

Professor Ulrich Oslender

IDS 3315-U01: GAINING GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

SYLLABUS

*[Please note, this syllabus is a draft schedule.
Dates and content are always subject to change by University officials.]*

Instructor: Professor Ulrich Oslender
Class meets: Tuesday / Thursday, 4:00PM - 5:15PM
Classroom: SIPA 2 #259
Office hours: Tuesdays, 1:00PM - 3:00PM (or by appointment), SIPA 324
E-mail: uoslende@fiu.edu (please always put IDS 3315 in the “Subject” line when e-mailing me)
Course website: On Canvas at: <https://canvas.fiu.edu/>

Course Description

Very few things are happening in the world in isolation. Instead, the world, as we know it today, is characterized by an ever-increasing interconnectedness. People, countries, regions and places are linked in multiple ways and on many scales, from the local to the global. In this class we will develop an understanding of these connections and, as the course title suggests, work towards gaining a global perspective on things happening in the world. We will approach this objective through a number of themes (including on migration, global trade, climate change, identity), as well as through methodological approaches (including on participatory action research, PAR) that social scientists apply in the field when examining the local/global connection. For the latter, we will have several guest speakers based at various U.S. universities join class, and students are encouraged to proactively engage with them through open conversation. In this way, you will get a better feel for what kind of exciting research anthropologists, geographers and sociologists are conducting in the world today. Perhaps you will feel inspired ...

This class also serves as an introduction to the BA Degree in Global Studies, offered in our Department of Global & Sociocultural Studies (in which you choose your disciplinary major in Anthropology, Geography, or Sociology).

Importantly, students' active participation is required in class. While I give more formal lectures in the first few weeks of the semester, increasingly students actively participate by giving short presentations on the day's readings at the beginning of class. This happens in small groups of two or three, depending on class enrolment. You could prepare a brief power-point presentation, or talk freely to the class about the readings to be discussed that particular week. This will be followed by class discussion, in which I expect everyone to participate. This means that you need to be well prepared when coming to class. As we progress through class, you will see that it is not only beneficial to practice short in-class presentations, it will also be tremendous fun as you get to know each other this way.

University Core Curriculum

This course satisfies the following University Core Curriculum requirement for Social Science Group One (state-required) [*Group Two (FIU-required)*]:

Students will demonstrate the ability to examine behavioral, social, and cultural issues from a variety of points of view. Students will demonstrate an understanding of basic social and behavioral science concepts and principles used in the analysis of behavioral, social, and cultural issues, past and present, local and global. It is supported by the following learning outcomes for the course:

Student Learning Outcomes

After successfully completing this course, you should have acquired the following:

1. *Global awareness.* Students will have acquired a basic awareness of the interrelatedness of local, global, and intercultural issues, trends, and processes that shape the world today. This includes political entities, economic activities, environmental patterns, and sociocultural traits. This is foundational knowledge for understanding and explaining the spatial expression of dynamic global processes.
2. *Global perspective.* Students will develop a multi-perspective analysis of local, global, and intercultural problems, so that they will be able to understand major processes that shape human society on a world scale. Very little of what happens on Earth happens in isolation. Large processes – such as global trade, climate, and international migration – are dynamic in time and space. They operate across countries, regions, and hemispheres, but have different effects in different locations. Thus, students will learn to think relationally about the world as comprised of a set of interconnected and interdependent regions.
3. *Global engagement.* Students will be able to conceptualize and think critically about possible ways to address problem-oriented enquiry into some of the main issues facing the world today. Importantly, they will be able to critically evaluate claims about the world's societies and cultures. This course will help students identify and evaluate generalizations, stereotypes, and assumptions about people and places. It will contribute to students developing a critical perspective on the stories about the world that they are confronted with on an everyday basis.

Class materials

- Reading materials, video clips, and documentaries are available via the course's syllabus and Canvas site.
- A number of chapters will be discussed from the following book, which can be accessed from the FIU Online Library:
Key Concepts in Political Geography, 2009. By Gallaher, Dahlmann, Gilmartin & Mountz. Thousand Oaks: Sage. ISBN: 978-1-4129-4672-8. Available [here](#).
- Additionally, we will read a number of articles from the New York Times. FIU provides free digital access to the NYT. Make sure to activate it [here](#)!

Using Canvas

Our course is on Canvas at: <https://canvas.fiu.edu/>. Additional readings are posted here together with announcements. It is your responsibility to ensure that you know how to use this site. If you experience problems, contact Canvas support at 305.348-3630, or <https://canvas.fiu.edu/support/>.

Grading

There will be a total of 500 points available in this class, broken down as follows:

1. Attendance and Participation	20%	100 points
2. Group work and presentation	20%	100 points
3. Exam	30%	150 points
4. Final Paper	30%	150 points
TOTAL	100%	500 points

I use the following grading scale (fractional grades are rounded to the nearest whole number):

A = 93%-100% / A- = 90%-92% / B+ = 87%-89% / B = 83%-86% / B- = 80%-82%
C+ = 77%-79% / C = 73%-76% / D = 60%-72% / F = below 60%

Exam

There is one mid-term exam (one hour long). It is essay-based, drawing on material covered in lectures and readings. I will explain details in class. ***The exam accounts for 30% of the Final Grade.***

Attendance and Participation

Attendance in class is necessary to achieve a passing grade. Students are responsible for all information, materials, and instructions disseminated during the class period. If you miss a class, make sure you get class notes from classmates. Better still, discuss the missed class with classmates or your group members.

To monitor attendance and participation, I award points in a number of ways: 1) through announced tasks – e.g., I might ask you to prepare relevant questions about the reading for discussion; 2) through unannounced tasks – such as a short quiz in class about the readings; 3) through your scheduled short in-class presentation. ***Attendance and Participation accounts for 20% of the Final Grade.***

Group Work and Presentation

At the beginning of the course, you form into small groups of 2 to 3 students. As a group you choose a topic from a list of themes – including on migration, global trade, climate change, identity, etc. The task is to examine a case study pertaining to one of these themes, discussing both local scenarios and wider global ramifications. For example, you may choose to discuss the migration crisis in the Darien Gap in Colombia, where thousands of migrants have been stranded and dying (local effects), while discussing the wider reasons for why people migrate (global ramifications). Or you may wish to examine a particular Fair-Trade project, let's say on a coffee farm in Guatemala (local expression), while discussing Fair-Trade more generally as a response to the inequality inherent in global trade (global ramification). This way you will not only gain a global perspective on local events, but you will also be able to show and explain the benefits of such a perspective to others. I will help you coordinate your choice of topic and will be available to give you ideas on how to approach this project. I want you not only to learn but also to have fun with it!

Here are some useful tips on how to conduct group work successfully: [Link 1](#).

Students' in-class presentations will take place in Weeks 12 to 14. You are encouraged to be creative in your presentations: you could use power-point, include video clips, or record interviews. The collective nature of the project should encourage you all to put in as much effort as you can. If it becomes apparent that a group member does not contribute to the project in an acceptable manner, I will deduct points in this particular student's record. I will explain the group project in more detail on the first day of class. ***Group work and presentation account for 20% of the Final Grade.***

Final Paper

Each one of you will write a final paper of around 2,000 words on the group work's research findings. This is an individual task, where you can shine and bring your own analysis to the fore; in a short group presentation that is not always possible. Remember to include a properly referenced Bibliography at the end of the paper. References should be ordered alphabetically by author, and you should adhere to the following standard of referencing:

Book

Agnew, John (2002), *Making political geography*, London: Hodder Education

Gregory, Derek & Allan Pred (eds), *Violent geographies: fear, terror, and political violence*, New York: Routledge

Article in Journal

Tilly, Charles (2003), "Contention over space and place", *Mobilization* 8(2), pp. 221-226

Book chapter

Gallaher, Carolyn (2009), "Terrorism", in C. Gallaher, C. Dahlman, M. Gilmartin, A. Mountz & P. Shirlow, *Key concepts in Political Geography*, London: Sage, pp.247-259

The Final Paper is due in Week 15 on April 18. It must be submitted electronically via Turnitin on the course's Canvas page. Similarity percentage on Turnitin needs to be below 10%. You will lose 5 points for every day the paper is late. ***The Final Paper accounts for 30% of the Final Grade.***

IMPORTANT: *Essay writing* forms an important part in this class. I expect you to be able to write in an articulate manner and present a coherent argument. You also need good command of the English language. If you feel you have problems with your writing skills, please address these concerns asap with me. You may also want to use the resources in the Center for Excellence in Writing (located in the Green Library: GL 125), where you can get help from writing tutors and participate in workshops to help sharpen your skills as a writer: <http://writingcenter.fiu.edu>

Make-Up Policy

Flat tires, conflicts with work or travel, or the neighbor's dog barking all night are not valid reasons for missing an exam. Make-up exams are only allowed for the following reasons: incapacitating illness; a death in the immediate family; official university travel; or jury duty. NO make up exams without: 1) a doctor's note that a student was incapable of attending for medical reasons; 2) documentation of a death in the immediate family; 3) documentation from a university official; or 4) court documentation regarding jury duty.

Electronic Device Policy

Think of the class as take-off time with an airline. All electronic devices ***must be turned off*** and stowed for the duration. That includes laptops, cell phones, iPads, etc.

The reasons for this policy are quite simple: First, while electronic devices can be useful tools, they are almost always also being used by students to check Facebook, Twitter, or similar social media sites during class. This is a huge distraction, not just for the student concerned but also for everyone else around, including me. Second, I always recommend taking notes in handwritten form, a much more efficient way of learning and memorizing lecture notes. Many scientists agree that handwriting is beneficial to the overall learning process. Read this [NYT article](#), e.g.

As you will agree, I have adopted this strict electronic device policy for your and the class's benefit.

Please note: If you are found to ignore this electronic device policy, you are subject to being removed from class. I may take away your electronic device for the remainder of the class and will deduct attendance points. Repeat offenders are subject to University disciplinary actions. By taking this class you express your consent to these rules.

Academic Misconduct

Academic Misconduct is defined, amongst others, as the following intentional acts or omissions:

Cheating: The unauthorized use of any materials, information, study aids or assistance from another person on any academic assignment or exercise. Assisting another student in the unauthorized use of any materials, information, study aids. Having a substitute complete any academic assignment or completing an academic assignment for someone else, either paid or unpaid.

Plagiarism: The use and appropriation of another's work without indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas, expressions or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is guilty of plagiarism. Any student helping another to plagiarize may be found guilty of academic misconduct.

Multiple Submission: Submitting the same or substantially the same academic work (including oral presentations) for credit more than once.

Penalties: Academic Misconduct will not be tolerated and dealt with according to the proceedings outlined in the Student Conduct and Honor Code. Please familiarize yourselves with this policy. Any student suspected of Academic Misconduct will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity (SCAI). The suggested minimum penalty for Academic Misconduct in this class shall be zero points for the assignment in which misconduct occurred, plus one full grade deduction in the student's final grade (e.g., if you were to receive a B in class, you would get a C instead).

Important Notice on Use of Generative AI Tools in Submissions: After careful consideration and in alignment with our commitment to maintaining the highest standards of academic honesty, I must inform you that the use of generative AI tools, including but not limited to text-generating platforms such as ChatGPT, is strictly prohibited when completing and submitting your assignments. While acknowledging the rapid advancements in technology and the potential benefits they may offer, academic success is best achieved through your individual efforts, critical thinking, and creativity. Utilizing generative AI tools undermines the learning process, diminishes the value of your education, and compromises the integrity of your work.

To help you further gain awareness of these matters, you are required to include in your submissions the following statement:

“I hereby confirm that I have not made use of generative AI tools in the preparation of my work I am submitting here.”

There is an exception to this rule: Should you use AI tools that help improve your grammar and general writing skills, such as Grammarly or DeepL, then please acknowledge that in the following statement:

“I hereby declare that I have made use of the following AI tools in the preparation of my work I am submitting here: [Name of AI tool]. This tool was exclusively used to improve my grammar/writing skills. All work submitted here is mine.”

Please note that failure to correctly declare your use of generative AI tools will lead to a charge of academic misconduct (see above). I believe in your abilities and am confident that your dedication to learning and personal growth will yield the best possible outcomes. If you have any questions or concerns about this policy, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in upholding the principles of academic integrity.

A Reminder of FIU's Student Code of Conduct

“Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.”

Important Dates

- Exam Feb 11
- Final Paper due Apr 18

Class Schedule and Readings

Please note: This draft is subject to change. Assigned readings should be completed prior to the class for that week.

Week 1: Jan 7, 9

- Introduction to course. Approaching Global Studies.

Reading: none assigned

- ⇒ Watch: “Why Global Studies?” [Presentation by Jeremy Weinstein](#), Director of the Global Studies Division at Stanford University (2017)

Week 2: Jan 14, 16

- Globalization, Global Trade and the Anthropocene

Reading:

- ⇒ Key Concepts: “Globalization”, pp.164-173 (available at FIU Online Library; see above)
- ⇒ Watch and Explore: <http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/spain/>
- ⇒ Article in The Guardian on the [Anthropocene](#)
- ⇒ Watch: <https://vimeo.com/39048998> (Welcome to the Anthropocene)
- ⇒ Explore: anthropocene.info (webportal on the Anthropocene)

Week 3: Jan 21, 23

- Fair Trade vs Free Trade: Coffee production in Guatemala and Mexico

Reading:

- ⇒ Watch and Explore: <https://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/guatemala.mexico/>
- ⇒ “Brewing Justice: Fair Trade Coffee, Sustainability, and Survival”, by Daniel Jaffee
 - Be creative: find online book reviews, summaries of this insightful book

Week 4: Jan 28, 30

- Migration

Reading:

- ⇒ Key Concepts: “Migration”, pp.174-184 (available at FIU Online Library; see above)
- ⇒ NYT article on the [Migration experience in the Darien Gap](#)
- ⇒ BBC article on [Bangladeshis in Libya](#)
- ⇒ Watch: “Guatemala: In the Shadow of the Raid”: <https://vimeo.com/35447001>
- ⇒ Explore: http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/rough/2009/07/guatemala_a_tal.html
 - Tip: read the comment section on this website for a wide range of opinions on this issue

Week 5: Feb 4, 6

- China in Africa

Reading:

- ⇒ NYT article on [Cobalt exploitation in the Congo](#)
- ⇒ Focus on Geography article on [The Intimate China-Africa in Kampala, Uganda](#)
 - (please read this article on a laptop or PC, as it includes dynamic map presentations that you will not be able to see on your phones)
- ⇒ Adovor Tsikudo, Kwame (2024), “Different approach, same focus: how China is shaping the future of its African cooperation through education”, *Human Geography* 17(1), pp.88-94; [click here](#)

Week 6: Feb 11, 13

- **EXAM: Tuesday, Feb 11**
- Thursday, Feb 15: Afro-Latin America

Reading:

- ⇒ Watch: Dr Jean Rahier, FIU-GSS, on [Afro-descendants in Latin America](#) (or view here: [Afro-descendants in Latin America](#))

Week 7: Feb 18, 20

- Afro-Latin America

Reading:

- ⇒ Interview with [Alejandro de la Fuente](#), Director of the Afro-Latin American Research Institute at Harvard University
- ⇒ Watch and Explore: [Goldman Environmental Prize 2004 to Libia Grueso](#)
 - (watch Profile Video and explore the rest of the page)
- ⇒ Watch and Explore: [Goldman Environmental Prize 2018 to Francia Márquez](#)
 - (watch Profile video and explore the rest of the page)

Week 8: Feb 25, 27

- NO CLASS: Spring Break!

Week 9: Mar 4, 6

- Bridging Scholarship and Activism (Guest speaker: Dr. Bernd Reiter, Texas Tech University)

Reading:

- ⇒ Reiter, B. (2015), “Of academic embeddedness: communities of choice and how to make sense of activism and research abroad”, in Reiter & Oslender (eds), *Bridging scholarship and activism: reflections from the frontlines of collaborative research*, Michigan State University Press, pp. 3-14 (available [here](#))
- ⇒ Oslender, U. (2015), “Leaving the field: how to write about disappointment and frustration in participatory action-research”, in Reiter & Oslender (eds), *Bridging scholarship and activism: reflections from the frontlines of collaborative research*, Michigan State University Press, pp.63-74 (available [here](#))

Week 10: Mar 11, 13

- Geographies of Hope (Guest speaker: Dr. Julianne Hazlewood, UC Santa Cruz)

Reading:

⇒ Hazlewood, J. (2012): “CO2lonialism and the ‘unintended consequences’ of commoditizing climate change: geographies of hope amid a sea of oil palms in the Northwest Ecuadorian Pacific Region, *Journal of Sustainable Forestry* 31:1-2, pp.120-153 (available [here](#))

Week 11: Mar 18, 20

- Coca production and cocaine consumption (Guest speaker: Dr. Alexander Huezo, UC Irvine)

Reading:

⇒ Huezo, Alexander (2019), “Contested natures: Coca, the War on Drugs, and ecologies of difference in Colombia’s Afro-Pacific”, *Journal of Political Ecology* 26, pp.305-322 (available [here](#))

⇒ NYT article: [Belgian Port City Grapples With a Flood of Cocaine](#)

⇒ Watch BBC clip: [TikTok videos humanise Colombia’s cocaine workers](#)

⇒ Watch: 2 clips on aftermath of coca eradication in rural Colombia:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFbKCYlIHHo>
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wnea_-ts9GY&t=3s

Week 12: Mar 25, 27

- Group Presentations

Reading: none assigned

Week 13: Apr 1, 3

- Group Presentations

Reading: none assigned

Week 14: Apr 8, 10

- Group Presentations

Reading: none assigned

Week 15: Apr 15, 17

- Wrap-up of class

Reading: none assigned

Apr 18: Final Paper due!

Week 16: Apr 22, 24

FINALS WEEK