Global Citizenship: Theory and Practice
(FRSEM-UA 484; CLASS # 14990)
Deutsches Haus, Washington Mews (University Place)
Monday 2-4:30 pm

Instructor: Vice Provost Ulrich Baer

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

What does it mean to be a global citizen? How can you belong to a community that is defined by a shared sense of purpose, origin, or identity, and yet think of yourself as inextricably in the whole world? What is intercultural competence? Are there universal human rights, or are the rights of people defined by the values of the communities in which they live? Are women’s rights universal? Is the death penalty acceptable? Is physician-assisted suicide acceptable? It is morally defensible to eat animals? Is it okay to hunt whales? Who should pay for polluting the oceans? Are American values universal values? What changes the world: ideas or people? Power or persuasion?

Is there a shared humanity on which one could base an ethical and political system? What happens when we impose our values on others? What are the problems and opportunities that can only be solved jointly, across actual and invisible borders and divisions? How does one learn to think and work across borders? Is it necessary to speak several languages to be a global citizen? How can one live truly in the world, as an inextricably interconnected place, without losing one’s grounding and suffering from alienation and estrangement?

Can you learn to be a global citizen—or are people born global citizens? Can you resist being a global citizen? What are the historical origins of this increasingly important concept, and what are its ramifications for your life in the world today? This seminar will explore the historic origins of the idea of a global citizenship. We will also examine the ethical, philosophical, and aesthetic modes through which global citizenship finds its expression.

The class will include a number of site visits and field trips to NYC area institutions; there will also be several guest speakers in class (filmmakers; designers; writers; businesspeople). You will receive detailed information on each site visit by email.

CLASS FORMAT, EXPECTATIONS, & GRADING
**Prerequisites:**

A willingness to challenge your own assumptions, and to re-consider the values you bring with you to college. A commitment to study hard, ask difficult questions of yourself, be honest in answering them, and have an open mind. The willingness to take yourself and your own work seriously.

**Desired Outcomes:**

Understand and be able to distinguish between the notions of “cosmopolitanism,” “globalization,” and “global citizenship.” Learn how to write an academic essay on a historical, philosophical or moral issue. Understand and be able to participate with solid information in the debates about the advantages and disadvantages of globalization. Learn how to present your own research in various formats, including written assignments, oral presentations, image-based presentations, or video. Learn to see your own values as culturally specific, and to see these values from another point of view. Develop the capacity to think from another perspective.

**Assessment Components:**

Reading Reports (20%): Students are required to submit, by midnight preceding the day of each class, a 300-word (roughly 1 page) reading response. Each week you will be informed which particular assignment to discuss. For academic/philosophical arguments: summarize the argument(s), formulate two questions that address this argument, and state whether you agree with the main points.

In the case of literary texts/films: select one passage or scene, explain its significance in the context of the work, and why – in your view – this passage illustrates the work’s larger concerns.

There will be a total of eight such reports due during the semester.

Class presentations (20%): You will be expected to give at least 1 in-class presentation in a small team.

Two papers of 5 pages each (40%): You are expected to submit these papers in printed paper form, with name, title, date, and instructor’s and seminar’s name, *at the beginning* of class on the day due. Late submissions will be penalized.

Final paper of 5-7 pages (20%): A one-page paper outline, listing the materials to be used, is due April 28. The final paper is due on May 12.

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.

**Assessment Expectations:**
Grade A: Well-argued, eloquent, and carefully edited papers; coherent and well-structured with a clear argument/point and substantiating evidence/citations/examples, well-presented in-class presentation; participation in class based on reflection and readings.

Grade B: Solid written assignment; solid class presentation; participation in class based on reflection and readings.

Grade C: Basic arguments in written form, no evidence of serious reflection beyond the assigned materials. Delivers a Class presentation that competently fulfills the requirement but omits a new perspective or interesting form of presentation. Uneven presentation in class.

If your grade falls below a B by the mid-semester point you are required to meet with the instructor to seek ways to improve your performance in class and written assignments.

Attendance Policy:

You are required to attend all seminar meetings and field trips, arrive on time, and inform the instructor of excused absences (due to illness) as soon as feasible (in advance of class, or soon after the missed class).

READINGS

Required Texts:


Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *A Discourse upon the Origin and the Foundation of the Inequality among Mankind*


*Kwame Anthony Appiah*, Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers

*Roland Barthes*, Empire of Signs

*Mohsin Hamid*, The Reluctant Fundamentalist

*Yu Hua*, China in 10 Words

*Aravind Adiga*, *White Tiger*

Supplemental Texts:
(Not required to purchase as copies are on reserve in NYU library)
Safranski, Rüdiger, *How much Globalisation can we Bear?*  
Manfred Stegner, Globalization  

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

Assignment/Readings:  
Due September 15th, Write reading responses for each of these texts. Please reference “Session 1” in Assignments on NYU classes for important guidelines and pertinent questions. |
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| Session 2: Historical Roots of Modern Cosmopolitanism (September 15th) | Assignment/Readings:  
Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*  
Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Second Discourse*  
Due September 22nd, 1st PAPER (3-5 pgs double spaced) on the Appiah reading due next week. Prompt is on NYU Classes under Assignments: Session 2.  
***United Nations trip next week*** |
| Session 3: Trip to the United Nations - FIRST PAPER DUE (September 22nd) | Assignment/Readings:  
Yu Hua, *China In Ten Words* (Excerpts)  
This reading is in resources in Classes titled “China in Ten Words (Intro, People, and Disparity Chapters)  
Due September 29th, Please write a reading response to this excerpt from Yu Hua’s *China In Ten Words*. Please reference “Session 3” in Assignments on NYU classes for important guidelines and pertinent |
| Session 4: (September 29<sup>th</sup>) | Assignment/Readings:  
Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*  
Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives* (excerpts)  
(Note: Read chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 13, 15, 20, 24, 25. The link to the reading will be posted in the prompt on NYU Classes.)  
Due October 6th, please write a reading response to Jacob Riis’s *How the Other Half Lives*. Looking into this book will give you a deeper understanding and appreciation for our visit to the Tenement Museum on the 6th. Please reference “Session 4” in Assignments on NYU classes for important guidelines and pertinent questions. |
| --- | --- |
| Session 5: Trip to Tenement Museum (October 6<sup>th</sup>) | Assignment/Readings:  
Now that you have read Riis’s work and visited an actual tenement, it is time for you to do a little investigating yourself. Due October 20<sup>th</sup>, your assignment is to go with your group (which I will assign) to the Lower East Side, and produce photographs for a class presentation (powerpoint/slide show/video or similar format) that illustrate the **historical difference and distance** between Riis's images and today's Lower East Side. Find some locations that either look like Riis's images, or look decidedly different (or the exact locations such as Mulberry Bend), and find a way to visually tell a story. You should be creative, and have a presentation ready to show in class (save it on a USB stick; try it out before class). Please reference “Session 5” in Assignments on NYU classes for important guidelines and pertinent questions. |
| Fall Recess: No Class (October 13<sup>th</sup>) | --- |
| Session 6: Global Ethics Discussion (October 20<sup>th</sup>) | Assignment/Readings:  
Excerpts from *Global Ethics*: essays by Peter Singer and Thomas Hurka: *Is the Lifeboat Full?*  
Yu Hua, excerpts from *China in Ten Words: Introduction*  
(This reading is under resources on classes)  
Due October 27nd, 2nd PAPER (3-5 pgs double spaced) on dilemma articulated by Singer and Hurta. Prompt is on NYU Classes under Assignments: Session 6. |
| Session 7: Signs of Culture-2ND ESSAY DUE (October 27<sup>th</sup>) | Assignment/Readings:  
By October 29<sup>th</sup>, please post in the Google Doc I will share with you, 1 |
globally oriented question that can be answered "yes" or "no" and may result in sharply divergent, even utterly incompatible opinions for people in one or different cultures. (Such as: "the death penalty is an appropriate form of punishment"; "for a divorce to be accepted by the community, the husband must release his wife from the marriage contract"). I will narrow the list down to 2-3 questions by the next day, along with a list of groups I will assign. Each group will be assigned a philosopher (Rousseau, Marx, Kant) and the task will be to write a response to how these questions would be approached by your assigned philosopher if he were alive today.

***Trip to the Metropolitan Museum next Week***

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<td>Dinaw Mengestu (with Darren Strauss) October 30th</td>
<td>Attendance optional but highly recommended</td>
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<td>Session 8: Metropolitan Museum of Art Field Trip: (November 3rd)</td>
<td>Metropolitan Museum of Art Visit with Head Curator Navina Haidar: New Galleries for the Art of the Arab Lands, Turkey, Iran, Central Asia, and Later South Asia</td>
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| Session 9: Elevate Discussion (November 10th) | Assignments/Readings:
Anne Buford, Elevate
For November 10th, please watch Elevate, a documentary directed by my close colleague, Anne Buford. She will be coming to talk to us next class about her experience with the Senegalese players and their experiences to acclimate to the American Culture. Please send me two questions you have on the film before Sunday midnight so I can prepare a class discussion for when Anne comes to visit.
Due November 17th - Global Supply Chain Project. Your assignment is to document the origin of a piece of Clothing or electronics that you own that has not been manufactured in the Unites States of America. You will work in groups that I will assign and the finished product should be a Powerpoint, Video, or anything of the like. Please reference “Session 9” in Assignments on NYU classes for important guidelines and pertinent questions. |
| Session 10: (November 17th) | Assignments/Readings:
Mohsin Hamid, The Reluctant Fundamentalist
Please start reading The Reluctant Fundamentalist. By the end of the week you should be at least half done with it. This book requires much of your attention and is worth at least two weeks of contemplation and reflection by which you will then write a reading response. |
| Session 11: Global Supply | Assignments/Readings: |
| Chain Projects Presentations Due (November 24th) | Due December 1st, finish The Reluctant Fundamentalist and write a 2-page response to its ending (or lack of). Please reference “Session 11” in Assignments on NYU classes for important guidelines and pertinent questions.

Also at this time you should be thinking about topics you would like to focus on for your final paper. I will give you a list of possible topics you can choose from in class but you are also free to choose your own as long as it has global implications. Please arrange a meeting time with me if you want to discuss your paper. |
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<td>Session 12: The Reluctant Fundamentalist (December 1st) Assignments/Readings:</td>
<td>Due December 8th, write at least a full paragraph outlining the idea for your final paper, naming a work that you will discuss, sources that you will use, and presenting a clear question that you will investigate/answer.</td>
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<td>Session 13: Last Day of Class (December 8th)</td>
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