Sociology 1871D/Development Studies 1000

Seminar in Development Studies

**Brown University**

**Spring 2013**

**Mondays 3:00-5:20 p.m.**

# Professor: José Itzigsohn

Office Hours: Wednesdays 3:30-4:30 and Fridays 3:30-5:00 at CLACS.

Office: 203 Maxcy Hall

## Course Description

Development is an elusive topic, conceptualized by some as the key to improving the human lot and by others as an illusion designed to perpetuate inequality and injustice. Development ranks among the most serious issues in the contemporary world, shaping the lives of humans in all societies. This seminar provides an introduction to the field of Development Studies through an in-depth look at the diversity of understandings of the concept as well as its practical applications in the contemporary world. Students will read texts that present pressing questions concerning development practices, policies, and theories. The pedagogical approach is to require students to read entire books, write thought-pieces ahead of seminar meetings, and engage in lively critical discussions of the readings during the seminar meetings. Class sessions will be highly participatory and efforts to connect broader debates to understanding contemporary problems will be encouraged. You will post your thought-pieces every week ahead of the seminar, by Sunday evening at 6pm. Discussions will be lead by groups of students who will start off the seminar with a short presentation and will work with me to lead the class.

**Required Texts**

* Argawala, Rina. 2013. *Informal Labor, Formal Politics, and Dignified Discontent in India.* Cambridge University Press.
* Baiocchi, Gianpaolo, Patrick Heller and Marcelo Silva. 2011. *Bootstrapping Democracy: Transforming Local Governance and Civil Society in Brazil*. Stanford University Press.
* Bin Wong, Roy. 2000. *China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of the European Experience.* Cornell University Press.
* Easterly, William. 2006. *The White’s Man’s Burden*. Penguin Books
* Farmer, Paul. 2001. *Haiti After the Earthquake*. Public Affairs.

# Li, Tania. 2007. *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics*. Duke University Press.

* Sachs, Jeffrey. 2005. *The End of Poverty*. Penguin Books.

**Course Requirements**

*Class Participation*: Class attendance is required. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings and to participate actively in class.

*Response Papers* Each student is required to post a 1 page response to the readings each week. These papers are ***intellectual*** responses to particular reading assignments. Response papers are not meant to be summaries of the reading – rather, they are an opportunity for students to use the readings as a springboard to express thoughts, grapple with questions, and formulate intellectual reactions to the course material. Papers should be clearly focused. Generally, a paper that examines a single issue or question will be more successful than one which covers a wide range of ideas. The response papers are not graded, nor are they a component of the course grade, but writing a good memo for each class is a condition to get a passing grade for the course. These are due at 6pm on the Sunday before the seminar.

*Class Presentations:* Each class will be led by a group of students. These groups will prepare a critical presentation to the class that *briefly* summarizes the readings for the week and poses questions for discussion. You will also prepare a 2-3 page handout with key terms and questions on the readings. These presentations should be limited to 20 minutes, but the presenters are responsible for moderating the class discussion after the presentation. The presentation will be graded based on an evaluation of the presentation of the readings, the handout, and the class moderation (Important: there is one question that the moderators **cannot** ask. The question is: “So, what do you think of the book?”)

*Final Research Paper:*  Students will write a final paper (approximately 10-12 pages). Students have to choose one of the topics discussed during the course—specifically, one of the topics of weeks 3 to 10)—review the debates and controversies on the topic (this implies a review of the literature), and develop their own position on those debates. **Final research papers are due on 5/7. Papers should be posted in the course website.**

**Student Evaluation**

Class participation, response papers and the final research paper will determine final grades:

Class Participation 35%

Presentation 20%

Final Research Paper 45%

**Course Structure and Reading Assignments**

**PART I: Introduction**

**Week #1 (January 27): Introduction –**

## Introduction/Preliminaries/Expectations

**Week #2 (February 3): What is Development?**

Reading: Farmer, Paul. *Haiti After the Earthquake*.

**Part II: Development Aid and Development Projects.**

**Week #3 (February 10): The case for the Milennium Development Goals.**

Reading:Sachs, Jeffrey. *The End of Poverty.*

**Week #4 (March 24): The case for small scale aid.**

Readings: Easterly, William. *The White Man’s Burden.*

**Week #5 (March 3): The Pitfalls of Development Projects.**

Reading: Li, Tania. *The Will to Improve*

**Part III: The Political Economy of Development**

**Week # 6 (March 10): Development and the State**

Readings:

Chang, Ha-Joon. “The East Asian Model of Economic Policy.” (from *The East Asian Development Experience*).

Lin, Jason. “The Comparative Advantage Following Development Strategy.” (from *Demystifying the Chinese Economy*).

Lin, Jason and Ha-Joon Chang. “Should Industrial Policy in Developing Countries Conform to Comparative Advantage or Defy It?” *Development Policy Review* (Nov. 2008).

Rodrik, Dani. “The Trilemma of the World Economy” (from *The Globalization Paradox*).

**Week #7 (March 17): The Politics of Informal Labor in India**

Readings: Rina Argawala: book.

**Week # 8 (March 31): China’s Development in Comparative Historical Perspective**

Readings : Roy Bin Wong, book.

**Part 4: Grassroots Development**

**Week #9 (April 7): Building Participatory Democracy in Brazil**

**Readings:** Baiocchi, Heller, and Silva, book.

**Week # 10 (April 14): The Solidarity Economy**

**Readings:**

Cruz e Silva, Teresa. “The General Union of Cooperatives of Maputo: An Alternative Production System?” in <http://www.boaventuradesousasantos.pt/pages/pt/livros/another-> production-is-possible-beyond-the-capitalist-canon.php

Singer, Paul, “The Recent Rebirth of the Solidary Economy in Brazil” in <http://www.boaventuradesousasantos.pt/pages/pt/livros/another-production-is-possible-beyond-> the-capitalist-canon.php

Rodriguez-Garavito, Cesar. “Solidarity Economy and the Struggle for Social Citizenship in Times of Globalization: A Study of the Cooperatives of Informal Garbage Pickers in Colombia.” in http://www.boaventuradesousasantos.pt/pages/pt/livros/another-production-is-possible-beyond-the-capitalist-canon.php

Jhabvala, Renana; Sapna Desai, and Jignasa Dave. 2010. *Empowering Women in an Insecure World*. SEWA Academy.

**Week #11 (April 21):**

Final discussion: The goal of the final discussion is to bring together the different threads discussed in the course. In preparation for our final discussion students will write a two pages position paper outlining a course of action or a policy (or set of policies) that you consider necessary or important for development (the paper should be posted on the course website). Students will be asked to present and justify their proposals to the class.