GLOBALIZATION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE
Proposed Syllabus

Course Description

This course examines the global dimensions of campaigns for social justice, exploring their formation, activities, and strategies for change, weighing the opportunities and constraints in mobilizing against inequality in the global and national arenas. The course is organized chronologically and thematically. The first half covers movements active through the 1980s and early 1990s, including campaigns for the end of slavery, women’s suffrage, civil rights, peace, and democracy. The second half considers examples from the 1990s through to the present day, like those on violence, health, labor rights, and citizen participation. In promoting a dialogue between theories and empirical evidence, the course seeks to inspire critical reflection over the means and ends of achieving greater justice at home and abroad.

Course Requirements

This course seeks to introduce students to basic concepts and debates on globalization and social justice via several interrelated course assignments:

- **Class participation**, which includes not only coming to class and participating in the discussions, but also co-leading one session with the professor
- **Research paper**, which involves in-depth research on one movement in particular
- **Submission and comments on news items**, which entails posting links and discussing news items touching on course-related themes at least once a week on a group Facebook page

COURSE SCHEDULE

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Week 1: Social Movements and Transnational Activism

This week introduces a variety of theoretical frameworks in the study of social movements, including recent modifications and extensions inspired by the dynamics of transnational contention, as activists come together across national borders to lobby governments and international organizations for change.


Week 2: Global Diffusion and International Norms

This week presents a variety of models for understanding the global diffusion of new political values and policy innovations, exploring the role of domestic and transnational social movements and international organizations vis-à-vis state actors.


**Week 3: Norms and Hierarchy in International Society**

This week addresses critiques to traditional models of norm diffusion, emphasizing inequalities in the global system shaping which states are most vulnerable to international pressures and ways in which domestic activists take steps to influence how global norms are translated locally.


**Week 4: Abolitionist and Women’s Suffrage Campaigns**

This week explores two early examples of transnational mobilization for social and political justice, the anti-slavery and women’s suffrage campaigns of the eighteenth century.


**Week 5: Civil Rights Campaigns**

This week offers a new perspective on the U.S. civil rights movement, connecting it to the international politics of the Cold War, and examines efforts to connect the concept of civil rights to the disabled.


Week 6: Student Movements

This week provides a survey of student activism globally, drawing on both historical and contemporary examples, to map links between student movements and broader social, economic, and political change.


Week 7: Anti-Nuclear and Peace Movements

This week presents an overview of several inter-linked campaigns of the international peace movement, analyzing differences in how anti-nuclear mobilization developed across various countries.


Week 8: The Protests in Tiananmen Square

This week examines the events leading up to the Tiananmen Square Massacre in China in 1989, focusing on various firsthand accounts as well as the role of the international media.


Week 9: The Fall of Communism in Eastern and Central Europe

This week maps the events associated with the fall of Communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe, focusing on the diffusion of popular uprisings across the region and the various methods of protest used.


Week 10: Global Norms and the Spread of Human Rights

This week explores the global diffusion of human rights, focusing in particular on the calculations made by authoritarian regimes when signing international human rights declarations.


**Week 11: Women’s Human Rights and Violence Against Women**

This week examines how discourses of human rights were linked to efforts to combat violence against women via an international campaign arguing that “women’s rights are human rights.”


**Week 12: Health and Human Rights**

This week addresses intersections between health and human rights, linking political and economic justice to the suffering and illness of the powerless and exploring options for a better future.


**Week 13: Anti-Sweatshop Activism and Corporate Codes of Conduct**

This week reviews campaigns for social justice in the garment industry, covering the roles played by – among others – students, consumers, and multinational corporations.


Week 14: Social Networking and the Arab Spring

This week addresses the role of new media like Facebook and Twitter in shaping popular protest today, focusing on the democratic uprisings across the Middle East in the Arab Spring of 2011.


Week 15: Conclusions and Student Presentations

This week will focus on reviewing the materials covered during the semester via short presentations by each student on their respective research projects. Students will prepare an overview of their theoretical ideas and their main empirical findings, for comments from the class prior to handing in the final version.