Anth 3040/30166
The Global Middle Class

Instructor	Rosenblatt
Term	Fall 2024
Course Delivery	In Person
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

A central feature of the last 30 years has been the emergence and expansion of “middle classes” in many parts of the world where such a group was previously small or non-existent. Even where such groups have long existed, the occupations and many other characteristics of those who belong to them are changing rapidly. This course examines these middle classes from an anthropological perspective, paying attention not merely to income statistics or demographic trends but to the values and daily lives of people who referred to as middle class around the world. The study of what has come to be referred to as the “global middle class” is made even more complicated by the wide variety of people who are given the label: in some case the term can refer to those just entering the world of consumer displays and urban amusements, and at other times it is used to describe members of a small elite. To orient ourselves, we begin by reading several general attempts to characterize the “global middle class” and say something about their significance for understanding our world and its future. In order to give us a more concrete understanding of who we are trying to understand we will read a number of journalistic and ethnographic analyses of various aspects of middle-class lives around the world. Students will also study a particular place in more depth, possibly in groups.

EVALUATION

Take-home Mid-term
Assignment based in in depth study of a particular place.
Take-Home Final

TEXT

Books, book sections, and articles, available on the course’s BrightSpace page