Course Code / Title: HS4027 Cultural Politics of Development and the Environment

Pre-requisites: None

No. of AUs.: 4 AUs

Contact Hours: 52

Course Aims

This course will introduce you to the critical intersection between development and the environment with an emphasis on cultural politics, political ecology, the global South, and theories of power. It will cover a range of perspectives and frameworks, including Foucaultian, Global Commodity Chain, actor network theory, political economy, gendered/racialized identities, neoliberal paradox, and environmental governance. Given the unique conditions generated by the neoliberal globalization, understanding cultural politics of development and the environment through different lenses is crucial for the students. It will evaluate competing interpretations and often very high and multiple stakes in understanding and/or representing environmental loss, claims, and knowledge(s) in development discourse; and examine how the historical, political economic, and cultural discourses and practices constitute these environmental contestations. The course will enable you to critically analyze economic patterns, environmental landscapes, and social structures, and hence will enhance your analytical skill.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

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

1. Explain the critical intersection between development and the environment, and the kind of cultural politics it generates such as the struggles over nature as struggles over place, identity, meanings, representations, and livelihoods.
2. Describe key theories of development, environment and power and their implications for the struggle of the marginal communities in the world.
3. Articulate connections between local environmental and social changes and global processes.

Apply critical lenses to environmental loss, claims, and knowledge(s) in development discourse.

Course Content

Week 1: Introduction: Rethinking development and the environment
Week 2: Development and the Environment: Critical Intersections
Week 3: Classical theories of development, nature-society relations, and power: I
Week 4: The crises of neoliberal capitalism/globalization
Week 5: Critical theories of development, nature-society relations, and power: II
Week 6: Colonial/ orientalist/ and postcolonial readings of nature and development
Week 7: Post-colonial development discourse and regimes of power
Week 8: Tale of three worlds: Constructions and subjections
Week 9: Food Revolutions and Development Subjectivities
Week 10: Cultural struggles of subalterns: Voices from the South
Week 11: Neoliberal globalization and governance
Week 12: Neoliberal security/governmentality
Week 13: Semester-end review/revision

Course Assessment

CA1  In-class exercise : 20%
CA2  Learning Portfolio : 20%
CA3  Class presentation : 20%
CA4  Essay : 40%

Total  100%