

SOC 783 Transnational Studies – SPRING 2016
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Office Hours: Tuesdays: 14.00 – 15.00; or by appointment

In recent years, 'transnationalism' has become a common reference across the social sciences. Moving beyond theoretical approaches to the study of global social phenomena that have traditionally centered on the nation state as the central conceptual unit of analysis, transnational studies considers social life as the constantly evolving product of multiple economic, political, cultural and historical factors that manifest across 'social fields.'

This course charts the evolution of transnational studies from a sociological standpoint, taking into account multiple forms of regional, international and local scales, identities and scopes of inquiry. We will compare and contrast transnational dynamics in various social spheres – the state, the economy, the family, education, religion and civil society – to rethink assumptions about identity, sovereignty, citizenship and the political economy.

Utilizing theoretical work and empirical research from sociology, history, politics, economics, anthropology and cultural studies, we explore the ways that transnational practices and processes manifest, relate to, and inform each other in different domains, and at different levels of social interaction, affecting the organization of social life during different historical periods.

Course objectives: By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- Define and discuss the concept of transnationalism
- Review and analyze its historical evolution
- Compare and contrast transnational practices in different domains and at different levels of social interaction
- Apply a sociological lens for analysis of transnational phenomena in various social spheres, including the state, the economy, the family, education, religion and civil society
- Assess and apply transnational research methods

Assessment methods

Conditions for passing the course:

1. **Regular Attendance and active participation in seminar discussions** (“Even to have expressed a false thought boldly and clearly is already to have gained a great deal.” Ludwig Wittgenstein)
2. **Short (1-page) weekly discussion papers** (The papers should be a reaction/critical engagement rather than a simple summary of the readings assigned for the week. You should focus on the questions you want to ask in the class, or point to gaps and conflicts in one or more readings.)
3. **Being a presenter/discussant for one assigned reading** (A presenter/discussant will be responsible for presenting and leading a discussion about one of the assigned readings.)
4. **Written final exam** (6 essay questions to be answered outside of class)
5. **Final essay** (topic of student’s choice in consultation with instructor; 3,000-5,000 words; 10-12 pages)

Particular activities of students will be evaluated as follows:

- 25% - reading, discussion papers and class participation
- 15% - discussion/presenter performance
- 25% - written exam
- 35% - academic research paper

Evaluation is assessed as follows:

- 90-100 = A
- 80-89 = B
- 70-79 = C
- 66-69 = D
- 60-65 = E
- 0-59 = F

Academic Honesty

The Faculty of Social Studies at MU expects students to know the study rules and maintain academic honesty by refraining from plagiarism and from cheating during exams. Plagiarism means that one presents other peoples’ ideas as one’s own and does not credit the author. Plagiarism is one of the most serious breaches of ethical standards in the academic environment, for it denies the mission of the university and the meaning of studying. From a legal perspective, plagiarism is the stealing of intellectual property. The official FSS policy on academic honesty is available in the course’s interactive syllabus in IS. Academic dishonesty is not tolerated under any circumstances at FSS. **The minimum penalty for academic dishonesty is expulsion from the course, a grade of F for the semester, and referral to the Faculty disciplinary committee.**

Literature

- *The transnational studies reader: intersections and innovations*, Sanjeev Khagram and Peggy Levitt, Routledge, 2007.
- *Transnational Villagers*, Peggy Levitt, University of California Press, 2001.

Optional:

- *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments and Deterritorialized Nation-States*, Linda Basch, Nina Glick Schiller, Cristina Szanton Blanc, Routledge, 1993.
- *God Needs No Passport*, Peggy Levitt, New York: New Press, 2007.

Weekly Timetable: Below you will find the proposed readings for each week of the semester. However, and this is very **IMPORTANT:** You must check the Interactive Syllabus and the Study Materials pages for specific reading assignments and any last-minute changes. Please make it a habit to check these weekly, as this is where I will communicate with you!

	REQUIRED READINGS:
1st Seminar-Feb. 25: What is Transnationalism?	<i>No reading</i>
2nd Seminar-Mar. 3: Historical Perspectives	Section 3 (Chapters 13-16), pp. 179-216 in <i>TS Reader</i> . OPTIONAL READING: Chapter 1, pp. 1-18 in <i>TS Reader</i> .
3rd Seminar-Mar. 10: Arts and Culture	Aoyama, Yuko. 2007. "The Role of Consumption and Globalization in a Cultural Industry: The Case of Flamenco." <i>Geoforum</i> (2007): 103-13. Levitt, Peggy. 2012. "The Bog and the Beast." <i>Ethnologia Scandinavia</i> , 42:29-49. Dekel, Tal. 2009. "Body, Gender and Transnationalism: Art and Cultural Criticism in a Changing Europe." <i>Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism</i> 9:175-197.
4th Seminar-Mar. 17: The Diffusion of Values, Norms and Meanings	Section 8 (Chapters 33-34 & 36+37), pp. 359-371 & 377-410 in <i>TS Reader</i>

<p>5th Seminar-Mar. 24: Transnationalism and the Digital Age</p>	<p>Nedelcu, Michaela. 2012. "Migrants' New Transnational Habitus: Rethinking Migration Through a Cosmopolitan Lens in the Digital Age." <i>Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies</i> 38(9): 1139-1356.</p> <p>Schrooten, Mieke. "Moving Ethnography Online: Researching Brazilian migrants' online togetherness." <i>Ethnic and Racial Studies</i> 35(10):1794-1809.</p> <p>Carpenter, R. Charli and Betsy Jose, "Transnational Issue Networks in Real and Virtual Space: The Case of Women, Peace and Security." <i>Global Networks</i> 12(4):525-543.</p>
<p>6th Seminar-Mar. 31: No class – reading period</p>	
<p>7th Seminar-Apr. 7: Migration</p>	<p>pp. 1- 124 in <i>Transnational Villagers</i>, Peggy Levitt, University of California Press, 2001.</p> <p>Presentation of Research Essay Topics</p>
<p>8th Seminar-Apr. 14: Religious Life across Borders and Transnational Islam</p>	<p>Section 6 (Chapter 28), pp. 315-332 in <i>TS Reader</i>.</p> <p>Grillo, Ralph. 2004. "Islam and Transnationalism." <i>Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies</i> 30:861-878.</p> <p>van der Veer, Peter. 2004. "Transnational Religion: Hindu and Muslim Movements." <i>Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies</i> 3(7):4-18.</p>
<p>9th Seminar-Apr. 21: The Case of Refugees</p>	<p>Koser, Khalid. 2007. "Refugees, Transnationalism and the State." <i>Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies</i> 33(2): 233-54.</p> <p>Wall, Melissa, Campbell, Madeline Otis, and Dana Janbek. 2015. "Syrian Refugees and Information Precarity." <i>New Media & Society</i>. Published online before print July 2, 2015, doi: 10.1177/1461444815591967.</p>
<p>10th Seminar-Apr. 28: Corporations, Classes and Capitalism</p>	<p>Mirchandani, Kiran, 2004, "Practices of global capital: gaps, cracks and ironies in transnational call centres in India," <i>Global Networks</i> 4(4): 355–373.</p> <p>Leslie Sklair, 2000, "The transnational capitalist class and the discourse of globalization," <i>Cambridge Review of International Affairs</i> 14(1): 67-85</p>
<p>11th Seminar-May 5: Security, Crime and Violence (focus on terrorism)</p>	<p>Beck, Ulrich, 2002, "The Terrorist Threat: World Risk Society Revisited," <i>Theory, Culture & Society</i> 19(4): 39–55.</p> <p>Asal, Victor, Nussbaum, Brian, and D. William Harrington. 2007. "Terrorism as Transnational Advocacy: An Organizational and Tactical Examination." <i>Studies in Conflict and Terrorism</i> 20:15-39</p>
<p>12th Seminar-May 12: Methodological Practices – what does it mean to use a 'transnational lens' to study social phenomena?</p>	<p>Mazzucato, Valentina, 2008, "Simultaneity and Networks in Transnational Migration: Lessons Learned from an SMS Methodology," In DeWind, Josh and Holdaway, Jennifer (eds) <i>Migration and development within and across borders: Research and policy perspectives on internal and international migration</i>, Geneva: International Organization for Migration, p. 69-100.</p> <p>Olesen, Thomas, 2007, "The Porous Public and the Transnational Dialectic: The Muhammed Cartoons Conflict," <i>Acta Sociologica</i> 50(3): 295–308.</p>
<p>13th Seminar-May 19: Research Essay Presentations</p>	<p>No reading – In-class Presentation (3-4 minutes) of Research Essay Progress</p>