

**TO:** Vivian Patraka  
Director, Institute for the Study of Culture and Society

**FROM:** Candace C. Archer

**RE:** **Annual Report on “Globalization, Society, Labor and the Environment  
Research Cluster**

The “Globalization, Society, Labor and the Environment” research cluster is relatively new to ICS. Formed in the spring of 2008, the cluster has continued to establish itself through the 2008-2009 academic year. Throughout spring semester, the cluster had established regular meetings and most participants had presented and received constructive feedback on their research.

The purpose of the cluster is to bring together individuals working on the themes tied to the issues of globalization. As globalization is a broad and interdisciplinary topic, the scholars involved are from a range of disciplines and approach these themes through a variety of methods and lenses. The research cluster hopes to create a cross-disciplinary dialogue about the numerous ways that globalization is affecting local and international society, the environment, politics, culture and labor, recognizing that individual cultures and societies are both fostering as well as reacting to global influences and pressures. The cluster also hopes to provide both graduate student mentoring for students working on topics in globalization and peer tenure-track mentoring for professors working on these issues. The cluster has members from several academic departments including political science, communications, popular culture, and American culture studies

This year the activities of the cluster focused primarily on the sharing research among the participants. Each participant was invited to present a paper on their on-going research to the group for feedback. The group provided critical readings of the papers under consideration and offered constructive criticism to help the writer move the paper toward publication or presentation. At each meeting a lively discussion ensued about the issues raised through the author’s research well as how the issues of globalization tied into the topics that the author addressed. Thus, the meetings provided for a rich intellectual discussion by people who were actively considering the issues tied to globalization.

Over the course of the year the cluster had an organizational meeting, individual meetings with members to discuss their interest in the group, and six substantive meetings where specific scholarship was presented by the author, reviewed and discussed (see Summary of Meetings).

*Participating Members of the Cluster:*

Candace Archer, Assistant Professor, Political Science  
Joshua Atkinson, Assistant Professor, Interpersonal Communication  
Radhika Gajjala, Associate Professor, Communication Studies  
Ellen Gorsevsky, Assistant Professor, Interpersonal Communications  
Daniel Mwendah M'Mailutha, Graduate Student, Communications Studies  
Clayton Rosati, Assistant Professor, Telecommunications  
Kristen Rudisill, Assistant Professor, Popular Culture  
Charlotte Tidy, Graduate Student, American Culture Studies  
Franklin Yarty, Graduate Student, Communications Studies

***Summary of Meetings Academic Year 2008-09:***

Early fall 2008 –

The facilitator (Radhika Gajjala) met individually with potential members to inform them of the group and invite participants.

October 2008 –

The first cluster meeting was convened to introduce new members to each other and plan for the year ahead. At this meeting members discussed how their research fit in with the topic of globalization and described the projects that they were working on. In addition, the cluster determined that authors would e-mail their papers to the group about a week before the meeting in order to provide enough time for reading and reflection. The first substantive meeting was set for early December.

December 5, 2008 –

At this meeting Dr. Joshua Atkinson and Dr. Clayton Rosati presented and received feedback on their paper entitled, “DetroitYES! And the Fabulous Ruins of Detroit: The Role of Intertextuality and Interactivity in the Construction of Alternative Cityscapes.”

January 24, 2009 –

At this meeting Dr. Kristen Rudisill presented and received feedback on her paper entitled “My School Rocks! Dancing Disney’s *High School Musical* in India.

February 20, 2009

At this meeting Charlotte Tidy presented and received feedback on her paper entitled “The First Emperor: China’s Terracotta Army” Exhibition as Rhetoric of Globalization.”

March 27, 2009

At this meeting Dr. Candace Archer presented and received feedback on her paper entitled “Fair Trade: Re-Humanizing Globalization”

April 17, 2009

At this meeting Franklin Yartey presented and received feedback on his paper entitled “The Critical Condition of Rhetorical Choices: The Bush Administrations’ Framing of HIV/AIDS as a National Security Threat in PEPFAR”