

SOC100 Introduction to Global and Community Studies

3rd and 4th quarters, Freshman

Instructors	KIMURA RYO, YOKOI MASANOBU, HOSOYA RYUHEI, TANAKA YUKITAKA, ITO ISAMU, TSUKIHARA TOSHIHIRO, IKOMA TOSHIHIDE, AWAHARA TOMOKO, LEHNER ALBERT JOSEPH JR, KING KELLY JEAN, KOBATA KOJI
Style of Class	Lecture, seminar
Number of Credits	2
Day and Period	Friday, Period 1

Course Description

When seeking to understand the current conditions and challenges in communities as they are transformed through globalization, it is necessary to approach issues from both local and global standpoints informed by different social contexts. This Class aims to impart fundamental knowledge on a range of problems confronted by local communities from multiple standpoints, to prepare students for undertaking specialized, practical studies in the sophomore year and beyond.

Students learn knowledge and methods essential from both local and global perspectives for understanding the problems confronting local communities across the spheres of politics, economics, culture, society, and lifestyle. The Class deals with seven specific themes: (1) local economies and globalization; (2) diverse political structures; (3) urban-rural issues in Japan; (4) low-birthrate, ageing, and community life; (5) cultural uniformity and cultural diversity; (6) development and role of global civil society; (7) achieving a multicultural coexistence society.

Course Objectives

- (1) Understand basic knowledge and problem-solving approaches in relation to the basic political and economic mechanisms of local communities and the problems they currently face.
- (2) Explore directions toward the resolution of the problems of globalization that emerge in culture, society, and lifestyle while being governed by the abovementioned political and economic mechanisms.
- (3) Understand various political, economic, cultural, ideological, social, and lifestyle problems of local communities from the perspectives of globalization and differences in social systems.

Prerequisites

None

Class Materials

None specified for classes 2 through 11 which deal mainly with politics and economics, but the following texts will be used in classes 12 through 15, which deal with the development and roles of culture and global civil society and multicultural coexistence society.

Steger, M. (2013). *Globalization: A very short introduction*. (3rd ed.) Oxford University Press. [GS]

Lechner, F. J. & Boli, J. (2015). *The globalization reader*. (5th ed.) Wiley-Blackwell. [GR]
Other materials to be distributed.

Course Method

Classes will be conducted in a lecture format up to Class 11. There is no common text specified for these classes; instructors will distribute summaries and other materials for each Class.

Classes 12 through 15 will as a rule be conducted in a seminar format. Students will be required to develop a sound understanding of the content of texts, videos, and other teaching materials, and to pro-actively ask questions, make comments, and engage in discussion.

Evaluation/Assessment

Assignments will be set for each of the seven themes (local economies and globalization, diverse political structures, urban-rural issues in Japan, low-birthrate, ageing, and community life, culture, development and role of global civil society, achieving a multicultural coexistence society), with students required to submit reports for assessment.

Grading

- 80% Reports
- 20% Active participation in Class

Course Schedule

Week 1: Overview: Class aims and expectations for students

Outline of current conditions and problems in local communities and points we should consider when confronting the era of globalization. In regard to globalization, a conceptual overview will be provided focusing on situating globalization in historical terms and identifying characteristics of different theories related to it.

(Instructors: KIMURA RYO, LEHNER ALBERT JOSEPH JR, KING KELLY JEAN)

Week 2: Local economies and globalization (1)

Characteristics of the global economy since the “Heisei bubble” era, as seen from the standpoints of globalization and the growing frequency of economic bubbles. (Instructor: KIMURA RYO)

Week 3: Local economies and globalization (2)

International expansion of local companies, progressing through the shift to a global industrial structure. (Instructor: KIMURA RYO)

Week 4: Diverse political structures (1)

Basic knowledge of the features and current trends in national and local governments in Japan. (Instructor: YOKOI MASANOBU)

Week 5: Diverse political structures (2)

Basic knowledge of the features and current trends in national and local governments in Europe and North America. (Instructor: YOKOI MASANOBU)

Week 6: Diverse political structures (3)

Overview of various aspects of international relations, and basic knowledge and approaches to the international relations mechanisms and principles. (Instructor: HOSOYA RYUHEI)

Week 7: Urban-rural issues in Japan and developing countries (1)

Problems in urban societies and resident communities in Japan, and potential solutions thereto. (Instructor: TANAKA YUKITAKA)

Week 8: Urban-rural issues in Japan and developing countries (2)

Problems confronting rural agriculture and rural communities in Japan, and potential solutions thereto. (Instructor: ITO ISAMU)

Week 9: Urban-rural issues in Japan and developing countries (3)

Basic knowledge of actual conditions in urban and rural areas of Asia. (Instructor: TSUKIHARA TOSHIHIRO)

Week 10: Low birthrate, ageing, and community life (1)

International developments surrounding the settlement of actual disputes in Japan concerning the impact of rapid birthrate decline and ageing in familial relationships. (Instructor: IKOMA TOSHIHIDE)

Week 11: Low birthrate, ageing, and community life (2)

Living conditions and community support models for children and the elderly in Japan, in light of developments internationally. (Instructor: AWAHARA TOMOKO)

Week 12: Globalization and culture

Various theories and debates advanced over the concern about “cultural uniformity” and the growing awareness of “championing cultural diversity.” (Instructor: LEHNER

ALBERT JOSEPH JR)

Week 13: Development and roles of global civil society

Development and present-day roles of global civil society across national borders, and international NGOs, in such fields as environment, healthcare, food resources, poverty, conflict, human rights, and democracy. (Instructor: KING KELLY JEAN)

Week 14: Migration issues and realization of a multicultural coexistence society

Comparative views of the causes and current conditions of migration in Japan and across the world. Adjustment/integration into new societies, and the realization of a multicultural coexistence society and challenges therein. (Instructor: KING KELLY JEAN)

Week 15: Student mobility and realization of a multicultural coexistence society

Overview of “student mobility” as a global trend in higher education, its historical context, and present-day aims. (Instructor: KOBATA KOUJI)

Preparation and Follow-up

- Preparation: Gather information related to the Class topic online and in print before each Class (approx. 1 hour).
- Follow-up: Summarize Class content in preparation for producing reports assigned for each theme (approx. hour).