**SOCIOLOGY 3597.01**

**WORLD PROBLEMS  IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT**

**SYLLABUS  Spring, 2014 (3 credit course)**

Professor S. Palmer

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The goal of this course is to help students develop an in-depth understanding of the constellation of conditions that give rise to some of the major world problems. The level of development in a country and the problems it faces can only be understood with an appreciation of that country’s geographical situation, its history, the composition and changes in its population, its political system, the level of its technological development and economic structures and resulting class structure. Religion and culture are the veils through which a country’s population views the world and identifies, or fails to identify, problems. It is important to understand the cultural threads of ideas and values that are passed down from generation to generation within each society in order to develop realistic solutions to a country’s social problems

Throughout the course, China will be used as a basic example to illustrate the interaction of all these factors. Examples from many other countries will be used in all sections of the course.

This is a hybrid course, with all lectures delivered online, and four meetings in class. The class will meet the first day of class at the Newark Regional Campus and on three other days throughout the semester to discuss the reading material. Lecture material on-line will be made available on the Monday of each week.

My email address ([palmer.4@osu.edu](mailto:palmer.4@osu.edu)) can be used to answer questions and give additional information if necessary.

**Required Sources:**

1. ***Reflections on the Revolution in Europe: Immigration Islam, and the West*** by Christopher Caldwell
2. ***The State of the Middle East: An Atlas of Conflict and Resolution***  by Dan Smith

***3. Paradise Beneath Her Feet: How Women Are Transforming the Middle East*** (Council on Foreign Relations Books (Random House)) **[**Paperback] by Isobel Coleman

COURSE OUTLINE SOCIOLOGY 3597.01

**1. Introduction: IN-CLASS MEETING AT THE NEWARK CAMPUS**

Review of syllabus. How the course works and course expectations.

**Why reading is emphasized in this course;** the plasticity of the brain and the importance of ‘deep reading’ and long-term memory. Based on the book *The Shallows by Nicholas Carr.*

**2. Understanding the evolution of homo sapiens** as explained by paleoanthropologists, from human fossil finds, to Carlton Coon and the multiregionalism model, to Spencer Wells and genetic data indicating the movement of home sapiens around the world.

**3. Development of  Societies**  through the stages of  Hunting and Gathering, Horticultural, Agrarian, Industrial, Post Industrial and Information Societies.

**4. Impact of geographical characteristics** on a country’s development, size, access to oceans, rivers, lakes, mountains, arable land, climate, rainfall, natural resources, and bordering countries as described through the geographical features of **CHINA.**

**5. The importance of history** in understanding the strands of culture within a society as indicated through **a short history of  CHINA.**

**6. Population and Migration** – the changing face of the world. The growth of world population, Demographic Transition theory and its critics. Population pyramids.  Population statistics, age structure, birth and death rates, infant mortality, sex ratio etc. and factors affecting them. Population changes in developing countries, population pressures and conflict.  Patterns of international migration and resulting problems. The process of assimilation. Example: Population in CHINA.

**7. Patterns of Race and Ethnic Relations** – How changing political structures and changing attitudes affect the treatment of minorities. The designation of ‘favored minority’ versus minorities classified as dangerous or of little importance. Preferential policies around the world. Identity and minority status. Cultural conflict and the role of religion. Example:  Race and Ethnic relations in CHINA

**8. MEETING ON THE NEWARK CAMPUS to discuss the book *Revolution in Europe* and the preceding sections of the course.**

**9. Political Institutions** – cross cultural perspectives; the problem of political legitimacy, the weak state strong state issue, threats to national sovereignty, economic challenges, claims" of democracy, the national identity/political community problem, and issues related to religion and politics. Typology of political systems. Example: Political system in CHINA**.** The structure of the government and the overriding power of the Communist Party.

**10. Conflict** – Political conflict (example Mao’s utopian approach vs Deng Xiaoping’s pragmatic approach), the Cultural Revolution and Tiananmen Square. The Arab Spring and its aftermath. Economic conflict in China, land grabs, wealth disparities and peasant resistance. Ethnic conflict in China, the Uyghurs, the Tibetans and the Falun Gong. International conflict, growing Chinese nationalism and boundary disputes with neighboring countries. International conflict: nuclear proliferation and international terrorism.

**11. Economy and Globalization** –The disparities among national economies after World War II. Development of welfare programs in the West. Aid to developing countries via technology transfer and agricultural advice. Later in the West, a folding back of the welfare state. Developing countries urged to emphasize free markets, privatization, efficiency and exports. Differential effects of globalization on national economies. The rise of state capitalism. Example: The  economy and the effects of globalization on CHINA **.**

**12. MEETING ON THE NEWARK CAMPUS to discuss the book *The State of the Middle East* and the preceding sections of the course**

**13. Environmental Issues** –Global warming, its causes, its consequences and its critics. The Keeling Curve.Carbon dioxide emissions and economic growth. Efforts to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and mercury. New energy sources and the impact on the environment, e.g. fracking. Electromagnetism, perhaps a new problem. Example: Environment problems in CHINA.  Severe air pollution and government efforts to control it.  Efforts to develop clean energy sources. Problems ofwater supply and water quality. Problems of waste disposal.

**14. Health** –Insect and animal born diseases due to global warming. Plagues and epidemiological transitions. Drug resistant bacteria. Health problems arising from farming practices. Impact of polluted water and inadequate sewage disposal on health in developing countries and remedial efforts. Malnutrition in some developing countries and increasingobesity in many other  countries. Variations in health care facilities and personnel across the world. Per capita GNP spent on health care around the world – too little or too much. Example: Health problems in CHINA and the new health care program. Profiteering at the expense of health.

**15. Family and Gender Issues** – Family structures, age of marriage and the influence of religion. Women in agriculture in developing countries and the effects of globalization.  Female skills and pay scales across the world. Globalization and its effect on jobs available to women. Genital mutilation of women and girls. Human trafficking and debt bondage across the world. The trafficking of children. Example: Traditional family structure in CHINA**.** The changing role of women withchanging political regimes. Variation in marriage and family structures between different ethnic groups. The unbalanced sex ratio. Sexual harassment.

**16. FINAL MEETING AT THE NEWARK CAMPUS for discussion of the book *Paradise Beneath her* Feet and the above sections***.*

**GRADE**

There will be two midterms and a final (short answer and essay questions) Midterm 1………..100 points Midterm 2………..100 points Final……………...100 points Participation in discussion 30 points

GE Requirement Statement Cross-Disciplinary Seminar

**Goals:** Students demonstrate an understanding of a topic of interest through scholarly activities that draw upon multiple disciplines and through their interactions with students from different majors.

**Expected Learning Outcomes:** 1. Students understand the benefits and limitations of different disciplinary perspectives. 2. Students understand the benefits of synthesizing multiple disciplinary perspectives. 3. Students synthesize and apply knowledge from diverse disciplines to a topic of interest.

**General Disclaimers**

Disability Services

If you need accommodations due to a disability, you must first register with the Office for Disability Services (ODS) at 226 Warner Center, ext. 69441. After you receive your authorized accommodation from ODS, you should show me your access plan and discuss your needs with me. Ideally, we should meet within the first week of class*.*

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT)** Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University’s *Code of Student Conduct,* and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University’s *Code of Student Conduct* and this syllabus may constitute “Academic Misconduct”

The Ohio State University’s *Code of Student Conduct* (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: “Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process”. Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University *Code of Student Conduct* is never considered an “excuse” for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the *Code of Student Conduct* and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obliged by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the University’s *Code of Student Conduct* (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

Other sources of information on academic misconduct (integrity) to which you can refer include: The Committee on Academic Misconduct web pages (COAM Home) *Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity (Ten Suggestions) Eight Cardinal Rules of Academic Integrity*