Syllabus of Record

Program: CET Siena
Course Code / Title: (SN/GSGS 3100) Critical Conceptions of the Global
Total Hours: 45
Recommended Credits: 3
Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: Global Studies / Anthropology, Sociology
Language of Instruction: English
Prerequisites / Requirements: None

Description
This course examines leading schools of thought in Global Studies from a critical perspective. Students engage with foundational political, social, and cultural concepts that underpin contemporary economic, cultural, and political institutions of power. The course brings together material from anthropology, political theory, and cultural studies.

Through readings and assignments—and their Sienese and Italian context—students examine the human condition and the sheer complexity of human interconnectedness, tackling actual "global" problems through teamwork. This course challenges basic assumptions about being human, relating to one another, and effecting change. It also invites students to question Western-centric singular narratives of globalization and modernization by approaching themes with global implications from multi-centric and plural perspectives.

Objectives
At the end of this course students will be able to:

- Approach questions of global human interconnectedness from a variety of theoretical perspectives.
- Articulate critiques of assumptions inherent in dominant understandings of globalization and interconnectedness.
- Analyze and compare different disciplinary perspectives on major themes around global human interconnectedness.
- Integrate theoretical insights with real-life cases and contexts.
- Collaborate with fellow students within and across tracks and disciplines.
- Discover and develop strengths and skills in tackling new knowledge and practical problems through developing writing and oral skills in a creative manner.

Course Requirements
Active participation is essential in this course. Students are expected to attend each class and field-based course component, as outlined in the CET Attendance Policy. Students are expected to read all assigned materials before the relevant class session and come prepared to participate thoughtfully in class discussions. Graded assignments include:
In-class group assignments: Students engage in graded in-class group exercises. All groups create a mental map on “personhood,” prepare and participate in a debate on human rights, and work on a “rethinking the global” poster.

Peer-reviewed paper: Although writing can be a solitary endeavor, good writing is a collaborative effort. For this project, students mimic the process of writing and submitting a journal article around the general theme of “improvement.” In a step-by-step sequence and in close collaboration with two peers, students turn a topic that excites them into a 5-page academic paper.

Portfolio: The culminating individual project consists of a portfolio of work that students collect and revise throughout the semester. It includes material related to 1) course content, 2) reflection, and 3) personal growth. Students work on the portfolio before, after, and often during every class. Students hand it in to be graded at the end of the course.

Group project: Students form an interdisciplinary research team that is trying to get funding to investigate an urgent problem related to development, global health, security and justice, or environment and sustainability. Each group must identify a compelling problem with global implications, collect relevant background information to situate the problem, draw on course-related and other academic sources to buttress the group’s claims, and present a pitch in a creative and innovative manner.

Grading
The final grade is determined as follows:

- In-class group assignments: 15%
- Peer-reviewed paper: 30%
- Portfolio: 25%
- Group project: 30%

Readings


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Outline of Course Content
Three to four weeks are spent on each of the below areas.

Topic 1 - Globalization and the global
- Why the “global”?
- Universal universals
- Dislocation
- Hybridization
- Glocality

Topic 2 - Being and being-with
- Sexuality
- Subjectivity
- Transnationalism
- Personhood: Dividual, self, intersectionality, Dasein, perspectives from the South
- Relationality: Sympathy, empathy, and letting–be

Topic 3 - Change, progress, and the good
- Environment and the will to improve
- Corruption and good governance
- Human rights or human wrongs?
- Crossing borders/better lives
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Topic 4 - Rethinking the global
- Decolonization and global public health
- Situation
- Assemblage
- Friction