

COURSE SYLLABUS: WORLD ISSUES

Course: SSC*K1210

Course Title: World Issues

Course Schedule: TR 11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

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Office Hours: Tues 9:00 – 11:00 a.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 is disproportionately located in Africa. They are in dire need of attention and solutions.

Women constitute a disproportionate share of the impoverished “bottom billion”. This is because in much of the developing world, women lack the basic political, social, and economic rights that men do. As a result, women are frequent victims of sex trafficking, violence, and rape, and they receive fewer resources from their families and their societies, especially in terms of their health and education. 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 these two main and interrelated topics: global poverty and the rights and the status of women in developing countries. The first section of the course will focus on global poverty, while the second will focus on the status of women. The emphasis of the course will be on Africa, where problems with global poverty are most severe. 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

Learning outcomes refer to the knowledge, skills, and abilities you should develop in this course. The learning outcomes for this course are:

- 1) Critical Thinking: To analyze and evaluate argumentation and persuasion in order to improve, refine, and refute it.
 - Read and critique original writings on global poverty
 - Critically assess solutions to global poverty and the status of women
- 2) Global Awareness: To examine the effect of historical and contemporary national and international events and trends on social, political and cultural institutions.
 - Knowledge of critical issues occurring in the world today and their impact on nations and individuals.
 - Knowledge of the links between individuals and nations around the globe.
 - Identify different cultural perspectives and explain how these perspectives influence how people see, experience, and act in their world.
 - Cultural Self-Awareness.
- 3) Communication: To understand and convey ideas using reading, writing, speaking, and listening
- 4) Information Literacy: To assess what information is needed to answer questions and solve problems and to retrieve, evaluate, and use that information effectively.
- 5) Responsible Citizenship: To understand how individual attitudes and behaviors affect societies and to use that understanding for ethical decisions and actions in personal, professional, and social life.
 - See one's self as an active participant in society with a strong commitment and responsibility to work with others.
 - Understand the impact of individual attitudes and behaviors on social institutions and society as a whole.

III. Course Readings

The required text for the class is:

- Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2009.

Additional required readings are available on-line as indicated in weekly course schedule.

Assigned readings are to be done before coming to class.

IV. 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.
- **Class participation will help boost your final GPA for the course.**

All assignments and exams involve written work, and poor quality writing, such as typographical errors, poor spelling, grammatical errors, and poor paragraph construction, will negatively affect your grade. At a **minimum**, you should spell check all work before it is submitted. If you want assistance with your writing skills, I strongly urge you to use I strongly urge you to use The Writing Center in room C-117. You can also contact them by email at TRWritingCenter@trcc.commnet.edu or by phone at 860-892-5773.

Late work will be penalized up to a full letter grade deduction depending on the severity of the infraction. Exams cannot be submitted after I have returned the graded exams, which is usually one week after the exams are due, without explicit permission from me. 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.

Students are expected to follow to standards of academic honesty. If there is a question about cheating or plagiarism, the college's **Academic Integrity Policy** (revised 8 January 2003) will be followed.

V. Cell Phone Policy

Cellular phones and beepers are allowed in class 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.

VI. Course Schedule and Readings

Part I. Global Poverty and Economic Development

Week 1: Global Poverty and Development

Tues 8/28: Defining Global Poverty

Thurs 8/30: Defining Development

Readings:

- Harding, "Nairobi Slum Life: Into Kibera", 4-part series at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/2297237.stm>;
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/2297259.stm>;

- <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/2297265.stm>; and
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/2297279.stm>
- Jay Aronson, “Development: Definitions and Assumptions”, Fall 2006 at http://www.techbridgeworld.org/courses/TDC_F06/lectures/L5_DevDefsAssumptns.pdf
 - “Definitions of Development and Underdevelopment”, Revision World at <http://revisionworld.co.uk/a2-level-level-revision/sociology/world-sociology/definitions-development-under-development>

Week 2: Colonialism and Neo-Colonialism

Tues 9/4: Colonialism and Neo-Colonialism

Thurs 9/6: Film: *Winds of Change*

Readings:

- Stuart Nolan, “Belgium’s Imperialist Rape of Africa”, September 6, 1999, World Socialist Web Site, at <http://www.wsws.org/articles/1999/sep1999/king-s06.shtml>
- “French Colonialism in West Africa”, Macrohistory and World Report at <http://www.fsmitha.com/h2/ch14-4.htm>
- “Kenya and the British”, MacroHistory and World Report at <http://www.fsmitha.com/h2/ch14-africa.htm>
- Rob Turrell, “Diamonds and Migrant Labor in South Africa: 1869-1910”, *History Today*, 36, 5, at <http://www.historytoday.com/rob-turrell/diamonds-and-migrant-labour-south-africa-1869-1910>
- Barbara Slaughter, “How Britain Crushed the “Mau Mau Rebellion”, September 15, 1999, World Socialist Web Site at <http://www.wsws.org/articles/1999/sep1999/mau-s15.shtml>

Assignment 1 handed out; Due Tues 9/18

Week 3: Globalization and Global Poverty

Tues 9/11: Globalization

Thurs 9/13: Africa vs. Asia

Readings:

- “Dumping Without Borders: How US Agricultural Policies are Destroying the Livelihoods of Mexican Corn Farmers”, Oxfam Briefing Paper at http://www2.grist.org/gristmill/images/user/2988/oxfam_report_corn.pdf
- Julian Ensby, “Obama Should Fight American Protectionism and Ditch Farm Subsidies”, The Comment Factory at <http://www.thecommentfactory.com/obama-should-fight-american-protectionism-and-ditch-farming-subsidies-1632/>
- Gumisai Mutume, “Mounting Opposition to Northern Farm Subsidies: African Farmers Battling to Survive”, *African Recovery*, 17, 1, May 2003, at <http://www.un.org/en/africarenewal/vol17no1/171agri4.htm>

- Zareen Iqbal, “African Land ‘Grabs’ and the Growing International Food Crisis”, International Institute for Justice and Development at <http://iijd.org/index.php/news/entry/african-land-grabs-and-the-growing-international-food-crisis/>

Week 4: Political Problems

Tues 9/18: Predatory States and the Natural Resource Course

Thurs 9/20: Racial and Ethnic Conflict

Readings:

- Mark Tutton, “Can Africa Break Its ‘Resource Curse’”, CNN, at <http://edition.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/africa/08/23/africa.resource.curse/index.html>
- “‘The Resource Curse’: Why Africa’s Riches Don’t Trick Down to Africans”, Knowledge@Wharton, at <http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article.cfm?articleid=1830>
- Jeffrey Gettleman, “Africa’s Dirty Wars”, *New York Review of Books*, at <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2012/mar/08/africas-dirty-wars/>
- Stewart Patrick, “Exorcising the Resource Curse”, *The Internationalist*, April 27, 2012, at <http://blogs.cfr.org/patrick/2012/04/27/exorcising-the-resource-curse-some-innovative-ideas/>

Week 5: Hunger and Malnutrition

Tues 9/25: Hunger and Malnutrition

Thurs 9/27: The Green Revolution

Readings: Readings:

- Holly Poole-Kavana, “Twelve Myths about World Hunger”, Institute for Food and Development Policy, 12, 2, 2006, at <http://www.foodfirst.org/en/node/1480>
- Anthony Faiola, “The New Economics of Hunger”, *The Washington Post*, April 27, 2008 at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/story/2008/04/26/ST2008042602333.html>
- Anthony Faiola, “Where Every Meal is a Sacrifice”, *The Washington Post*, April 28, 2008 at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/story/2008/04/27/ST2008042702198.html>
- Raj Patel, Eric Holt-Jimenez, and Annie Shattuck, “Ending Africa’s Hunger”, *The Nation*, September 21, 2009, reprinted at <http://bolekaja.wordpress.com/2009/12/19/ending-africas-hunger/>

Week 6: Debt Problems and Debt Relief

Tues 10/2: The Debt Crisis, the IMF, and the WB

Thurs 10/4: Debt Relief

Readings:

- “Why Africa Cannot Spend On Its Citizens”, TradeMark Southern Africa at <http://trademarksa.org/news/why-africa-cannot-spend-its-citizens>
- “Debt Relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative” at <http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/hipc.htm>;
- “A World of Debt: Why Debt Relief Has Failed to Liberate Poor Countries”, at http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Reforming_System/World_of_Debt.html;
- William Easterly, “Think Again: Debt Relief”, Foreign Policy, November 1, 2001, at http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2001/11/01/think_again_debt_relief

Assignment 1 handed out; due 9/23

Week 7: The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank

Tues 10/9: Film *Life and Debt*

Thurs 10/11: Discussion

Readings:

- Jerry Mark Silverman, “History Matters: Establishing the World Bank and IMF”, at <http://internationaldevelopmentshould.com/2011/02/21/history-matters-establishing-the-world-bank-imf/>
- “What are the Bretton Woods Institutions”, at <http://www.brettonwoodsproject.org/item.shtml?x=320747> (Read additional links in the “See Also” section at the bottom; “Criticism of the IMF” at <http://www.economicshelp.org/dictionary/i/imf-criticism.html>;

Week 8: Solutions

Tues 10/16: Foreign Aid

Thurs 10/18: Sustainable Agriculture and Land Reform

Readings:

- Nicholas D. Kristof, “Aid: Can It Work?”, *New York Review of Books* at <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2006/oct/05/aid-can-it-work/>;
- Jeffrey D. Sachs, “How Aid Can Work,” *New York Review of Books* at <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2006/dec/21/how-aid-can-work/>;
- William Easterly, “The White Man’s Burden”, *New York Review of Books* at <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2007/jan/11/the-white-mans-burden/>;
- Diana Jeater, “Parasites of the Poor”, Pambazuka News at <http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/comment/75588>
- Evaggelos Vallianatos, “Cash Crop Colonialism and the Attack on African Agriculture”, Pambazuka News, November 17, 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201111180989.html>

Exam 1 handed out; due 10/25

Part II: The Status of Women

Week 9: Women and Development

Tues 10/23: Women's Rights

Thurs 10/25: Patriarchy

Readings:

- Kristoff and WuDunn, Introduction, pp. 149-160;
- Human Rights Watch report summaries (handout);
- "Sahara Women Relish Their Rights", BBC News, at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3227997.stm>

Assignment 2 handed out; Due 11/6

Week 10: Globalization, Neo-Liberalism, and Women

Tues 10/30: Globalization and Women

Thurs 11/1: Women and Immigration

Readings:

- Phillipa Strum and Daniele Torontolo (editors), Women Immigrants in the United States, Proceedings of a conference sponsored by the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and the Migration Policy Institute, September 9, 2002, at http://stage-wilson.p2technology.com/sites/default/files/womenimm_rpt.pdf (Read pp. 23-37)
- "Family Immigration System and Asian & Pacific Islander Women", National Asian Pacific Islander Women's Forum at http://napawf.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/11/NAPAWF_Familyimmigration_factsheet.pdf
- Kavitha Sreeharsha, "Reforming America's Immigration Laws: A Woman's Struggles", Immigration Policy Center, June 2010, at http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/docs/A_Womans_Struggle_062810.pdf
- Amie Newman, "Why Is the Arizona Immigration Law a 'Women's Issue'?", RH Reality Check at <http://www.rhrealitycheck.org/node/13456>

Week 11: Other Gender Issues

Tues 11/6: Sex Trafficking and Prostitution

Thurs 11/8: Violence and Rape

Readings: Kristoff and WuDunn, pp. 3-92

Week 12: Development Issues

Tues 11/13: Population Growth and Population Control

Thurs 11/15: AIDS

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

Week 13: Women in Agriculture

Tues 11/20: Women and Agriculture

Thurs 11/22: No Class—Thanksgiving Holiday

Readings:

- “Women and Agriculture: Growing More than Just Food”, Women Thrive Worldwide at <http://womenthrive.org/images/womenandagriculture.pdf>
- “The ‘Keepers of Seed’: The Impact of the ‘Green Revolution’ in Africa on Female Farmers”, Consultancy Africa Intelligence at http://www.consultancyafrica.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=780:the-keepers-of-seed-the-impact-of-the-green-revolution-in-africa-on-female-farmers&catid=59:gender-issues-discussion-papers&Itemid=267
- “Women and the Green Revolution”, Food and Agricultural Organization at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/X0171E/x0171e04.htm>

Week 14: Solutions for Gender Inequality

Tues 11/27: Microfinance, Education, Women’s Health, and Clean Water

Mon, 11/29: Gender and Development

Readings:

- Kristoff and WuDunn, pp. 167-252
- “What Third World Women Want”, *The Weekly Standard*, at http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/what-third-world-women-want_574825.html

Week 15: Student Paper Presentations

Tues 12/4: Round I

Thurs 12/6: Round II

Final exam handed out; due 12/13 by 5:00 p.m.

Week 16: Student Presentations (if necessary)

Tues: 12/11: Round III

Thurs: 12/13: Round IV