

223.41 • Global Problems and Change (3 hrs.)
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Providence College
Fall Session, 2010
Mondays 12:40 – 3:15

SYLLABUS

A. Calendar Description of the Course

An examination of the nature and processes of contemporary social problems and change at both the societal and global levels. Special attention will be given to issues of economic, political, and cultural globalization, and their effect on selected social problems such as technology, environment, war, crime, addictions, poverty, and human trafficking.

“For every thousand hacking at the leaves of evil, there is one striking at the roots.”

- Henry David Thoreau

“The future enters into us in order to transform itself in us, long before it happens.”

- Rainer Maria Rilke

B. Purpose of the Course

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. summarize and characterize the sociological sub-disciplines of social problems, social movements, and social change;
 2. compare the various theoretical perspectives that sociologists use to study global problems and change, in contrast to other academic disciplines;
 3. outline various dimensions and consequences of globalization as the predominant current form of social change;
 4. identify and describe the social dynamics of selected social problems both in Canada and globally, and the implicit ideological debates within them;
 5. overview the role and effectiveness of various social activist organizations seeking to address social problems, demonstrating particular familiarity with one;
 6. articulate a Christian perspective of social problems and change, that both critiques sociological perspectives of the same, and in turn is critiqued by sociological perspectives;
 7. interpret the extent to which his or her own life is both affected by and a contribution to global problems and change, and thereby enhance self-understanding;
 8. express encouragement toward her or his own potential for more enlightened, constructive, and sustainable living as a Christian citizen-activist;
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Note re. Syllabus:

It is the student's responsibility to retain their course syllabi for use as support for possible future applications to other educational institutions for transfer of credit.

9. display an appreciation for the interconnectedness of human life, and a deep sense of responsibility for the well-being of human life.

C. Textbooks

REQUIRED:

Eitzen, D. Stanley and Maxine Baca Zinn, eds. 2009. *Globalization: The Transformation of Social Worlds* 2nd ed. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Hunter, James Davison. 2010. *To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy, and Possibility of Christianity in the Late Modern World*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

All assigned collateral readings are available as PDF documents under Course Readings at www.provsoc.org .

RECOMMENDED:

Barber, Benjamin. 2007. *Consumed: How Markets Corrupt Children, Infantilize Adults, and Swallow Citizens Whole*. New York: W.W. Norton.

Bornstein, David. 2007. *How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Bouma-Prediger, Steven and Brian Walsh. 2008. *Beyond Homelessness: Christian Faith in a Culture of Displacement*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Bouma-Prediger, Steven. 2010. *For the Beauty of the Earth: A Christian Vision for Creation Care*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Brown, Lester. 2007. *Plan B 3.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilization*. New York: W.W. Norton.

Brown, Tricia Gates. 2004. *Free People: A Christian Response to Global Economics*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers.

Cannon, Mae Elise. 2009. *Social Justice Handbook: Small Steps to a Better World*. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Claiborne, Shane. 2006. *The Irresistible Revolution: Living as an Ordinary Radical*. HarperCollins Canada.

- Eitzen, D. Stanley and Kenneth Stewart, eds. 2007. *Solutions to Social Problems: From the Bottom Up: Successful Social Movements*. Toronto: Pearson.
- Fraser, Evan D. G., and Andrew Rimes. 2010. *Empires of Food: Feast, Famine, and the Rise and Fall of Civilizations*. New York: Free Press.
- Goudzwaard, Bob, Mark Vander Vennen, and David Van Heemst. 2007. *Hope in Troubled Times: A New Vision for Confronting Global Crises*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.
- Haugen, G. 2006. *Good News about Injustice: A Witness of Courage in a Hurting World*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Haugen, Gary. 2008. *Just Courage: God's Great Expedition for the Restless Christian*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Hawken, Paul. 2007. *Blessed Unrest: How the Largest Movement in the World Came into Being and Why No One Saw It Coming*. Viking Press.
- Kendall, D., V. Nygaard, and E. G. Thompson. 2010. *Social Problems in a Diverse Society* 3rd Canadian ed. Toronto: Pearson.
- Klein, Naomi. 2007. *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*. Toronto: Knopf Canada.
- Kraybill, Donald B. 2003. *The Upside-Down Kingdom* rev. ed. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press.
- Laxer, Gordon and Dennis Soron. 2006. *Not for Sale: Decommodifying Public Life*. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press.
- Lechner, Frank J. and John Boli, eds. 2008. *The Globalization Reader* 3rd ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- McKibben, Bill. 2007. *Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future*. Times Publishing.
- McLaren, Brian, Elisa Padilla, Ashley Bunting Seeber, eds. 2009. *The Justice Project*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.
- Pieterse, Jan Nederveen. 2004. *Globalization or Empire?* New York: Routledge.
- Rebick, Judy. 2009. *Transforming Power: From the Personal to the Political*. Toronto: Penguin Press.
- Ritzer, George. 2010. *Globalization: A Basic Text*. Toronto: Wiley-Blackwell.

- Robbins, Richard H. 2010. *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism* 5th ed. Toronto: Pearson.
- Smith, Miriam, ed. 2008. *Group Politics and Social Movements in Canada*. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press.
- Spencer, Nick, Robert White, and Virginia Vroblesky. 2010. *Christianity, Climate Change, and Sustainable Living*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson.
- Stackhouse, Max. 2007. *God and Globalization: Volume 4: Globalization and Grace*. Continuum.
- Staggenborg, Suzanne. 2008. *Social Movements*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Stiglitz, Joseph E. 2010. *Freefall: America, Free Markets, and the Sinking of the World Economy*. New York: W. W. Norton.
- Tilly, Charles and Lesley J. Wood. 2009. *Social Movements, 1768-2008*. 2nd ed. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.
- Vago, Steven. 2004. *Social Change* 5th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

NOTES:

A list of **Social Dissent Websites** is posted in your Blackbaud student portal under “Shared Documents” for this course

Students should familiarize themselves with the following **Websites**:

Globalization101.org, a project of the Carnegie Endowment
at <http://globalization101.org>

The New Internationalist at <http://www.newint.org/>

Society for the Study of Social Problems, at <http://www.sssp1.org/>

This organization also publishes the leading journal: *Social Problems*

Sojourners: Christians for Justice and Peace, at <http://www.sojo.net>

This organization also publishes the magazine: *Sojourners*

The Veritas Forum: Social Justice at <http://veritas.org/media/topics/45>

D. Course Requirements

1. Reading Checks (15%)

At the beginning of each class, one question about each of the readings assigned for that class will appear on the PowerPoint screen, to be answered on a slip of paper and submitted immediately. Questions will require an answer of a word, phrase, but no more than a sentence. These questions will enable you to demonstrate whether you have completed the assigned reading on time with rudimentary comprehension. They can only be answered at the time they are given to the whole class; late-comers or absentees will forego the opportunity for credit for that reading. Your grade for this component of the course will accumulate throughout the semester.

2. Personal Reflections and Closing Exercise (3 x 5% = 15%)

For the two Personal Reflections, write a 2-3 page informal reflection on selected course material that demonstrates your personal interaction with it, and functions as a form of journaling. No further study beyond doing the assigned readings and participating in class discussion is required. Comment on ideas or analyses presented in the preceding unit of the course that have interested or impressed you the most, explaining why you think they are significant. In order to develop your reflections meaningfully, you should limit your focus to the topics of one or two classes/readings. For the Closing Exercise, which will be similar to a reflection but also presented orally in class, instructions will be given in class a week in advance of the due date.

Reflection Paper on Unit I: Theory

Reflection Paper on Unit II: Globalization

Closing Exercise after Unit III

Due Date:

October 4

November 1

December 6

3. Panel Summary (15%)

The second unit of the course (Globalization) will proceed primarily through students serving on a panel which summarizes and discusses extra readings. All students will do all the basic assigned reading for each topic, but a subgroup of 3-4 students will do extra reading on a topic for which they sign up and present a summary to the class. Each subgroup will serve as a panel, in which each panel member first presents their 10-15 minute summary of the extra reading they did, and then together with the instructor and other panelists discusses the topic in light of the basic assigned readings and the other summaries. As part of their report, each student must prepare a 1-page outline of their summary as a handout to distribute to the rest of the class. Though the rest of the class will be primarily

an audience to the discussion, it will nevertheless be encouraged to interact with the panel in a supplementary manner. Each panel must include summaries from the following books on reserve for this course in the library:

- The relevant chapter(s) from George Ritzer, 2010. *Globalization: A Basic Text*. Wiley-Blackwell
- A selection from the relevant section(s) in Ritzer & Atalay, 2010. *Readings in Globalization: Key Concepts and Major Debates*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- A selection from the relevant section(s) in Lechner & Boli, 2008. *The Globalization Reader*, 3rd ed. Blackwell.

The topics are as follows:

Oct. 18 Economic Globalization

Ritzer ch.8 “Global Economic Flows”

Ritzer & Atalay Pt.I “Political Economy”

Lechner & Boli Pt.IV “Economic Globalization”

Political Globalization

Ritzer ch.6 “Global Political Structures and Processes”

Ritzer & Atalay Pt.I “Political Economy”

Lechner & Boli Pt.V & VI “Political Globalization I & II”

Oct. 25 Cultural Globalization

Ritzer ch.9 “Global Culture and Cultural Flows”

Ritzer & Atalay Pt.II “Culture”

Lechner & Boli Pt.VII & VIII “Cultural Globalization”

Resisting Globalization

Ritzer ch.16 “Dealing with, Resisting, and The Futures of Globalization”

Ritzer & Atalay Pt.1 “Political Economy”

Lechner & Boli Pt.X “Resisting Globalization”

Further details will be provided and sign-up will occur in the second class of the course. How many panels each student serves on will depend on course enrolment.

4. Christian Perspective Paper (25%)

Due Date: November 8

Write an 8-10 page paper comprised of two halves. The first half of the paper must be a book review of Hunter's *To Change the World*. The second half of the paper should articulate your own Christian perspective of global social problems and/or change in general, or one problem in particular. As a general guideline, you should have approximately the same number of references as there are pages to your paper, and no more than half of the references may be from internet sources other than on-line academic journals, government agencies, or credible public organizations. Your paper should demonstrate that you have done independent research and reading beyond the assigned readings, that you have thought carefully and/or reorganized your topic in an original manner, and that you can express yourself in writing clearly and effectively. It will be graded on the quality of its content (15%), rhetoric (5%), and technical competence (5%). ASA format is required (see "The Bare Basics of ASA Documentation" in your Blackbaud student portal under "Shared Documents" for this course). Help in all aspects of essay writing can be found in the *Providence College Academic Formation Guide* available in the Providence Bookstore. See also the study help posted under Shared Documents in your Blackbaud student portal entitled "How to Write a Book Review."

5. Public Advocacy Paper (10%)

Due Date: November 22

Research any local or global social problem/issue of your choice. Then write a 500 word article expressing your concern and/or perspective about the problem/issue, and send it as one of the following:

- a) a letter to the editor of a newspaper or magazine
- b) a letter to an organization or elected/public official
- c) an opinion piece that you submit to a newspaper or magazine

The Providence College administration or student newspaper do not qualify as acceptable recipients! Many organizations such as Amnesty International have many letter-writing helps on their websites.

After you have emailed your submission to the organization or official, forward your email to me for your course assignment credit. Attach to your forward the sources you consulted in researching your submission. Your grade for the assignment is not dependent on whether your submission is published, or whether it draws a response, but I will nevertheless be curious, and would like to know – please keep me informed!

6. Organization Analysis (20%)

Due Date: November 29

Write a 5-page research report about one particular organization (e.g. Greenpeace), social movement (e.g. micro-finance), event (e.g. Quebec City Summit of the Americas protest), or social activist (e.g. Vandana Shiva) involved in addressing a particular social problem. Your report should describe the problem (which could be one not covered in the classes of this course), the history of the organization, what they are doing about the problem, how they compare to other organizations involved in the same field, who joins the organization and how they do so, how effective the organization has been, what else could or should be done about the problem, etc. Each student will also give a 10 minute oral report to the class on the due date, during which you are expected to use a PowerPoint presentation and distribute a one-page summary of your report to your classmates.

Sample sources for ideas include the Social Dissent Websites posted in your Blackbaud student portal under “Shared Documents” for this course, and the following books on reserve in the library:

Bornstein, David. 2007. *How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas*.

Eitzen, D. Stanley and Kenneth Stewart, eds. 2007. *Solutions to Social Problems: From the Bottom Up: Successful Social Movements*.

Robbins, Richard H. 2010. *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism* 5th ed. Chapters 10-12.

Tilly, Charles and Lesley J. Wood. 2009. *Social Movements, 1768-2008*. 2nd ed.

E. Grading Summary

1. Grade Components

Reading Checks	15%
Personal Reflections	15% (3 x 5%)
Panel Summary	15%
Christian Perspective Paper	25%
Public Advocacy Paper	10%
Organization Analysis	20%

Note: The last date for **Voluntary Withdrawal** from this course is Friday, Nov. 12.

2. Grading Scale

Final course letter grades and their Grade Point equivalents will be calculated using the following scale:

<i>Percent</i>	<i>G.P.</i>	<i>Quality</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>G.P.</i>	<i>Quality</i>
91 – 99 = A+	4.0	Exceptional	67 – 69 = C+	2.5	Satisfactory
85 – 90 = A		Excellent	63 – 66 = C	2.0	Adequate
80 – 84 = A-			60 – 62 = C-		
77 – 79 = B+	3.5	Superior	57 – 59 = D+	1.0	Marginal
73 – 76 = B	3.0	Good	53 – 56 = D		Poor
70 – 72 = B-			50 – 52 = D-		
			< 50 = F	0.0	Failure

F. Course Policies

The full text of the academic policies, procedures and regulations of Providence College can be found online in the Student Handbook

(http://www.providencecollege.ca/college/student_life/) and the College Academic Calendar

(http://www.providencecollege.ca/college/programs/registrars_office/calendar/).

1. Class Attendance

Full attendance at all classes is expected, because active listening, thinking, and discussing are primary learning experiences in this course. While I am committed to making the classes as interesting and informative as possible, it is neither my role nor my gift to be an entertainer. I am happy to give additional assistance outside the classes to students who find themselves struggling with course material, but only to those who have demonstrated the self-discipline to attend all the classes they possibly can.

2. ICTs in Class

Student use of information and communication technologies for purposes other than class note-taking is not allowed in the classroom, as students are expected to give their total attention to class activities. Use of cell-phones or ipods is never appropriate in the classroom, and use of laptop computers to play games, write blogs, chat with others, browse the internet, or engage material not related to the class is always distracting to classmates and disrespectful to the instructor. While some instructors here at Providence College and other universities have begun banning laptop computers and other ICTs from the classroom, as have I in my

Introduction to Sociology course, I am expecting you more senior students in this course not to abuse the privilege of using laptops for note-taking in class.

3. Academic Integrity

Students are expected to demonstrate academic integrity in all its various forms, and will be held accountable for doing so by the policy on Academic Conduct in the Student Handbook (http://www.providencecollege.ca/college/student_life/). One particularly problematic breach of academic integrity is plagiarism, which is stealing from the ideas and writings of another person and passing them off as one's own. For an elaboration of the nature, types, and prevention of plagiarism, see the document entitled "Academic Dishonesty: The Problem of Plagiarism in Academic Writing" posted under Shared Documents in your Blackbaud student portal.

4. Late Assignments

Assignments will not be accepted after their due date; a grade of zero will be given for that component of the course. Furthermore, I will **not** receive requests for due date extensions. If you feel an extension is warranted, attach a cover letter to your assignment when you hand it in, explaining why it is late, and I will make a decision if and when your paper is graded. Assigning a late penalty (usually 10% or one letter grade per week) or waiving the zero grade will be considered only in the cases of medical or personal emergencies as detailed in the cover letter. Computer problems, conflicts with co-curricular activities, changes in employment schedules, or competition for library resources do not constitute such personal emergencies. Failure to plan ahead, or to maintain a margin of time for unforeseen events prior to the due date, does not warrant an extension either.

G. Class Schedule

The readings listed under each class topic are to be read prior to that class. All assigned readings from other than the course text (Eitzen & Zinn = E&Z) are posted under Course Readings at www.provsoc.org. I reserve the right to assign additional readings during the course of the term or to alter the schedule of topics as I see fit.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading Check</u>
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Sept. 13	Orientation to the Course	
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UNIT I: Theory

Introduction to Social Problems

Sept. 20	Overview of Social Change	
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Urmetzer, Peter. 2010. "Marx, Globalization, and Modernity: What is Old Becomes New Again." In *Seeing Ourselves: Classic, Contemporary, and Cross-Cultural Readings in Sociology* 3rd Canadian Edition.

Eglitis, Daina Stukuls. 2007. "The Uses of Global Poverty: How Economic Inequality Benefits the West." In *Seeing Ourselves: Classic, Contemporary, and Cross-cultural Readings in Sociology* 2nd Canadian ed.

Martin Luther King, Jr. 1963. "Letter from a Birmingham Jail."

Sept. 27	Strategies of Social Change	
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Meyer, David S. 2007. "How Social Movements Matter." In *Solutions to Social Problems: From the Bottom Up: Successful Social Movements*.

Jeremy Rifkin, 2010, "The Empathic Civilization," RSA Animate <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7AWnfFRc7g&feature=related>

Christians and Social Justice

Smith, Christian. 2001. "Correcting a Curious Neglect, or Bringing Religion Back In." In *Sociology of Religion: A Reader*.

Stewart, Brian. 2004. "On the Front Lines."

"A Social Creed for the 21st Century"

"Poverty-Stricken Africans Receive Desperately Need Bibles"
The Onion, 2006

UNIT II: Globalization

Oct. 4 Introduction to Globalization **First Reflection Due**

Eitzen & Zinn. 2009. Ch. 1. "Globalization: An Introduction"
Eitzen & Zinn. 2009. Ch. 2. "Dimensions of Globalization"

Oct. 11 **Thanksgiving (classes cancelled)**

Oct. 18 Economic Globalization (student panel)

Eitzen & Zinn. 2009. Ch. 4. "Economic Globalization"
Ghemawat. 2009. "Why the World Isn't Flat." In E&Z, #6

Political Globalization (student panel)

Eitzen & Zinn. 2009. Ch. 5. "Political Globalization"

Oct. 25 Cultural Globalization (student panel)

Eitzen & Zinn. 2009. Ch. 6. "Cultural Globalization"
Finsterbusch, Kurt, ed. 2008. "Will the Clash of Civilizations be
the Dominant Struggle of the Twenty-First Century?" In
Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Social Issues 14th ed.

Resisting Globalization (student panel)

Weidenbaum. 2009. "Globalization: Wonder Land or Waste
Land?" E&Z, #7
Brecher, Costello, & Smith. 2009. "Globalization and Social
Movements." In E&Z, #37
Marable. 2009. "Globalization and Racialization." In E&Z, #38

UNIT III: Selected Social Problems

Nov. 1 Technology **Second Reflection Due**

Drori, Gili S. 2006. "Understanding the Conceptual Origins and
Expanding the Scope." In *Global E-Litism: Digital
Technology, Social Inequality, and Transnationality*.

Barber, Benjamin R. 2006. "The Uncertainty of Digital Politics: Democracy's Uneasy Relationship with Information Technology." In *Globalization: The Transformation of Social Worlds*.

Ecology

Field. 2009. "Global Warming." In E&Z, #36 3pp

McKenzie, Judith I. 2008. "The Environmental Movement in Canada: Retreat or Resurgence?" In *Group Politics and Social Movements in Canada*.

Toly, Noah J. 2005. "Climate Change and Climate Change Policy as Human Sacrifice: Artifice, Idolatry, and Environment in a Technological Society." *Christian Scholar's Review*, 35, 1:63-78.

Nov. 8

Crime and Criminal Justice

Christian Perspective Paper Due

Sager, et al. 2009. "The Underground Web." In E&Z, #30

Schapiro. 2009. "Big Tobacco." In E&Z, #31

Komisar. 2009. "Explosive Revelation\$" In E&Z, #32

Human Trafficking

Stein. 2009. "No Way Out." In E&Z, #33

Cockburn. 2009. "21st Century Slaves." In E&Z, #34

Gutnick, David. 2008. "Fishing for My Master in Ghana."

Nov. 15

War and Terrorism

Eitzen & Zinn. 2009. Ch. 8. "The Globalization of Terror"

Altheide, David L. 2011. "Consuming Terrorism." In *Inside Social Life: Readings in Sociological Psychology and Microsociology* 6th ed.

Migration and Tourism

Batten, Manlove, & Gryll. 2009. "Climate Refugees." In E&Z, #35

Bouma-Prediger, Steven and Brian Walsh. 2008. "Postmodern Homelessness." In *Beyond Homelessness: Christian Faith in a Culture of Displacement*.

Lemert, Charles, and Anthony Elliot. 2006. "Introduction." In *Deadly Worlds: The Emotional Costs of Globalization*.

