

Globalization in the Modern Era: Global Labor

Last Updated: Sun, 12/28/2025

Course prefix: HTS

Course number: 3055

Section: A

CRN (you may add up to five):
28813

Instructor First Name: Bhumika

Instructor Last Name: Chauhan

Semester: Spring

Academic year: 2026

Course description:

This course introduces students to the concept of globalization through an in-depth examination of how the global economy connects workers from cities and villages around the world within transnational labor processes. Emphasizing the labor process and the lived experiences of workers, students will gain a grounded understanding of the global economy and the forces driving offshoring, migration, and the global labor movement. A central question guiding the course is: What is the relationship between workers in wealthy and poorer nations? Does the globalization of production create inherent conflict between them, or can shared interests foster solidarity? Students will map global supply chains and analyze how they perpetuate and exploit global inequalities, situating these dynamics within the historical context of colonialism. Through case studies of everyday goods and services—such as our cars, clothes, food, and electronics—produced by multinational corporations like General Motors, Amazon, Nike, and Walmart, students will critically examine the implications of globalized production for the global community and their own working lives.

Course learning outcomes:

- Gain a familiarity with key sociological theories and recent empirical research about globalization, and learn to apply them.
- Analyze the complexity of global processes, such as offshoring and immigration, and appreciate their impact on your life.
- Critically understand why global inequalities persist, and what recent transnational social movements have attempted.

- **Skills:** critically reading social scientific research; identifying and using scholarly sources; communicating social scientific research.

Required course materials:

All of the readings are posted on Canvas. There are no course readers or required books. You should have access to the readings during our class meetings as per the course schedule.

Grading policy:

Assignments, Deadlines, and Grading:

Class participation (20% of final grade)

Writing and speaking in class is essential practice for learning new concepts. While each class will involve an element of lecture, students will be expected to participate in class discussions as individuals as well as through group work. Hence, students are required to read the readings before class. As you read the materials for class, you are encouraged to write memos for every reading. A good memo will (1) summarize the key arguments, key concepts, and the evidence provided, (2) evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the evidence and argument, (3) reflect on how the reading relates to previous readings and class discussions, (4) things that are not clear to you about the argument, and (5) pose 1-2 questions about the readings. These elements will help you participate in class discussions the next day.

In-class open-book exam (30% of final grade, March 19):

This exam is designed as a **checkpoint for your learning**, not a high-pressure test. It will give you an opportunity to reflect on and apply the ideas we've explored together.

- **Format:** You'll answer **three short-answer questions (300-500 words each)** from a set of five.
- **Content:** All questions will come from the readings and discussions we've already covered in class. If you've been engaged and taken notes, you're already well-prepared.
- **Allowed reference materials:** You may bring printouts of the course readings to class. Laptops or other devices are not allowed.
- **Goal:** The exam is about demonstrating your understanding of key concepts and making connections between readings—not memorizing details.
- **Support:** If you have questions or want to review strategies, please come to office hours.

Class Presentation (50% of final grade, last two weeks of class)

Your final project is an 8-minute class presentation. You can choose to focus on offshoring or immigration.

1. You will choose a commodity, firm, or industry as your case study and discuss how the global production or immigration links workers of a Global North country and a Global South country in this case.
2. Tell us why this case is important to you, and why it's sociologically interesting?
3. You should find ONE academic book or TWO journal articles about your case that go beyond the course readings.
4. You must also clearly engage with the relevant concepts from the course and as well as the relevant course material.
5. Extra credit: You will analyze one primary data source (original interviews, news reports, labor market surveys, government or international agency reports, documentaries, online forums/chats/social media) about workers in a Global North country and workers in a Global South country in your chosen case.

Note that this assignment is about showing that you have engaged with the course readings and can apply what you learned to a new situation.

Points to Grades:

A (90-100), B (80-89), C (<70-79), D (60-69), F (<60)

Late assignments

The policy for late assignments is that you will need a documented health, funeral, or university-sponsored excuse for turning in late assignments at full credit. Assignments turned in after their due dates without an excuse will receive a drop in letter grade every two days beyond their due date.

Accommodations

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at 404.894.2563 or their website as soon as possible to discuss your needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Then, make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss your learning needs.

Attendance policy:

Attendance will be taken in every class period, and this will determine the classroom participation grade listed above. Class attendance is central to your learning in this course,

and a lot of important material will be introduced during class that will go beyond the readings. Missing too many classes will impact your ability to follow subsequent classes and do your assignments.

But life happens! Excused and documented absences will not affect the participation grade, though. If you will be missing a class, please send a brief email in advance so that your class participation grade is not impacted. If you're unwell, please get a doctor's note. If you have a sports meeting, please get a letter from your coach. Prioritize your health and stay home if you're unwell. If you are unable to attend class for **three consecutive meetings due to a prolonged illness**, please send along a doctor's note and see the Accommodations section below. If you feel you are having trouble catching up, please set an appointment for office hours.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

Academic misconduct is described fully in two documents: the [Student Code of Conduct](#) and the [Academic Honor Code](#). The Student Code of Conduct outlines the Institute's expectations for academic and nonacademic conduct as well as students' rights and seeks to foster an environment conducive to academic excellence. The Code outlines nine charges that apply to academic misconduct. The [Georgia Tech Academic Honor Code](#) is a guide that articulates [student and faculty expectations](#); it is designed to strengthen the level of academic integrity and trust within the Tech community. As described in the Academic Honor Code, faculty members are expected to create an environment where honesty flourishes.

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social, or geographic relationships develop, persist, or change.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Intercultural Competence
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion