This course explores alternatives to globalization, locally and globally. Based around key examples including the Zapatistas, La Via Campesina and other parts of the Alter-Globalization movement; we will begin studying various parts of what many consider a new kind of “global social movement.” We will combine this with hands on engagement with local examples of organizations, projects and groups that are also working to create alternatives within and beyond neoliberal globalization. The course will investigate what it means to be a global social movement, what pursuing an alternative global agenda looks like, as well as what social change in the 21st century means.

The aim of the class is to combine learning about global movements through scholarly and primary sources, with empirical, experiential engagement with local instantiations of such movements and social change projects. The class will feature several guest speakers and some off-campus visits, allowing us to not only learn about movements and alternatives from books, but to explore the complex challenges and possibilities faced by practitioners. We will stress alternative experiential learning methods that recognize movements and activists as knowledge producers. Students will conduct some form of ethnographic or oral historical research with a local project/group, and class time will also be spent developing research skills.