

## **SEMINAR IN AMERICAN POLITICS: NEOLIBERALISM AND GLOBALIZATION**

Spring Semester 2002

Political Science 329  
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Class Time: M 2-4:30  
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The title of this course suggests that we will take on two very large and complex topics, neoliberalism and globalization. Neoliberalism is the reigning philosophy of our age, and yet a great many people – including, no doubt, many of you – do not actually know what it means. Rather than offering a concise definition or even a set of readings that might demystify the term, we will spend the entire semester considering its meaning and its impact on today's world (we will, in other words, proceed through an inductive rather than a deductive method). It will quickly become apparent that globalization cannot possibly be understood without simultaneously entangling ourselves in a discussion of neoliberalism. And thus I beg the question of what this course deals with, but somewhere in the first class discussion the topic will begin to emerge.

### **Course Requirements:**

Please note that the course schedule booklet lists POLS 101 or POLS 200 as prerequisites for this course. Except in unusual cases I will enforce this requirement. Note also that graduate students taking this course will meet with me separately to discuss additional assignments.

This course will be run in a seminar style, composed of a mixture of brief presentations by me, and a considerable amount of discussion involving every student in the class. I may call on anyone at any time to comment on the readings or even to assist in the presentation; therefore, be prepared to participate at all times. You should keep in mind that a substantial proportion of your course grade depends upon your participation and preparation for class. To this end, I ask you to observe a few ground rules:

(1) You are required to read the course material before each week's class, according to the schedule outlined in the syllabus. I really can't overstate the importance of this particular requirement. In a course of this size, you will not be able to hide if you're not prepared. Note that the quality of your class participation counts for 20 percent of your grade. To avoid confusion or ambiguity, here's how attendance will affect your participation grade: You may miss up to two classes free, no questions asked (this factors in unforeseen events such as illness, traffic, etc.). The third miss will result in a one-half grade deduction from your attendance grade, and each additional miss will result in an additional one-half grade deduction. Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access and participation in this course must be registered with the Office of Disability Services (312-413-0123).

(2) Two essays synthesizing the course material are required, on the dates indicated in the syllabus. There is, in addition, a topics paper assignment designed to get you to read and analyze current reporting on globalization. I will hand out the essay instructions at least one week in advance (but usually much more). Each of the essays counts for 25 percent of the course grade. The topics paper counts for 30 percent of the course grade. Note that two paper assignments are due at the end of the semester. Before you panic, be aware that by then you will have virtually completed the topics paper.

Requirements and instructions for the research paper will be described (as for the two essays) in a separate hand-out. All instruction sheets distributed during the semester are part of the course syllabus. You should therefore make sure you obtain each of them before undertaking a paper assignment.

The books available in the bookstore are:

Benjamin R. Barber, Jihad vs. McWorld. Ballantine Books.

Thomas L. Friedman, The Lexus and the Olive Tree. Anchor Books.

William Greider, One World, Ready or Not. Simon and Schuster.

J. M. Blaut, The Colonizer's Model of the World. Guilford.

**AN IMPORTANT REMINDER:** The bookstore returns books to distributors at the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> week (by my calculations, that is the week of February 25 this semester). If you wait to buy books until after that date you may have to do so through Amazon.com or through a special book order. It's your call; just be mindful that your failure to buy books on time does not become my problem, or an excuse not to read any of the readings on time.

If you request, I will place any or all of the required books on reserve. Believe it or not, many of the personal copies I've placed on reserve over the years have come back to me marked up. It almost embarrasses me to even ask, but please do not write marginal notes in any book placed on reserve!

### **SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNED READINGS**

January 7. Introduction to the course.

#### **I. A Clash of Cultures**

January 14. Benjamin R. Barber, Jihad vs. McWorld, both introductions and Part I.

January 21. Martin Luther Kings' Birthday. **No class.**

January 28. Barber, Parts II & III.

## **II. A Celebration of Capitalism**

February 4. Thomas L. Friedman, The Lexus and the Olive Tree, Opening Scene and Part I.

February 11. Friedman, Part II.

February 18. Friedman, Part III.

**Monday, February 25. First Essay Due.**

## **III. Joining the Debate**

February 25. William Greider, One World, Ready or Not, Part One.

March 4. Greider, Part Two.

March 11. Greider, Part Three.

**March 18. Spring Break!**

March 25. Greider, Part Four.

## **IV. Who's World Is It?**

April 1. J. M. Blaut, The Colonizer's Model of the World, Chapter 2 1 & 2.

April 8. Blaut, Chapter 3.

April 15. Blaut, Chapters 4 & 5.

April 22. A summing up.

**Monday, April 29. Two assignments due: Third Essay and Topics Paper.**