

Development and Social Change Seminar

ASIA 3000 (3 Credits/45 class hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:

Nepal: Development and Social Change

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus represents a recent semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Course Description

This nine-week course employs a variety of approaches to introduce students to Nepal. Through both classroom and field oriented activities, students will investigate the social, political, cultural, historical, environmental, and economic forces that have shaped the country. The seminar focuses on the interplay of cultural factors – ethnic identities, gender, caste and class—with Nepal’s development efforts. The important elements of development theory, including neo-liberalism, approaches to poverty and governance issues, social entrepreneurship, and the post-development literatures will be considered. The course examines efforts at social change amidst the recent conflict and political renegotiations between citizens and state. Students are encouraged to analyze and question dominant development paradigms as deployed in Nepal. Students will also gain experience themselves as fieldworkers in the cross-cultural context.

The seminar provides students a deep understanding of the broad patterns of development flows, aid interventions, migration, and economic policies. In the seminar, these issues are situated in Nepal’s cultural, political, economic, and social history. Excursions to different parts of Nepal’s diverse regions, from high Himalayan villages, to communities in the tropical foothill Tarai region, provide students with a variety of unique environments in which they can investigate the diverse intersections of development and social change.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Articulate prevailing and historical development approaches and theory relevant to the Nepal context;
- Analyze historical contexts for current developmental, political, and social changes in Nepal;
- Assess notions of “social change” and “development” from both anthropological and contemporary Nepali political perspectives;
- Integrate information gathered from unique primary resources available in Nepal with information presented by local scholars and professionals and from texts;
- Demonstrate and articulate critical insights on the connections between a modern development agenda, transnational economic realities and notions of culture;
- Analyze the factors that support or interrupt processes of social and political change in Nepal.

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Language of Instruction

This course is taught in English, but students will be exposed to vocabulary related to course content as well as the nuances of economic change and development through in-country expert lectures and field visits in a wide range of venues and regional locales.

Course Requirements

Course Schedule

***Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.**

Module 1: Introductions to Nepal and Development (12.5 hours)

Topic 1: Geography of Nepal

Topic 2: Locating Nepal in the Region (and Kathmandu's place in Nepal)

Topic 3: History of Nepal, parts I & II

Required Reading:

Whelpton, J. 2005. Introduction and Chapter 1 and 2. In *A History of Nepal*, 1-60. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Topic 4: Hinduism and Buddhism in Life

Required Readings:

Gellner, D. N. 1997. Ethnicity and Nationalism in the World's Only Hindu State. In *Nationalism And Ethnicity in a Hindu Kingdom*, 3-31: Harwood Academic Publishers.

Gyawali, D. 1996. Challenged by the Future, Shackled by the Past. *Himal South Asia*. May:14-19.

Topic 5: Introduction to International Development Theories

Required Readings:

Escobar, A. 1995. Introduction: "Development and the Anthropology of Modernity," and "The Problematization of Poverty: The Tales of Three Worlds and Development". In *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*, 3-54. Princeton New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Esteva, G. 2000. Development. In *The Development Dictionary*, 8-34: Orient Longman Ltd.

Sachs, W. 2000. Introduction. In *The Development Dictionary*, 1-7: Orient Longman Ltd.

Sen, A. 2006. Globalization and Voice. In *Identity and Violence*, 120-148. New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company.

Willis, K. 2005. *Theories and Practices of Development*. London: Routledge.

Topic 6: Excursion to Pashupatinath Temple

Topic 7: Scales of Development in Nepal

Required Readings:

Jacobson, T. L., and J. D. Storey. 2004. Development communication and participation: Applying Habermas to a case study of population programs in Nepal. *Communication Theory* 14 (2):99-121.

Mehta, J. N., and S. R. Kellert. 1998. Local attitudes toward community-based conservation policy and programmes in Nepal: a case study in the Makalu-Barun Conservation Area. *Environmental Conservation* 25 (4):320-333.

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- Nightingale, A. 2003. Nature-society and development: social, cultural and ecological change in Nepal. *Geoforum* 34 (4):525-540.
- Pigg, S. L. 1992. Inventing Social Categories through Place: Social Representations and Development in Nepal. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34 (3):491-513.

Module 2: Diversity and History (10 hours)

Topic 1: Caste and Ethnicity in Nepal, parts I & II

Required Readings:

- Gellner, D. N. 1997. Ethnicity and Nationalism in the World's Only Hindu State. In *Nationalism and Ethnicity in a Hindu Kingdom*, 3-31: Harwood Academic Publishers.
- Gyawali, D. 1996. Challenged by the Future, Shackled by the Past. *Himal South Asia*. May:14-19.
- Pradhan, R. 2005. Ethnicity, caste and a pluralist society. In *State of Nepal*, eds. K. M. Dixit and S. Ramachandaran, 1-21. Kathmandu: Himal Books.

Topic 2: Inclusion and Exclusion

Required Reading:

- Bennett, L. 2006. *Unequal citizens: Gender, caste and ethnic exclusion in Nepal*. Washington DC: The World Bank, DFID.

Topic 3: Ethnicity and Nationalism

Required Readings:

- Joshi, S. 2005. Waiting for Justice. *The Nation*. January (9):30-31.
- Kanchuli, M. 2001. The Hunger for Justice and the Water of Desperation (Translated by W. Amtzis and M. Kanchuli). *Secret Places: New writing from Nepal* 13 (2).
- Pandey, T. R. Democracy in Cage: Towards a Framework for a State Restructuring in Nepal. *Occasional Papers in Sociology and Anthropology* 11 (0):148-177.

Topic 4: Ethnic Diversities

Required Readings:

- Turin, M. 2001. Call me Uncle: An Outsider's Experience of Nepali Kinship". Research Note. 28 (2):277-283.
- . 2007. Linguistic Diversity and the Preservation of Endangered Languages: A case Study from Nepal. Kathmandu: ICIMOD.

Topic 5: Economic Forces in the Himalayas

Required Readings:

- de Sales, A. 2009. From ancestral conflicts to local empowerment: two narratives from a Nepalese community. *Dialectical anthropology* 33 (3):365-381.
- Dixit, S. 2003. Education, deception, state and society. In *State of Nepal*, eds. K. M. Dixit and S. Ramachandaran, 193-211. Kathmandu: Himal Books.

Topic 6: (Re) Defining Development, Parts I & II

Required Readings:

- Fisher, W. F. 1991. Doing good? The politics and anti-politics of NGO practices. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 26 (1):439-64.
- Hart, G. 2001. Development critiques in the 1990s: *culs de sac* and promising paths. *Progress in Human Geography* 25 (4):649-658.

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- Larner, W. 2003. Guest editorial: neoliberalism. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 21 (5):309-312.
- Leve, L. G. 2007. "Failed Development" and Rural Revolution in Nepal: Rethinking Subaltern Consciousness and Women's Empowerment. *Anthropological quarterly* 80 (1):127-172.
- Rankin, K. N. 2001. Governing development: neoliberalism, microcredit, and rational economic woman. *Economy and Society* 30 (1):18-37.
- Tamang, R. 2002. Mass media in development programs in Nepal: Practices and problematics. *DAI* 63 (06A):286.
- Townsend, J. G., G. Porter, and E. Mawdsley. 2004. Creating spaces of resistance: development NGOs and their clients in Ghana, India and Mexico. *Antipode* 36 (5):871-889.

Module 3: Excursion (15 field hours)

Topics: Community based development media; Community forestry; Scales of development operations; Cooperative-based development projects.

Site Visits, Fall Semester: Community Radio Madanpokhara, Madanpokhara Community Forestry Users Group, District Soil Conservation Office, Dhaka cloth weaving cooperative, Madanpokhara Mothers' Group, United Mission to Nepal, Brangdi Coffee Producers' Cooperative.

Required Readings Fall Semester:

- Banjade, A. 2006. Voice to the Voiceless in Western Nepal: An Audience Survey of Community Radio Madanpokhara. *The Journal of Development Communication* 17 (1):71-91.
- Bista, D. B. 1992. *Fatalism and development: Nepal's struggle for modernization*. Calcutta: Orient Longman.
- Karki, M., J. B. S. Karki, and N. Karki. 1994. *Sustainable management of common forest resources: An evaluation of selected forest user groups in western Nepal*: International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development.
- Nepal, P. 2001. Functional Base Analysis of Tansen Municipal Town. *Contributions to Nepalese Studies* 28 (2):285-293.
- Tiwari, K. P. 2010. Agricultural Policy Review for Coffee Promotion in Nepal. *The Journal of Agriculture and Environment* 11 (1):138-147.

Site Visits, Spring Semester: Naari Chetana Womens' Group, National Trust for Nature Conservation & Natural History Museum, Beekeeping, Jwani Village: Baghmara Community Forest Users Group and Biogas plant, Tharu Village & Tharu Museum

Required Readings Spring Semester:

- Guneratne, A. 2001. Shaping the tourist's gaze: representing ethnic difference in a Nepali village. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 7 (3):527-543.
- Jones, S. 2007. Tigers, trees and Tharu: An analysis of community forestry in the buffer zone of the Royal Chitwan National Park, Nepal. *Geoforum* 38 (3):558-575.
- Miklian, J. 2009. *Nepal's Terai: Constructing an Ethnic Conflict*. PRIO.
- Pigg, S. L. 1996. The credible and the credulous: The question of villagers' beliefs in Nepal. *Cultural Anthropology* 11 (2):160-201.
- Tripathi, D. 2008. Inclusion of Indigenous Tharu People in UNDP Supported Village Development Program: A case study of Benimanipur VDC, Nawaparasi, Western-Terai, Nepal. *Himalayan Journal of Sociology and Anthropology* 3:54-72.

Module 4: Ethnicity, Nationhood, and Social and Political Change (4.5 hours)

Topic 1: Ethnicity and Nationalism

Required Readings:

- de Sales, A. 2009. From ancestral conflicts to local empowerment: two narratives from a Nepalese community. *Dialectical anthropology* 33 (3):365-381.

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Dixit, S. 2003. Education, deception, state and society. In *State of Nepal*, eds. K. M. Dixit and S. Ramachandaran, 193-211. Kathmandu: Himal Books.

Topic 2: Political History of Nepal

Required Readings:

His Majesty's Government. 1998. Law and Women: According to the Muluki Ain (Public Law) 1962, 152-153: Nepal South Asia Centre.

Lal, C. K. 2003. Nepal's Maoism. In *Understanding the Maoist Movement of Nepal*, ed. D. Thapa, 135-148. Kathmandu: Modern Printing Press.

Topic 3: Social Change in Conflict Areas

Required Readings:

Pandey, T. R. Democracy in Cage: Towards a Framework for a State Restructuring in Nepal. *Occasional Papers in Sociology and Anthropology* 11 (0):148-177.

Pettigrew, J., and K. Adhikari. 2009. Fear and everyday life in rural Nepal. *Dialectical anthropology* 33 (3):403-422.

Topic 4: Political Unrest and Conflict Resolution

Required Readings:

Lecomte-Tilouine, M. 2009. Terror in a Maoist Model village, mid-western Nepal. *Dialectical anthropology* 33 (3):383-401.

Liechty, M. 2003. Modern Nepali History and the Rise of the Middle Class. In *Suitably modern: Making middle-class culture in a new consumer society*, 39-58. Princeton: Princeton Univ Press.

Module 5: Development and the Social (3 hours)

Topic 1: Gender Issues in Development

Required Readings:

Bennett, L. 2006. *Unequal citizens: Gender, caste and ethnic exclusion in Nepal*. Washington DC: The World Bank, DFID.

Joshi, S. 2001. 'Cheli-Beti' discourses of trafficking and constructions of gender, citizenship and Nation in modern Nepal. In *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 157-175: Routledge.

———. 2005. Waiting for Justice. *The Nation*. January (9):30-31.

Kanchuli, M. 2001. The Hunger for Justice and the Water of Desperation (Translated by W. Amtzis and M. Kanchuli). *Secret Places: New writing from Nepal* 13 (2).

Topic 2: Education and Development

Required Reading:

Dixit, S. 2003. Education, deception, state and society. In *State of Nepal*, eds. K. M. Dixit and S. Ramachandaran, 193-211. Kathmandu: Himal Books.

Topic 3: In Search of Agency

Required Readings:

de Sales, A. 2009. From ancestral conflicts to local empowerment: two narratives from a Nepalese community. *Dialectical anthropology* 33 (3):365-381.

Nightingale, A. J. 2005. "The Experts Taught Us All We Know": Professionalisation and Knowledge in Nepalese Community Forestry. *Antipode* 37 (3):581-604.

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- Pigg, S. L. 1992. Inventing Social Categories Through Place: Social Representations and Development in Nepal. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34 (3):491-513.
- . 1997. Found in Most Traditional Societies': Traditional Medical Practitioners Between Culture and Development.' In *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*, eds. F. Cooper and R. Packard, 259-291. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Module 6: Development Redefined (4.5 hours)

Topic 1: Social Entrepreneurship

Required Reading:

- Liechty, M. 2003. Modern Nepali History and the Rise of the Middle Class. In *Suitably modern: Making middle-class culture in a new consumer society*, 39-58. Princeton: Princeton Univ Press.

Topic 2: Social Capital and Civil Society

Required Reading:

- Shneiderman, S. B. 2009. The formation of political consciousness in rural Nepal. *Dialectical anthropology* 33 (3):287-308.

Topic 3: Thinking from the Bottom Up

Required Reading:

- Townsend, J. G., G. Porter, and E. Mawdsley. 2004. Creating spaces of resistance: development NGOs and their clients in Ghana, India and Mexico. *Antipode* 36 (5):871-889.

Module 7-8: Himalayan Excursion (20 field hours)

Topics: Trade, Tourism and Cultural Marketing in the Himalayas

Cultural Ecology of Nepal; Development in the Village: Hopes and Realities; Pilgrimage and Sacred Geography in the Himalayas Discussions Include: Insiders/Outsiders: Being a Tourist the Village after Thirty Years

Module 9: Governance, Opportunities and Challenges (Final Module Synthesis) (3 hours)

Discussion Topics: "Fixing" Development in Nepal; Development in the 21st Century; Bridging the Non-profit and Business sectors; Under the Governance Umbrella.

Student discussions include: Where Does Nepal Go From Here?, Taking Stock of What We've Learned and What We Can Do.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Description of Assignments:

Written Assignments

Written assignments must meet the structural and logistical expectations outlined in the semester syllabi.

Development Theories Reaction Paper

In an effort to make sure that everyone is on the same page from the outset, all students will complete a reaction paper by the end of the 2nd week. Working on this assignment will be a cumulative process ending in a five page (5pp) essay, not including bibliography, appendixes, etc.. The goal of the paper is to demonstrate the student understanding of two main development theories (writ large, e.g. modernization, neoliberalism, women and development, development as discourse, etc.) via a critical response to the readings. This paper should be both a summary of the development theories and critical

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in nature. Critical responses may present questions, rebuttals, syntheses of key ideas, or critical analyses of themes in the readings.

Development in Nepal Paper

Working on this assignment will be a cumulative process ending in a six to seven pages (6-7pp) written paper, not including bibliography, appendixes, etc.. The goal of the paper is to demonstrate the student understanding of some current development theory (write large, e.g. modernization, neoliberalism, women and development, development as discourse, etc.) and critiques of such theories in a Nepal specific context. Students are expected to choose a specific topic (health, education, water resources, women, historic preservation, etc.) and gain some first-hand knowledge of the current work in this sector. To do this students are expected to visit at least one organization, NGO, or INGO focusing their efforts in the specific field and complete an interview as part of the assignment. Students should prepare a list of questions in advance based on issues raised in the seminar readings and lectures.

Successful completion of the paper requires a discussion of the specific topic of choice in the larger development arena and the incorporation of concerns specific to Nepal such as the complex social stratification system as they impact efforts at change.

The paper will be due at the end of the seminar and for many students can be usefully combined with advance work on their ISP topic. The paper is an opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge of the very complex and slippery processes of development and social change. Some types of questions to consider when working on this assignment include, but are not limited to:

- How is development defined in the context you are examining?
- Who is defining “development” and what work does this definition do to bound potentialities?
- Who are the “beneficiaries”? Who are the decision makers?
- What are the avenues through which the problems and solutions are designed, evaluated, monitored?
- In what ways are development and these specific projects working to change Nepalese culture, economy, identity, subjectivity, etc.?

These are only examples; you should incorporate your own ideas and insights as part of your analysis of the development situation you are examining. Remember, too, there are rarely black and white answers in this type of work and there are rarely definitive definitions of what development is. Similarly, there are always nuances to pay attention to and analysis of the information you glean needs to be insightful, critical, and attendant to your own non-Nepali perspectives.

Lectures, Discussions, and Excursions

Students are required to lead at least one discussion session during the course on a pre-assigned topic. They are expected to demonstrate a basic understanding of the material and to facilitate group analysis of the crucial issues – i.e. this is not a regurgitation of the readings but a discussion of the questions and consequences of the readings in relation to learning experiences in-country.

Periodic Debriefings and Current Affairs

Every week and a half, depending on scheduling availability, we will debrief lectures and address current events developments in Nepal. Students will prepare brief annotated bibliographies of readings and review class notes prior to debrief. In addition, every student will take notes on at least one newspaper article (e.g. from *The Kathmandu Post*, *Himalayan Times*, *Nepali Times*, *Republica*, etc.) that relates to the broad theme of development and social change. Students will prepare to discuss the article and how it relates to the course themes, though not every student will present due to time constraints.

Village Study Project

This assignment will be briefed at the beginning of our excursion. The project integrates fieldwork techniques such as interviewing, participant observation, and possibly even participatory rural appraisal, as part of the process of understanding development in a rural context. It requires students

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to explore in-depth a specific rural community and usually, one particular ethnic group. Students are given the chance, through rural homestays, to participate directly in village life; this sometimes takes the form of helping with farm work or being part of a village festival. The assignment requires students to make first-hand observations, as well as analysis of the issues of cultural identity and capacity building as they apply to the village, and then to integrate their broader knowledge of Nepal by preparing a presentation with the theme "The Village in Thirty Years." Students deliver individual oral presentations as part of a group process of exploration and evaluation and turn in field notebooks at the end of the assignment. Grades are based on group effort and organization as a whole, individual oral presentations and quality of the field notebook.

Final Exam

The final exam for the course consists of short and long essay questions given to students one day prior. The goal of the exam is to give students the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge of development issues both within the macro and micro contexts and to use the analytical skills they have been developing as part of the seminar, in preparation for writing critical independent study project papers.

Assessment:

The Seminar consists of 45 hours of formal classroom lectures and more than 35 hours of field visits, informal talks, and group and individual discussions. Student performance is assessed on the basis of the tests, papers, contributions to group discussions, and enthusiastic initiative in his or her own learning process. The final grade is given by the Academic Director, according to each student's active reflections and involvement as instantiated in their papers and according to his/her degree of enthusiastic exploration of and authentic insights into the academic and intellectual themes of the program.

- Development Theories Reaction Paper 15%
- Development in Nepal paper 30%
- Village Study Project 15%
- Final exam 30%
- Attendance and Participation 10%

Refer to the syllabus for grading criteria for all courses.

Grading Scale

94-100%	A
90-93%	A-
87-89%	B+
84-86%	B
80-83%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
67-69%	D+
64-66%	D
below 64	F

Expectations and Policies

Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.

Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.

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Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak

Attendance. All students are required to attend all lectures at the SIT Nepal schoolhouse in Kathmandu and to participate in all bi-weekly discussion and analysis sessions. All excursions are mandatory and students must discuss absences with the Academic Director before the planned departure.

Participation. Participation is not the same as attendance. All students are expected to participate fully in all aspects of the seminar. This means asking pertinent questions to the course's guest lecturers, engaging in discussion and analysis during lectures, group discussions and on excursions. Students are expected to complete the required reading in a timely fashion, and to demonstrate their understanding of texts through reflection, writing, and discussion.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and the academic appeals process. Also, refer to the specific information available in the Student Handbook and the Program Handbook given to you at Orientation.

Disability Services: For information about and support from Disability Services (DS) to facilitate an accessible educational experience, please contact disabilityservices@sit.edu or +1-802-258-3390. Additional information regarding SIT Disability Services can be found on the DS website at: <http://studyabroad.sit.edu/disabilityservices>.

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