Course Description
The aim of the course is to provide the student with an understanding of how ongoing globalization processes affect socio-cultural changes and the construction of individual and collective identities. The re-shaping of Self-identity in a globalized world, and the relation to a “cultural Other”, will be one of the core focuses of the course.

Course Objectives
More people in more parts of the world, through travel and symbolic media figures, dream and consider a greater range of ‘possible’ lives than they have ever done before. One of the most common denominators in the diverse dimensions of globalization is the subversion of the cardinal assumption of the first modernity, namely the ideal that citizens live, act, and think in a self-enclosed space: the national state. Hence, we will examine the space and time compression and its effects on social as well as cultural dynamics, both at a collective level (nations, groups) and at an individual level. The possible convergence of global culture – the greater uniformity of lifestyles, cultural symbols and transnational modes of behavior – will be critically tackled. We will also consider the dissemination of some peculiar technoscapes, mediascapes, ideoscapes and ethnoscapes within the globalization process. The socio-cultural encounters with “Otherness” will be addressed in a comparative perspective (United States, Europe and Italy) – drawing on the experience of young Americans abroad. The second part of the course will be dedicated to the idea of becoming a “citizen of the world”; the possible/impossible cosmopolitan meta-synthesis will be compared with the multiculturalist paradigm. Besides trying to answer to apparently simple questions (Who is a Cosmopolitan?), through your socio-cultural encounters we will try to grasp the mentality of the Cosmopolitan in Europe as well as the European Cosmopolitan. Signs of the possible fragile sense of the European identity and the lack of the “European Dream” will be discussed and critically examined. The basic concepts and theories adopted – and shared with the students – allow for an interdisciplinary approach, including Sociology, Cultural Anthropology, Social Psychology, Political Science, Communication and Media Studies.

Course Requirements and Learning Outcomes
Throughout this course students are expected to engage in active participation by contributing their thoughts, ideas and questions. Thus, it is crucial to study the required readings, be ready to share opinions on the topics discussed in class and hand in short papers following the guidelines. Course requirements include a midterm exam and a research paper. The midterm exam consists in answering (essay form) to one mandatory question then to pick another among a list. Each question is worth 100 point; the final grade is given by the average. Usually each answer should be approximately 1 to 2 handwritten pages. In the autobiographical-autoethnographical paper (around 15 pages) students are expected to make reference to the interpretative concepts and methods of analysis acquired during the course and to their autobiographical experience abroad, as well as finding (at least) one scholarly and one non-scholarly source – for further information see the appendix at the end of the syllabus. At the end of this course, the successful student is expected to be able to: 1) actively engage him/herself with the topics brought to his/her attention – assessed in the participation; 2) understand the main theoretical perspectives and empirical findings discussed in class – assessed in the midterm exam; 3) analyze how one socio-cultural feature has affected his/her communicative experience abroad – assessed in the first part of the final research paper; 4) critically understand and apply concepts and methods learned during the course in the research project – assessed in the final paper.

Teaching Method
The course has a seminar format. Lectures will introduce the main topic, with the support of slides synthesizing concepts, paradigms, theories and examples extracted from the readings. Sometimes students will carry out in-class exercises (individually or in groups) and report on them. Students’ social and cultural
experiences will be used to elaborate the concepts discussed throughout the course. A teaching method is efficient when the students make appropriate preparation, so that they too are responsible for its success in that the pedagogical value of a method is enacted by each participant in the process.

Teaching Commitment
My primary goal is to foster students’ critical thinking and imagination. I believe that the best way to achieve this objective lies in the capacity to construct a context of dialog, where it is eminently clear that learning together, as best we can, is our mission (nothing more, nothing less). Students should never censor themselves, but always freely express their opinions on any subject – the discussion of sensitive issues should never be avoided in a social science class – bearing in mind that reading, studying, and being curious is the only way to construct thoughtful interpretations. Students should also try to take up the challenge of exploring unknown social and cultural territory, not expecting to receive the “perfect map” – you go from A to B and then to C and so on – in advance. I believe knowledge has little to do with the practice of reassuring ourselves each step we take; I prefer to wander a bit in the forest of cultural symbols and only afterwards find our way out. In our learning itinerary, students will never be scared of making mistakes; mistakes, in the strict sense of the word, do not exist. These are the meta-objectives of the course; on my part the only thing I can guarantee 100% is intellectual honesty.

Grading
Attendance and participation: 30%; Mid-term exam: 30%; Final research project: 40%.

Grades
- 94-100 % A
- 90-93.9% A-
- 86-89.9% B+
- 83-85.9% B
- 80-82.9% B-
- 76-79.9% C+
- 72-75.9% C
- 70-71.9% C-
- 65-69.9% D+
- 60-64.9% D
- Below 60% F

Attendance, academic honesty, decorum and other policies
It is required to observe Gonzaga University academic integrity policy regarding absences and academic honesty. Students are expected to behave properly and to show self-respect and respect for others. Please be advised that laptops are allowed only to take notes during the lecture. You may not use your computer to surf the web or for any other personal purpose. Regarding the use of laptops, smartphones etc. in class, my opinion is expressed in the following post: Laptop in Class. Documented learning disabilities or other medically-certified problems that call for special arrangements for any student’s expected academic performance will be duly taken into consideration.

Required Readings

Movies
Carnage (Roman Polanski, 2011)
Cosmopolis (David Cronenberg, 2012)
The Social Network (Fincher 2010)

Documentaries and Videos
Blau Jeans (Meaghan Kimball, 2010)
TED Talk (2012) Sherry Turkle: Connected, but alone?

Recommended additional resources
Data and conceptual tools for the overall course and the research paper are available on my blog: Pierluca Birindelli. Examples of research paper are available here: Interpreting Cultural Experiences: Travel and Knowledge
Course outline & schedule (The order and content can be changed if necessary-useful)

Week 1:
Introduction to ‘globalization’: approaches and controversies
End of nations and birth of the cosmopolitan citizen?
Exercise: Globalization is...; Globalization in my life...; Cultural Globalization in Florence: an example

Week 2:
Globalization and Culture
Autobiographical reflection on globalization hand in (1-2 pages)

Documentary projection: “Blau-Jeans" (Megan Kimball)
Synopsis: American popular culture cast a spell on Europe that has never worn off. "Blau Jeans", a new one-hour documentary by Meaghan Kimball, shows how this spell both charms and afflicts Berlin, one of contemporary Europe's most dynamic cultural centers.

Week 3:
The American and the European Dream
Exercise: American, European, Cosmopolitan

Week 4:
Travel in a globalized world
Exercise: Global Travellers

Week 5:
Glocality: sense of place, sense of time, sense of otherness
– TED Talk (2012) Sherry Turkle: Connected, but alone?

Week 6:
Self-realization in a globalized world
Review

Week 7: Mid-term exam
Week 8:
Secularization, de-secularization and ontological security: Europe and United States

Week 9:
Cultural Globalization in Florence
Field trip and ethnographic observation

Week 10:
Cosmopolitans and Locals

Week 11:
The ‘banal’ Cosmopolitan
Film screening: Carnage (Roman Polanski, 2011)

Week 12:
Cosmopolitanism and group belonging

Week 13:
Presentation of the draft of the research paper
Group work
Discussion

Week 14:
Final paper presentation and paper hand in
Appendix: Final research paper guidelines and format

Cultural Globalization

A significant photo connected with the title

A title for the overall work

Your first and last name

Your Picture

Submission: by email (file in attachment)
Table of contents
The biographical accounts are guided by this template divided into three sections pointing out the basic phases of travel (departure-transition-arrival). The narrative framework is enhanced with two sections: preliminary and return. The collective identity preliminary consists in a general reflection on your Nationality (region and city), your idea of Florence, Italy and Europe. Still in the preliminary, write your opinion on the meaning of the term “Cosmopolitan”. The departure section reconstructs the social, economic and cultural background upon which the decision to study and live abroad took place. Here we find autobiographical accounts your sociocultural milieu (family, hometown, peers and education etc.) and the cultural objects influencing the representation of Italy, Europe and the idea of travelling in general. The transition-passage section is where different life experiences abroad are recounted (city life, housing, friends, education, interaction with locals, food, social life etc.) accompanied by an account of the virtual community made up of social networks and the bridge kept alive with home. The arrival consists in portraying a bond/link/contact/attachment with a human being of the host culture and/or with a place that became familiar during the stay. In the return section you will reflect and try to anticipate the main meanings of the experience abroad after you are back home and the contextual acknowledgement and valorization of your travel experience.
For each section and mini-chapter you need to make an effort to find a title pointing out the main meaning(s).

Collective identity preliminary
- Collective Identities: “American”, “Italian”, “European”, “Cosmopolitan”. Copy and paste the exercise: America is… Americans are; Italy is… Italians are; Europe is… Europeans are; to me “Cosmopolitan” means… Develop-interpret what you already wrote. See if your opinions have changed in the meantime.

1. First Section — “Departure”. Main: How the decision of going abroad took shape
- Family
- Hometown
- High School
- University
- Peers, Friends, girlfriend/boyfriend
- Key biographical passage(s)

2. Second section — Transition (Passage). Main: Your experiences abroad
- The meaning of being abroad — “Why Am I in Florence?”
- Myself: key experiences abroad
  - Trip to Florence (flight, taxi from the airport, etc.)
  - Roommates, Apartment
  - First walk in the city
  - First night out, Nightlife, Party ing
  - Orientation / Disorientation
  - First day of school, school impressions, professors, peers
  - First trip from Florence / Weekend Travels
  - Eating practices in Florence: markets, restaurants, diners
  - New friends abroad
  - Interaction with locals / other foreigners
  - Intimate life
- Relations / communications with home, family, friends, etc. (Phone Call, Postcards, Facebook, Instagram, Snap Chat, Pinterest, Twitter, Viber, WhatsApp, Skype, Face Time)
- Us: American Students in Florence (Italy, Europe); my generation
- An Other: The “profile” of a hypothetical Italian young person. See the exercise and integrate if with your reflections at the end of the semester
3. Third section — Arrival. Main: A bond with a person, with the city
   - A bond/link/contact with a person of the host culture and/or with a place
   - My Map: “City Explorations and City Landmarks”
     - Draw “landmarks” of places (streets, squares, cafés, etc.) you have experienced and gained familiarity with. Update your “landmarks”. Take a picture of your map and paste it in the document.
     - Take another look at the map and add a brief comment of your experience of the city

4. Return home / Future. Main: Meanings of my travel experiences when I get back home
   - Who is going to acknowledge and valorize your travel experience and how and why?
   - The meaning of my travel experience in 10 years’ time
   - Myself over the years

5. Final free interpretations about the whole experience abroad
   - …

Bibliography

Development of the paper
You are expected to use — it is up to you do decide in which part of the paper — at least one concept from the course (readings, slides, blog, class discussion, movies...) and find (and use) one scholarly and one non-scholarly source on your own.

Format
   - Use this file for the final submission.
   - Submit the paper within the deadline by email. File in attachment. Name the file with you last name.
   - Around 10 pages double spaced (cover, index and bibliography excluded)
   - Use font Times New Roman 12 (or similar).
   - If you are using figures or tables, put the number and the description (Fig. 1: Description; Tab. 1: Description).