**Global Issues**

**Course Description**
Students will develop an understanding of global interdependence by exploring challenging issues facing the world community. Major issues lie in the demographic, environmental, economic, and geopolitical realms. The course is designed to build skills in research, critical thinking, peer collaboration, and communication about global issues.

**Major Topics**
- Demographic explosion
- Environmental issues
- The new world economy
- The geopolitical world
- Personal stands on global issues

**Major Projects**
Students will engage in a major global issues research and project over the course of the semester. Major deadlines will be given to the students and posted in the online gradebook early in the semester. Students will be presenting research on a regular basis over the course of the semester and participate in a global issues forum at the end of the semester. During this forum students will present and defend a research-based personal position on their chosen global issue. Participation in this forum acts as a final for the course, thus students are required to attend class and participate in the forum in order to meet the standards related to the forum and complete the course. Projects will be presented the December 1-12. **Forum dates will be December 15-19.**
Standards To Be Met
Content Standards – 85% of Final Grade

The standards to be met in this course by students and on which they are assessed are based on the Alaska Content Standards in Geography, which parallel five of the six Essential Elements of Geography for Life, the national geography standards.

- **The World in Spatial Terms**
  1. Use Geographic Skills

- **Places and Regions**
  1. Understand Regions

- **Physical Systems**
  1. Recognize Diversity & Spatial Distribution of Earth's Ecosystems

- **Human Systems**
  1. Explain Human Networks & Globalization
  2. Interpret Population Characteristics and Distribution
  3. Analyze how Conflict & Cooperation Shape Earth's Surface
  4. Analyze Processes, Patterns, & Functions of Human Settlement

- **Environment and Society**
  1. Understand Resource Development & Use
  2. Analyze Patterns of Resource Use
  3. Analyze Human Perceptions of Resource Use & the Environment
  4. Evaluate Consequences of Human Modification

- **Uses of Geography**
  1. Understand the Impact of Geography on Historical Events
  2. Interpret Demographic Trends
  3. Evaluate Global Changes

Life Skills Standards – 15% of Final Grade

- Work Ethic
- Participation
- Courtesy/Respect

Access your grades!
Access them at:
http://www.sitkaschools.org
Technology Skills

Students should be adept with the following technology skills upon enrolling in Global Issues: using word processing, spreadsheet, presentation, and database programs, and searching the internet. Additional skills to be learned during the course include GIS (geographic information systems). Finally, students will use social networking (a class blog) during the semester.

Grading/Earning Credit

Students at Sitka High School receive both feedback on the course standards (see the previous page of this course outline) and a final grade. Feedback on the course standards is based on the individual student’s performance on standards-based assessments. Over the course of the semester, the student’s performance on standards-based assessments will be averaged to create a performance score at the end of the semester. This is true for both content and life skills standards. The scores on the course standards allow the student, teacher, and parents to evaluate strengths and weaknesses in the student’s learning. The course grade, however, is calculated based on totaling the points a student has accumulated by completing assignments over the course of the semester. Total points are calculated by attributing 85% of the grade to content scores and 15% to life skills scores.

Thus, it is important for students to both concentrate on the quality of their work, which reveals strengths and weaknesses in the ability to meet the standards, and to complete all assignments, as the course grade determines whether or not the student receives credit for the course. As a required course for seniors and for graduation, keeping track of success in the course is critical. Students and parents may track standards-based scores and current course grade calculations via the web. The report card at the end of the semester will reflect both standard scores and the final grade.

Main Resources

The main text resource used in the course is:

*High Noon: 20 Global Problems, 20 Years to Solve Them* by J. F. Rischard

It is a paperback book available for use only in the classroom.

We also make extensive use of library, supplemental, and web-based resources and materials both in and out of class.

Students will each read a book about their global issue project topic. The book will be chosen through consultation with the course teacher and the school librarian.
Notes:

- When students travel for pre-arranged or extracurricular activities, students need to sign out before travel and should also check in after travel.
- Hard copy work missed is placed in the appropriate box in the classroom. Students are responsible for checking the box, the class blog, and the gradebook for missed work.
- Late work and makeup work is accepted up to the end of the lab following the original due date.
- At times, students are required to work in groups. When this happens, students are responsible for using lab and office hours to work with their group if class time is not sufficient.
- Students must have a three-ring binder in which to keep their Global Issues work, and the binder will be graded for organization and completeness throughout the semester. The binder should have five dividers.
- Students are expected to record all assignments in the SHS Student Planner and check the course blog for updates.
- Global Issues is a senior-level, culminating class of the caliber required for the Alaska Performance Scholarship. Success in this class demands study beyond class and regular use of office hours and labs.
- Student projects may not be late and the forum cannot be missed. Students who may be traveling at the end of the semester—for any reason—should alert the teacher before October 15, 2014.
- When projects are presented, students will turn in (1) all research material, (2) a printout of the final project, and (3) the scoring guide. Students may not present without these materials and may not present without having their project saved electronically in their SHS school network folder.

To acknowledge reading of this course outline, send e-mail to instructor at: smothers-marcelloj@sitkaschools.org with your parents cc’d on the e-mail.