

Globalization Workshop

Background: As globalization continues to make our world a more connected and interdependent place, we all are coming to see that our choices and actions have far-reaching effects. In Mexico, the process of globalization is often associated with administrations of President Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1989-1994), who negotiated the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and dramatically facilitated the opening of the country to foreign investment. Many blame his eagerness to integrate the Mexican economy for the devastating financial disaster that hit the country in 1994 and 1995, and led to the dramatic devaluation of the peso. More than a decade after the crisis, low wages continue to drive hundreds of thousands of Mexican workers north in search of better pay and employment opportunities.

Learning Objectives: The globalization workshop is an overview of the forces contributing to globalization, the effects on Chiapas, as well as an exploration of alternatives to these forces.

Preparation:

Participant research

Directions: This is a research-based workshop that requires each participant to prepare a 10-15 minute presentation on one of the follow sub-topics:

- **History of Neo-Liberalism:** This presentation should provide an overview of neo-liberal economic theory including its basic tenants, international institutions that promote neo-liberal policy, and noteworthy historical figures.
- **Mexican Government Policy:** The presentation should focus on the 1980s-present, looking at economic and political change that occurred in Mexico embracing neo-liberal economics.
- **NAFTA and other free-trade agreements:** This section should explain the basic economic principals and effects of NAFTA and similar free trade agreements in which Mexico participates.
- **Effects on the Mexican worker:** This presenter should provide indicator of how the situation of the average Mexican has changed in the last 20-30 years such as changes in minimum wage, purchasing power and unemployment rates.
- **Transnational Corporations:** Please give both positive and negative effects of the rise of transnational corporations in Mexico.
- **Responses to Globalization:** Presenter should give examples of both opposition and adaptation to globalization such as the 1999 WTO protests in Seattle and the fair trade movement.

The workshop begins with the facilitator leading a group discussion of the definition of “globalization.” S/he should take notes during the discussion on a large piece of paper in front of the group. After a 5-10 minute discussion, the workshop proceeds with each participant sharing her/his respective research topic in the order listed above. Participants should remember to keep presentations limited to a maximum of 15 minutes with five minutes allotted for questions after each presentation.

Texts:

- The Lexus and the Olive Tree-Thomas Friedman
- Globalization and its Discontents- Joseph Stiglitz
- Fences and Windows- Naomi Kline
- The Modern World System (I, II, III) - Immanuel Wallerstein
- The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for our Times -Jeffery Sachs
- In Defense of Globalization- Jagdish Bhagwati
- The End of History and the Last Man- Francis Fukuyama
- Development as Freedom- Amartya Sen

Reports and other Publications:

- International Forum on Globalization- offers detailed information on how globalization has affected indigenous peoples worldwide.
- United Nations Development Program (UNDP): Development and Globalization: Facts and Figures 2004

Visuals:

- Map: Indigenous Peoples and Globalization
<http://www.ifg.org/programs/indig.htm>
- UC Atlas of Global Inequality
<http://ucatlas.ucsc.edu/>
- Declining Cost of Transportation and Communication
<http://www.globalpolicy.org/globaliz/charts/trnsprt2.htm>
- Internet users 1996-2002
<http://www.globalpolicy.org/globaliz/charts/internet.htm>
- Net Migration Flow per Region 1995-2000
<http://www.globalpolicy.org/globaliz/charts/mignet.htm>