COURSE DESCRIPTION
The economy – the set of institutions plus the market governing the production, exchange, and consumption of goods, services, information and financial products – affects every aspect of our lives, from crucial details such as whether we have a job, food, housing, medical care, or transportation, to the quality of our jobs, our social status, and whether we can plan for a future or not. All of these issues are not only economic in character, however. They are also profoundly social and cultural. All human production and distribution of goods and services originate in a social and cultural context, are shaped by and go on to affect social structures, involve organized institutional and symbolic practices, and have a variety of important social and cultural outcomes.

In this course, our study of “economy” and “society” begins with a critical examination of the assumptions underlying both these terms. We will examine the origin and peculiarities of the capitalist system and analyze it not only as an “economic” system, but as a social, political, and cultural one that produces gross inequalities as well as enormous imbalances of power. We will also examine how “society” is far from being some sort of container for human relationships, but is, instead, a social system organized by nation-states, hierarchical relations of domination and subordination, and the social construction of “normal” as well as “deviant” groups. We will bring “economy” and “society” back together by examining the relationship between capitalist markets and contemporary capitalist societies by studying processes of capitalist globalization and its links to relationships organized by sexism, racism, and nationalism across our world.

This course is an elective for the International Cultural Studies Program’s Graduate Certificate.

REQUIRED READINGS: (Available at the UHM Bookstore)


**Course Requirements and Grading:**
- Participation: 10%
- Discussion Questions: 10%
- Critical Book Evaluations (2, 4-5 pages each: 15% each): 30%
- Research Essay (20-25 pages): 50%