COURSE CONTENT

Course Code / Title  : HS3016 Societies in Comparative Perspective
Pre-requisites  : HS2001 Classical Social Theory and
                 HS2002 Doing Social Research
No. of AUs. : 3 AUs
Contact Hours : 39

Course Aims

This course teaches students to understand societies through the comparative method, focusing particularly on the categories of race, ethnicity, gender, nationality, demography, post-colonial history, scientific development and globalization. Source material will draw heavily on Singapore, Israel, and Qatar, three multi-racial post-British protectorates with advanced development in science and technology and each with a unique history of national identity formation.

Each week will focus on a particular theme of comparison, asking how we can understand each society through each specific lens of comparison. Through the course of the lectures students will understand the varied ways societies can be compared, yielding a rich analytic toolkit for deploying the comparative method.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Identity the different ways sociologists and anthropologists can understand societies comparatively.
2. Describe the key theories that can be used to understand societies comparatively.
3. Extend the lessons learned in class to compare other societies around the world.

Course Content

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Week 1  Introduction to the course
Key concepts: Anthropology as comparison
Week 2  National Identity
Key concepts: What is a Nation?
People versus territory
Week 3  Ethnicity
Key concepts: Ethnic identity versus national identity
Week 4  Race
Key concepts: Race and power

Week 5  Demography
Key concepts: Labour and demography

Week 6  Science and Technology
Key concepts: Science and technology as nation- and state building

Week 7  Globalization
Key concepts: McWorld

Week 8  Mid-term exam/quiz

Week 9  Constitutions of peoplehood
Key concepts: People as subject/object

Week 10  Settler Colonialism/Post Colonialism
Key concepts: Nativism

Week 11  Indigeneity
Key concepts: Indigeneity

Week 12  Religion
Key concepts: Secularism/Religious nationalism/Religious law

Week 12  Layered Comparisons
Key concepts: Comparing societies

Week 13  Review of course, class Q&A

Course Assessment

CA1  Mid-Term Test : 20%
CA2  Class Participation : 20%
CA3  Presentation : 10%
Final Examination : 50%

Total  100%