

FIRST YEAR SEMINAR – FYS 100-43A

Fall 2007—“Globalization”

time: 1:00 – 2:10 pm even days

place: Simons G-40

DR. STEVEN THOMAS

office: Quad 252-B

phone: x2734

e-mail: swthomas@csbsju.edu

office hours:

even days: 2:15—3 pm,

odd days: 1:15—2 pm,

and by appointment

GOALS OF ALL FIRST-YEAR-SEMINARS:

- 1) Improve your writing skills and learn college-level writing along with research and library skills.
- 2) Develop your public speaking skills through active class discussion and oral presentations.
- 3) Develop your reading and critical thinking skills so that you can become a thoughtful and engaged citizen in your community.

THE THEME OF OUR CLASS:

Towards these three goals, we will focus our attention on a current, much hyped, and highly debated issue – “globalization” – which is not only controversial but also very confusing conceptually. We will read articles and some selected pages from books that address the concept of globalization from several different perspectives.

I have chosen this issue for two reasons: (1) it is an issue that affects all other issues (such as environment, religion, sports, music, peace, poverty, health, etc.), and (2) it is an issue that may affect you directly in many ways, some obvious and some not so obvious (such as the culture you live in and the kinds of jobs that will be available to you.)

By reading different perspectives on the issue, talking about them, using them as models for how to write (and how not to write), and developing your own opinion, you will improve your writing, speaking, and thinking skills. Moreover, you will prepare yourself not only for your scholastic career here at The College of St. Benedict and St. John’s University, but also beyond, for whatever career you choose after college.

TEXTS TO BUY AT THE BOOKSTORE FOR FALL SEMESTER:

Naomi Klein, *No Logo* (2002 edition)

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

a handbook (your choice, see course website for details)

COURSE WEBSITE:

<http://www.employees.csbsju.edu/swthomas/FYS.htm>

RECOMMENDED THINGS TO DO BEFORE THE COURSE BEGINS:

- 7:00 pm, Tuesday, August 28th, go to the world premier screening of “The Dying Fields” at St. John’s U. library, AV2 theater
- Watch a movie, any movie (which you can get from the library), that in some way relates to globalization

CURRENT EVENT ASSIGNMENT:

Over the course of the semester, each of you will present to the class about a current event relevant to the theme of globalization. Your presentation will include summarizing a newspaper article and engaging with that article by doing some outside research. On Friday, September 9th, each of you will sign up for days.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

I expect you to come to class everyday, prepared to discuss the reading and do the in-class activity. If you miss more than three days of class, I will lower your overall grade as I deem appropriate.

It is your responsibility – and yours alone – to plan ahead, inform me ahead of time about other commitments or potential issues that you might have (including sports, religion, disability, etc.), and keep up with the assignments.

OVERVIEW

Unit A August 30—September 21

- **Reading Topics:** popular culture, changing job market
- **Skills:** arguing a cause/effect thesis about culture, paragraph structure, using the library
- **Major writing assignments:** you will write and turn-in two papers about culture (one about movies, one about either sports or music). After getting feedback from me, you will choose one of these to revise for a grade
- **Activities:** library game, two ungraded and one graded discussion, presentations by Inter-Cultural Center and Career Center

Unit B September 25—October 22

- **Reading Topics:** trade and the job market, immigration, farming
- **Skills:** writing for an audience – exigency, ethos, plagiarism, and the rhetorical situation
- **Major writing assignments:** (1) you will do a “rhetorical analysis” of an op-ed, editorial, or letter to the editor, and (2) you will write your own letter to the editor of a periodical of your choosing
- **Activities:** in-class discussions

Unit C October 24—November 15

- **Reading Topics:** fair trade vs. free trade, definitions of globalization
- **Skills:** defining terms, focusing an argument, contextualizing one’s position
- **Major writing assignments:** (1) in-class exam on defining globalization; (2) short essay defining a term in the context of an issue of your choosing
- **Activities:** discussions of the reading, in-class debate (graded)

Unit D November 19—December 14

- **Reading Topics:** environment, religion, activism
- **Skills:** moving from definition to action, proposal arguments, refuting counter-arguments
- **Major writing assignment:** short research paper arguing for a course of action or a policy
- **Activities:** in-class discussions; oral progress report on your research paper

Spring 2008 Semester—Looking Ahead

- **Reading Topics:** your own research, novels, and how creative literature addresses globalization
- **Skills:** how to begin and complete a major research paper; the rhetoric of web-design, public speaking, and creative engagement with a community
- **Major writing Assignments:** (1) a large research paper on a topic of your choice. We will break this assignment into several steps – a state-of-the-debate paper, a definition paper, and two drafts of a final paper; (2) web-design – a group project that will bring together the different research agendas of the group’s members; (3) a creative project of your choice
- **Major Activities:** library day, formal oral presentation, civic engagement