Salvatore Babones. Forthcoming. "The Once and Future Hegemon." Accepted for publication in *The National Interest*.

Media: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yMM-3oNOIHk>