
Course Learning Outcomes for Unit I

Upon completion of this unit, students should be able to:

1. Discuss key concepts in human geography including place, region, movement, and landscape.
 - 1.1 Explain how place, region, and landscape influence inhabitants.
 - 1.2 Label key terms describing space.
2. Evaluate the role and impact globalization has on environmental, cultural, spatial, and geopolitical issues within the three tiers of the world system.
 - 2.1 Identify examples of key issues and changes caused by globalization.
 - 2.2 Classify the three tiers that constitute the modern world-system.
3. Evaluate sustainability as an approach to addressing global social problems.
 - 3.1 Explain the role of sustainability in addressing global social problems.

Reading Assignment

Chapter 1: Geography Matters

Chapter 2: The Changing Global Context

Unit Lesson

In this unit's reading, we will learn what cultural (human) geography is and why it matters. "Human Geography is about recognizing and understanding the interdependence among places and regions, without losing sight of the uniqueness of each specific place" (Knox & Marston, 2005, p. 3). We live in a highly connected world today that is full of examples of the diffusion and inclusion of various cultural elements. The food you eat, the things you buy, and the technology you use often come from distant places. When you participate in these activities, you are interacting indirectly with people from around the world. This integration and connection between cultures and places around the world is called *globalization*. "Globalization is the increasing interconnectedness of different parts of the world through common processes of economic, environmental, political, and cultural change" (Knox & Marston, 2015, p. 50).

While globalization is not a new phenomenon, today it is viewed as faster, larger, broader, and more complex (Knox & Marston, 2015, p. 50). As a result, more and more of your daily activities, your economic choices, your environment, and your political issues will be influenced and even dominated by global concerns. In many cases, this interconnectedness or globalization will bring positive changes. For example, the sharing of music, foods, and technology between places enriches many people's lives and can be seen as a positive. One type of technology that has had a huge impact on the level of interconnectedness in the world today is the cell phone. The cell phone has connected the more marginalized areas of the world. Cell phones in developing areas are being used to connect families, transact business, gather and share information, and organize political activism (Pew Research Center, 2014a).

Most globalization trends present a mix of positive and negative aspects. One interesting example is coffee. European explorers took coffee bean plants, which originated in Africa, to Europe. From Europe, it spread to colonies in North and South America. As a result of this globalization, people from around the world are now able to enjoy coffee every day. We don't typically think about where coffee comes from, but coffee does come from somewhere. It passes through a global commodity chain. The demand for coffee that you create by drinking it affects the people who grow, roast, ship, distribute, and consume coffee. This demand drives coffee producers to clear forests to make way for coffee plantations. Deforestation endangers species, degrades the environment, and contributes to climate change. These practices cannot be continued

indefinitely. That is, they are not *sustainable* because they use up natural resources at a rate faster than they can be replenished. In response, countries and NGOs have encouraged more sustainable practices. In some cases, growers have turned to shade-grown coffee that can be grown without deforestation or harmful chemicals. This method produces better quality coffee, but is more labor intensive and therefore more expensive. Some consumers are willing to pay the higher price for the higher quality, chemical-free coffee. Although it continues to increase in popularity, shade-grown coffee still only accounts for a small percentage of all coffee sold (Ellison, 2004).



Coffee Beans
(Tiverylucky, 2013)

Often, there is a struggle to get consumers to pay higher prices for socially and environmentally responsible production. A solution to this problem is “greening the economy,” which uses new technologies and techniques to reduce production costs and to be more sustainable and environmentally friendly. An example of successfully greening the economy can be found in clean energy. In the United States, many jobs have been created in the clean energy sector that will have both positive economic and environmental impacts (Pew Charitable Trusts, 2009).

Globalization potentially contributes to other problems besides environmental degradation. These include terrorism, pandemic threats, dependency on foreign resources, and economic disparity (Knox & Marston, 2015). For example, cyber-attacks continue to be in the news. These attacks are often perpetrated by people in one country against people in another. The global interconnectedness of the Internet makes these attacks relatively easy to carry out. The Internet’s benefits of communication, commerce, and cultural exchange far outweigh its risks. How should the risk of cyber-attacks be managed? On the one hand, people who go on the Internet are responsible for their own choices. On the other hand, governments have a moral obligation to protect their citizens and businesses from attack. Cultural understanding is required to build a consensus as to which activities are allowed on the Internet and which are considered illegal. The solution to this problem, as with most problems in globalization, requires a global perspective that takes into account the economic, military, environmental, political, and cultural realities.

It is not always clear how globalization will impact us in the future. Pew Research polled over a thousand leaders from business, academia, government, and nonprofits about the most important global trends in the coming years (Poushter, 2014). See the results below:

Top 10 Global Trends in 2014

Experts ranking by global significance

- 1 Rising societal tensions in the Middle East and North Africa
- 2 Widening income disparities
- 3 Persistent structural unemployment
- 4 Intensifying cyber threats
- 5 Inaction on climate change
- 6 The diminishing confidence in economic policies
- 7 A lack of values in leadership
- 8 The expanding middle class in Asia
- 9 The growing importance of megacities
- 10 The rapid spread of misinformation online

Source: World Economic Forum's Survey on the Global Agenda 2013. Survey sample included 1,529 experts and thought-leaders around the world.

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Top 10 Global Trends in 2014
(Pew Research Center, 2014b)

As the world continues to become increasingly interconnected, cultural geography, or the study of the interactions between places and cultures, helps us better address these societal issues and get along in this highly globalized world. Globalization impacts everyone. As you begin to look for signs of it, you will begin to see it everywhere. Do you see signs of globalization in your life? On your food labels? At the gas pump? What positives and negative aspects do you see of globalization?

References

- Ellison, K. (2004, June). Can great coffee save the jungle? *Smithsonian Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/ist/?next=/science-nature/can-great-coffee-save-the-jungle-2705993/>
- Knox, P. L., & Marston, S. A. (2015). *Human geography: Places and regions in global context* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Pew Charitable Trusts. (2009). The clean energy economy: State by state. Retrieved from <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/fact-sheets/2009/06/10/the-clean-energy-economy-state-by-state>
- Pew Research Center (2014a). Emerging nations embrace Internet, mobile technology. Retrieved from <http://www.pewglobal.org/2014/02/13/emerging-nations-embrace-internet-mobile-technology/>
- Pew Research Center. (2014b). Top 10 global trends in 2014 [Image]. Retrieved from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/11/20/experts-rank-the-top-10-global-trends/>

Poushter, J. (2013). Experts rank the top 10 global trends. Retrieved from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/11/20/experts-rank-the-top-10-global-trends/>

Tiverylucky. (2013). Coffee beans [Image]. Retrieved from <http://www.freedigitalphotos.net/images/coffee-beans-photo-p203235>

Suggested Reading

The article below investigates the positives and negatives of trade and integration in a globalized world.

Pew Research Center. (2008). Assessing globalization. Retrieved from <http://www.pewglobal.org/2008/06/24/assessing-globalization/>

The article below summarizes ten global trends predicted to occur in the coming years by some of the top leaders from business, nonprofit, academia, and government.

Pew Research Center. (2013). Experts rank the top 10 global trends. Retrieved from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/11/20/experts-rank-the-top-10-global-trends/>

The PowerPoint below covers the elements of APA that are used in unit written response questions. *In order for the link below to function properly, you must first log into the myCSU Student Portal and access Learning Resources. By selecting Citation Resources, you will be able to access the APA Citation for Written Response PowerPoint.*

[APA Citation for Written Response PowerPoint](#)

Learning Activities (Nongraded)

Visit the website <http://show.mappingworlds.com/world/>

This is an interactive map that compares world demographics, natural resources, education, health, religion, death rates, agricultural resource, conflict, economics, migration, government, and leisure activities. Click on several different categories and countries. Watch the map conform to show what countries have the most resources and opportunities (core) and which have the least (periphery). What patterns do you see? How does the US compare to other countries in the core or periphery in terms of demographics and resources?

This is an alternative assignment to get you thinking more critically. This is not a written assignment to turn in. You can write a one page compare and contrast essay in response to the above questions as practice if you like. I hope you enjoy the interactive map!

Nongraded Learning Activities are provided to aid students in their course of study. You do not have to submit them. If you have questions, contact your instructor for further guidance and information.