

Geography 350/550
Fall, 2012

Gundars Rudzitis, McClure 307C
Office Hours: Wed. 4-6 & by appointment

Geography of Development

Brief Description:

The modern concept of “development” spread from the United States and Europe around the globe after World War II. Today, however, “development” and globalization have come under attack. Why? How has a topic normally thought of as rooted in dry and technical economic concepts become so controversial, full of passion, organizing people around the world arguing that “development” itself is increasing poverty and destroying the environments upon which we all depend? For example, the controversy about climate change is a symptom, not a cause, of arguments surrounding “development.” What are some of the alternative approaches being proposed by a wide variety of people, ranging from activists to development specialists and academics. We will explore alternative approaches that focus on people, society, nature and cultures in particular spaces, places, and regions.

Books:

K. Willis, *Theories and Practices of Development*, Routledge, Second edition 2011.
R. Wilkinson and K. Pickett. *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger*, Bloomsbury Press, 2011.
E. Weiner, *Geography of Bliss*, Twelve, Hachette Book Group, 2009.
R. Peet, P. Robbins and M. J. Watts, *World Political Ecology*, Routledge, 2011.
S. Deb, *The Beautiful and the Damned: A Portrait of the New India*, Macmillan, 2012.
Additional article readings will be put on electronic reserve at the library and will be indicated on the monthly readings handouts.

Grading Procedure and Attendance Policy

There will be periodic quizzes every few weeks based on the assigned readings lectures, and other material covered in class. I will drop the quiz with the lowest grade and the average of the remainder will count for 60 percent of your grade. There will be no makeup quizzes. So, if you don't take a quiz, for whatever reason (medical, athletic, idleness and sloth, other, ...etc.), it will count as the one dropped. There will be no midterm or final exam. In accordance with UI attendance policy, if you miss three classes you can expect to drop one grade. Four or more absences normally will result in a D or F.

Another 20 percent of your grade will be based on a background paper on a country we mutually agree on. You will work on your country background paper throughout the semester and give updates of your progress that will be included in the 20 percent of your grade. The books and readings we do throughout the semester will serve

as the basic references for your professional report. Any periodic updates on your progress should be turned in at the end of the class period they are due. I will not accept assignments or updates by e-mail.

I will give you detailed information about the format of the background paper. Generally undergraduate students are expected to write a report of approximately 15-20 pages of text, and graduate students of 25 pages or more. Any plagiarism on the country background report, or assignments, will result in an F in the course, and will be referred to the university judicial system and Dean of Students.

The remaining 20 percent of your grade will be from class participation. This is an active learning environment, and you will learn from each other, based on your research, and your own life experiences. We will enliven the class discussions by drawing on our individual experiences around the world, and informing each other about the country we have chosen to concentrate on. I look forward to learning from you as well!

Extra Geography 550 Graduate Student Requirements:

Graduate students will in addition to meeting the undergraduate course requirements, (quizzes, more in-depth paper) will have additional meetings at a mutually agreeable time with supplemental readings that we will discuss. These meetings can take place on or off-campus. Most recently they have met in a coffee shop downtown. Graduate students, given the additional background reading, will also be responsible for periodically leading and facilitating the in class discussions.

Initial Reading Assignments: Please do the readings before coming to class.

Mon. 8/20	Introduction to course
Wed. 8/22	Chapter 1 in Katie Willis, <i>Theories and Practices of Development</i>
Fri. 8/24	Willis, chapters 1 and 2
Mon. 8/27	Willis, chapter 2
Wed. 8/29	Willis, chapter 3
Fri. 8/31	Willis, chapter 3
Mon. 9/3	No class Labor Day
Wed. 9/5	Quiz 1, Willis, chapters 1 to 3.

