

HUM-427

History of globalization I

Eichenberger Pierre

Cursus	Sem.	Type
Humanities and Social Sciences	MA1	Obl.

Language of teaching	English
Credits	3
Session	Winter
Semester	Fall
Exam	During the semester
Workload	90h
Weeks	14
Hours	3 weekly
Courses	2 weekly
Project	1 weekly
Number of positions	60

Summary

Globalization is the linguistic omnivore of our times. This course addresses the long history of worldwide encounters and goes behind the rosy vision of a global village. It gives particular attention to inequalities and to the men and women who fought for alternatives to capitalism.

Content

Globalization rose to conceptual stardom in the 1990s, when the ascent of Western liberal democracy and capitalism looked irresistible. For some time, that triumph seemed to herald the “end of history,” as political scientist Francis Fukuyama wrote in 1989, the year the Berlin Wall fell. Since that period, nationalism, wars, racism and inequalities have vastly invalidated the rosy vision of a global village of cultural exchange and of ever-greater understanding.

This course will show that globalization has had a longer history. Corporations did not wait for a label to be created to invest and make profits on a global scale. Religions and ideologies conquered the world and inspired revolutions long before CNN, Facebook and Twitter spread information in real time. Colonialism created empires on which the sun never set, exploiting racism and inequalities that still haunt our world.

This course will investigate the various dimensions of globalization (economic, political, social, military, cultural and environmental) to help students question our contemporary reality from a historical perspective. Over the course of the class, we will question the view of globalization as a linear, Western, homogenizing process and investigate the power struggles that shaped the advance of capitalism worldwide. We will go behind the rosy narrative of an ever more integrated world and give particular attention to the social, political and economic inequalities within different assemblages of territories and in terms of authority and rights across time and space (Saskia Sassen). We will also investigate the roles of the men and women who fought for alternatives to capitalism.

The course will be divided into two related semesters. During the fall, we will become acquainted with the vast literature on globalization. We will also visit some international organizations in Geneva to become familiar with those crucial actors of our globalized world. In the spring, students will use the knowledge they gathered during the previous semester to write an original historical research paper investigating one aspect of globalization.

Keywords

History - Globalisation - Inequalities - Capitalism

POLY-perspective :

- global perspective
- citizen perspective

<https://www.epfl.ch/schools/cdh/cdhs-vision/>

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, the student must be able to:

- Define and construct a case study using as a starting point a general question.
- Formulate a specific question related to the topic of the course
- Situate the question temporally and spatially.
- Identify, analyse and explain the principal characteristics of your question
- Respond appropriately to a critical comment
- Draft a coherent argument.
- Give an oral presentation explaining the issues relevant to the subject of the written report.
- Formulate and suggest constructive criticism of another report.

Transversal skills

- Set objectives and design an action plan to reach those objectives.
- Communicate effectively with professionals from other disciplines.
- Give feedback (critique) in an appropriate fashion.
- Demonstrate the capacity for critical thinking
- Take feedback (critique) and respond in an appropriate manner.
- Access and evaluate appropriate sources of information.
- Make an oral presentation.
- Write a scientific or technical report.

Teaching methods

The course will be divided into two related semesters. During the fall, we will become acquainted with the vast literature on globalization. We will also visit some international organizations in Geneva to become familiar with those crucial actors of our globalized world. In the spring, students will use the knowledge they gathered during the previous semester to write an original historical research paper investigating one aspect of globalization.

Expected student activities

Class attendance; reading and oral presentation of books and scientific articles; written report investigating one particular aspect of globalization in a historical perspective. Further details will be provided at the start of the course.

Assessment methods

Evaluation on a semester basis (grade associated to 3 ECTS). During the fall semester, the evaluation will be based on an oral presentation and a short description of ideas for the research paper. The evaluation of the spring semester is based on the written report and an oral presentation.

Supervision

Assistants	Yes
Others	The teacher and the assistant can be contacted at all times by e-mail.

Resources

Bibliography

A space will be available on the Moodle platform.

A bibliography list will be distributed at the beginning of the course.