

COURSE SYLLABUS: WORLD ISSUES

Semester: Fall '10

Course: SSC*K1210

Course Title: World Issues

Course Schedule: MWF 1:00—1:50

Instructor: Prof. Steven Neufeld

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Office Hours: Tues and Thurs 11:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.; or by appointment

I. Course Description

There are a multitude of issues that can be construed as world issues that span countries in terms of their causes and consequences. Clearly one of the most fundamental global issues we face is global inequality and the persistence of global poverty in the world. Much of the world's population continues to be plagued by poverty, disease and illness, malnutrition, and frequently living in politically unstable and strife torn areas. This "bottom billion", as Paul Collier describes them, constitutes 1/6 of the world's population and is in dire need of attention and solutions.

A disproportionate share of those in poverty are women. This is because in much of the developing world, women lack basic political, social, and economic rights and are not invested in by their families or their societies, especially in terms of their health and education, and because women are frequent victims of sex trafficking and rape. This oppression of women contributes to global poverty and the lack of development, in part by contributing to the problem of AIDs and population growth.

This course will be organized around two main and interrelated topics: global poverty and the rights and the status of women around the globe. Each section of the course will examine various aspects of the problem, as well as potential solutions and their pitfalls. In the course of discussing these issues, we will also examine a number of other global issues, such as globalization and neo-liberalism, racial and ethnic genocide, political conflict and corruption, hunger and malnutrition, population growth and family planning, sex trafficking, migration, and AIDs.

II. Learning Outcomes

The learning objectives of this course include:

- I. Cultures and Societies: analyze and understand the causes and consequences of major global issues affecting the welfare of large segments of the world's population
 - Learning about the meaning and measurement of development
 - Learn about the causes and consequences of underdevelopment in the world today
 - Understand and analyze political processes in developing countries
 - Understanding the concepts of globalization and neo-liberalism and their effects on economic development and the status of women
 - Understand and analyze the status of women in global perspective

- II. Critical Thinking: Utilize critical thinking skills to analyze societies and social behavior
 - Read and critique original writings on global poverty
 - Understand the relationship between patriarchy and pre-industrial social structures
 - Critically assess solutions to global poverty and the status of women

- III. Communication: To understand and convey ideas using reading, writing, speaking, and listening
 - Do a research project and class presentation on a major global issue

I. Course Readings

The required texts for the class are:

- Jeffrey D. Sachs, *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*, New York: Penguin Books, 2005.
- Nicholas D. Kriston and Sheryl WuDunn, *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2009.

Additional required readings may be assigned during the course. **Assigned readings are to be done before coming to class.**

II. Grading and Assignments

- There will be two written assignments each worth 12.5% of your final grade.
- There will be two exams, one after each major section of the course. Each exam will count for 25% of your final grade. The exams will be take-home exams in essay format, and the last exam will **not** be cumulative.

- You will also write a 5-6 page research paper and give a 10-12 minute class presentation based on your research paper. The research paper and presentation will together count for 25% of your final grade.

Late work will be penalized accordingly. Failure to complete assignments and/or exams will hurt your final grade more than submitted work that receives an F but reflects some level of effort. Class participation can help boost your final GPA for the course.

All written work for the course must follow accepted rules for writing, grammar and citations. If you need assistance with your writing, you should visit The Writing Center on campus.

III. Cell Phone Policy

Students are notified that cellular phones and beepers are allowed in class or in the Learning Resource Center only if they are turned off or turned to a silent mode. Under no circumstances are phones to be answered in class. When there are extenuating circumstances that require that a student be available by phone or beeper, the student should speak to the instructor prior to class, so that together they can arrive at an agreement.

IV. Weekly Outline and Readings

Part I. Global Poverty and Economic Development

Week 1: Global Poverty and Development

Fri 8/27: What are Poverty and Development?

Readings: None

Week 2: Theories of Development

Mon 8/30: Modernization Theory

Wed 9/1: Dependency Theory

Fri 9/3: World Systems Theory

Readings: Sachs, pp. 1-50; York and Bradshaw handout

Week 3: Colonialism and Neo-Colonialism

Mon 9/6: Labor Day Holiday—No Class

Wed 9/8: Colonialism

Fri: 9/10: Neo-Colonialism (Film: Capuccino Trail)

Readings: Sachs, pp. 51-89; Handouts

Week 4: Globalization

Mon 9/13: Trade

Wed 9/15: Globalization

Fri 9/17: Asia vs. Africa

Readings: Sachs, pp. 148-209

Assignment 1 Handed Out: Due 9/27

Week 5: Neo-Liberalism and Structural Adjustment

Mon 9/20: Third World Debt

Wed 9/22: The World Bank and the IMF

Fri 9/24: Film: *Life and Debt*

Readings: TBA

Week 6: Political Problems and Conflicts

Mon 9/27: Weak and Failed States

Wed 9/29: Political Conflict and Civil Wars (Natural Resource Curse)

Fri: 10/1: The Cold War (Film: Winds of Change)

Readings: French, *A Continent for the Taking*, pp, chapters 2, 6 and 7, pp. 25-47;
111-149

Week 7: Racial and Ethnic Conflict

Mon 10/4: Racial and Ethnic Conflict

Wed 10/6: Darfur

Fri 10/8: Botswana: A Success Story

Readings: Sachs, pp.210-266; Easterly handout

Week 8 11/6: Solutions to Global Poverty

Mon 10/11: World Hunger

Wed 10/13: The Green Revolution

Fri 10/15: Foreign Aid

Readings: Readings: Sachs, pp. 266-328

Exam 1 handed out; due 10/22

Part II: The Status of Women

Week 9: Women and Development

Mon 10/18: Human Rights

Wed 10/20: Patriarchy
Fri 10/22: Women and Islam

Readings: Kristoff and WuDunn, Introduction, pp. 149-160; Human Rights Watch report summaries (handout); Afghanistan readings (handout)

Assignment 2 Handed Out; Due 10/29

Week 10: Globalization and Women
Mon 10/25: Globalization
Wed 10/27: Neo-liberalism (NOW Film)
Fri: 10/29: Women and Migration

Readings: Hochschild and Ehrenreich, ???;

Week 11: Other Gendered Issues
Mon 11/1: Sex Trafficking and Prostitution
Wed 11/3: Genital Mutilation/Cutting
Fri 11/5: Conflict and Rape

Readings: Kristoff and WuDunn, pp. 3-92

Week 12: Development Issues
Mon 11/8: Population Growth
Wed 11/10: AIDS
Fri 11/12: Women and Development

Readings: Kristoff and WuDunn, pp. 93-148, 161-165

Week 13: Solutions to Gender Inequality
Mon 11/15: Microfinance
Wed 11/17: Women's Health
Fri 11/19: Education

Readings: Kristoff and WuDunn, pp. 167-252

Week 14: Concluding Comments on Women
Mon, 11/22: Culture and Social Change
Wed, 11/24: Thanksgiving Holiday
Fri, 11/26: Thanksgiving Holiday

Readings: TBA

Week 15: TBA
Mon 11/29:
Wed 12/1:
Fri 12/3:

Readings: TBA

Week 16 12/11: Finals Week

Mon 12/6: Student Presentations

Wed 12/8: Student Presentations

Fri 12/10: Student Presentations

Readings: None

Final Exam handed out; due 12/17