AGLO 303 Theoretical Perspectives on Globalization  
Spring, 2016, MW 2:45-4:05, HU133 (#9269)

Bret Benjamin <bbenjamin@albany.edu>  
Office: Humanities 326 (442-4071)  
Office Hours: Mondays 1:30-2:30pm (and by appointment)

This course takes up the ambitious task of theorizing globalization, one of the defining conceptual rubrics of our current historical moment. Under investigation, then, is not only globalization—it’s origins, dynamics, characteristics, and consequences—but also theory. What role can intellectual and critical inquiry play in the world today? What is the relationship between generalization and particularity, that is to say between conceptual models that engage in broad forms of periodization, systemic analysis, or abstraction, versus those analytical models that focus on the particular, the local, the historically or geographically specific? What is the relationship between theory and critique? What are the intellectual traditions that inform contemporary thought? And how might a reflective investigation of theory help us to better understand and respond to the globalizing processes and structures that condition the world in which we live?

That world, for better or worse, comes at us in ways that do not conform neatly to traditional academic disciplinary boundaries and methods of study. Theorizing globalization—a topic that is interdisciplinary by its very nature—entails, therefore, the investigation and critique of disciplinary knowledges. Surveying key texts and concepts that have shaped current scholarly understandings of globalization we will read thinkers from a number of traditional academic disciplines: economists, sociologists, political scientists, geographers, historians, anthropologists, literary and cultural theorists, and more. Any theoretical position has value and limitations; by looking at an object from one perspective, we see things that would otherwise be hidden, but we also obscure aspects that might have been visible previously. Our aim, then, is to analyze the assumptions, limits, and possibilities that underpin theoretical investigation into the various processes, structures, and histories that connect and divide the globe.

Required Texts
- Coursepacket at Rapid Copy, Basement of Business Administration Bldg.

You are required bring a hard copy of the assigned article to class so that we can refer to specific passages in discussion.

Breakdown of Grades
- Midterm Exam 40%
- Final Exam 40%
- Quizzes 15%
- Participation 5%
Written Assignments
Midterm and Final Exams
There will be a midterm and a final exam covering the readings for each half of the semester. The exam will include passage identification and essay questions.

Quizzes
Regular reading quizzes will be given throughout the semester. Bringing assigned readings to class will be part of the quiz.

Attendance Policy
Attendance is required. After three absences, I will lower your final class grade by one third of a letter for each additional class that you miss. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. You can miss three classes, and three classes only, before your grade begins to drop. If an extenuating situation arises, such as a prolonged illness or a death in the family, you should contact me immediately and your absences may be excused as long as documentation from the Undergraduate Dean’s office is obtained. It is your responsibility to keep track of your own absences.

Electronic Devices
No electronic devices for reading, listening, note-taking and writing (e.g., laptops, tablets, phones, headphones, etc.) will be permitted in class. If you have a medical reason for needing to use such a device, we can make special arrangements.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and, as such, instances of plagiarized materials will be dealt with harshly. Depending on the severity and the details of the case, I reserve the right to file formal disciplinary action with the University (a process that often results in suspension or expulsion) and the right to impose a grading penalty that may go so far as to issue a failing grade for the entire course. DO NOT PLAGIARIZE.

From the University Guidelines on Scholastic Integrity:
Presenting as one's own work the work of another person (for example, the words, ideas, information, data, evidence, organizing principles, or style of presentation of someone else). Plagiarism includes paraphrasing or summarizing without acknowledgment, submission of another student's work as one's own, the purchase of prepared research or completed papers or projects, and the unacknowledged use of research sources gathered by someone else. Failure to indicate accurately the extent and precise nature of one's reliance on other sources is also a form of plagiarism. The student is responsible for understanding the legitimate use of sources, the appropriate ways of acknowledging academic, scholarly, or creative indebtedness, and the consequences for violating University regulations.

Examples of plagiarism include: failure to acknowledge the source(s) of even a few phrases, sentences, or paragraphs; failure to acknowledge a quotation or paraphrase of paragraph-length sections of a paper; failure to acknowledge the
source(s) of a major idea or the source(s) for an ordering principle central to the paper's or project's structure; failure to acknowledge the source (quoted, paraphrased, or summarized) of major sections or passages in the paper or project; the unacknowledged use of several major ideas or extensive reliance on another person's data, evidence, or critical method; submitting as one's own work, work borrowed, stolen, or purchased from someone else.
Schedule of Readings

1/23  Introductions
1/25  What is Globalization? What is Theory? (no reading)

1/30  Film screening: *Life and Debt*
2/1   Karl Marx, “The Manifesto of the Communist Party” (473-491, 499-500) and from the Preface to the *Critique of Political Economy* (4-5)

2/6   Keynes, “The End of Laissez Faire” (654—657, 663-672)

2/13  W.W. Rostow, “Stages of Economic Growth” (47-55)
2/15  Andre Gunder Frank, “The Development of Underdevelopment” (76-84)

2/20  Immanuel Wallerstein, “The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System” (95-113)
2/22  Maria Mies “Housewifization International” (112-127, 142-144)

2/27  Cynthia Enloe, “Carmen Miranda on My Mind” from *Beaches, Bananas, Bases* (124-150)

3/6   Midterm Review
3/8   **Midterm Exam**

3/13  NO CLASS
3/15  NO CLASS

3/20  Film screening: *Mardi Gras: Made In China*
3/22  Kenichi Ohmae, “The End of the Nation State” (207-211)
      *Writing Workshop*

3/27  Thomas Friedman, “It’s a Flat World Afterall” (247-255)
3/29  Arjun Appadurai, “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy” (27-37, 45-47)

4/3   Frederick Cooper “What is the Concept of Globalization Good For: An African Historian’s Perspective” (189-213)
4/5   Franco Moretti, “Conjunctures on World Literature” and “Planet Hollywood”

*Note:* *Wednesday, April 5 is the last day to drop course and receive a “W”*

4/10  NO CLASS
    Globaly: Lakner, Milanovic, “Global income distribution: From the Fall of the Berlin Wall to the Great Recession”

4/17  David Harvey, “Neoliberalism and the Restoration of Class Power” (9-29)
4/19  David Harvey, “Neoliberalism and the Restoration of Class Power” (41-68)

4/26  Esteva and Prakash, “From Global Thinking to Local Thinking” (277-289)
      Daniel Immerwahr, “Thinking Small Won’t End Poverty”

5/1   Paul Crutzen, “Geology of Mankind”
5/3   Mike Davis, “Planet of Slums” (5-34)

5/8   NO CLASS: Extended Office Hours
5/10  Final Exam Review

5/18  Final Exam 10:30-12:30, Thursday, in our normal classroom.