So573: Practice of Social Change and Development in Asia

Credit hours: 3
Teaching hours: 48

Objectives:
Sociologists have long sought to understand the dynamics of social change and have provided critiques of various explanations of development. Linking the classical as well as contemporary sociological debates on change and development, and drawing arguments from other social sciences, this module critically examines the conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of the shifting development debates from interdisciplinary perspectives. It then attempts to contextualize those debates in the development experience of Asia in general and Nepal in particular.

By the end of the module students should have acquired an understanding of key theoretical and policy debates and of the main competing approaches in the sociology of development. They should also develop an understanding of the practice of development in Asia in general, and Nepal in particular.

Unit I: Key concepts (4 hrs)
A. What is development? Quality of life? Growth? Development as freedom and functioning? Development as the practice of liberal capitalism?
B. Why development studies? Linking sociology, applied sociology, and development studies

Readings:
Unit II: Substantive development issues (14 hrs)
A. Poverty, inequality and development
B. Empowerment, social inclusion and development
C. Livelihood diversification and rural peasants
D. Migration (labour/urban/overseas), remittance and development
E. Markets, social change and development
F. Globalization, social change and development

Readings:
Unit III: Does Asia show the way? Review of Asian development “models”
(15 hrs)

A. The East Asian model
- From “Asian tigers” and the East Asian “miracle”
- Neoliberal critique of the miracle
- What lessons can be learned?

B. The Kerala model
- Aspects of social equality in Kerala
- Mass science education and local planning
- Does Kerala show an alternative model of sustainable development?

C. The Grameen Bank model
- Understanding micro-credit and micro-finance: What is it for?
- Method of “Grameen Bank action” (From 16 decisions, 10 indicators, and credit delivery to breaking the vicious cycle of poverty)
- A critical look at micro-credit financing
  (i) The mobilization-organization-finance nexus
  (ii) The sociology of peer group lending
- How empowering are micro-credit programmes?

D. Chinese growth model
- China’s take off and its economic transformation
- Implications of Chinese success

E. Going beyond Eurocentrism? Is Asia rising?

Readings:


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**Unit IV: Nepal's experience of development after the 1960s**

(15 hrs)

A. Population, resources and social change in West Nepal

B. Road building, market development and peripheralization of West-Central Nepal

C. Caste, ethnic and gender dynamics and contemporary social change

D. Global-local articulation and social change in peri-urban Nepal

E. Modernism, consumerism and the expanding middle class in Kathmandu

**Readings:**


