INDIGENOUS POLITICS: DECOLONIZATION OR “DEVELOPMENT”

Class Time: Thursday 11:30-2:30
Location: R S128

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York University is situated on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation. The University acknowledges other indigenous nations who have longstanding relationships with this territory, such as the Huron-Wendat, the Haudenosaunee and the Métis nations.

Course Description
Settler colonialism is being challenged by Indigenous peoples in Canada and across the globe as Indigenous peoples’ decolonize. Hence what is at stake is the Indigenous struggle not only against colonialism but also for recognition and emancipation. A fundamental part of that struggle has included challenges to forms of “development”. But, what is the purpose of development? What is the Indigenous experience of development? In search for answers to these and other similar questions, this course considers theories of development in light of the practical experiences and challenges confronted by Indigenous people in their struggle for decolonization.

The objective of this course is to examine and further develop the analytic tools necessary to understand the challenge for Indigenous decolonization in the global economy. Central analytic questions to be addressed include the changing relationship between capitalism and indigenous peoples, between capitalist and non-capitalist modes of production and the role of the state. Drawing on different community, country and group experiences, topics to be considered include: the globalization of indigenous issues; First Nations, trade liberalization and state restructuring; resource development, the UN and indigenous rights; and, forms of resistance. The course also investigates the legal, cultural and environmental implications of development strategies.

Course Requirements
Professionalism 20%
Seminar Presentation 20%
Seminar Paper 20% (Due Oct 20)
Essay 40% (Due Dec 5)
TOTAL: 100%
**Professionalism**

A graduate seminar, active and regular class participation is a required expectation of successful performance in the course. Students are expected to have completed ALL the required readings each week and to demonstrate that familiarity through class discussion. Professionalism, as a grade, includes arriving to class punctually and participating thoughtfully. If a student misses a class they can submit a 1-2 page review and critical analysis of the readings to receive the weekly participation grade.

**Collegiality:** This course will be a safe and respectful learning environment where people can express ideas and opinions while engaging in critical, reflexive, academic discussion.

**Course Conduct:** Cell phones must be turned off during class. Private conversations during class are strongly discouraged as is general web surfing, etc. These interfere with the ability of those around you to follow class lectures and discussion. Students and the instructor are expected to disagree on issues of interpretation and approach but a high standard of courtesy and decorum is expected in all classroom interactions. Personal attacks, excessive and/or loud interruptions, derogatory or offensive (such as racist, sexist or homophobic) comments, and any behaviour generally dismissive of the comments of others will not be tolerated. Students should focus on deconstructing and challenging the **arguments** of the author and not assailing the character of the individual.

**Seminar Presentation**

Students will be assigned one week in which they are responsible for presenting the readings on the topic. They will synthesize the readings and present their analysis of them to the class. They will lead class discussion and provide an overview of key themes, linking them to practical or contemporary examples and debates. Students will initiate discussion and offer thought-provoking questions to generate class dialogue.

**Seminar Paper (Oct 20, due in class)**

Students are required to critically review and evaluate one (or more) of the readings from one of the weeks in the first section (Weeks 2-5). The focus here is primarily on theoretical questions of colonization, capitalism and “development”. Your task is to highlight and review the strengths/weaknesses of a theoretical argument/analysis/approach and to test its relevance against a contemporary example in Canadian/indigenous politics. Is the argument persuasive? If so, why? If not, why not? And is it still relevant or useful today? Be sure to connect your theoretical analysis to your example (rather than have them stand alone). You do not have to give equal weight to all the readings and can focus on one or two authors.
Essay (Dec 5, hand in at Robarts Centre by 4 pm)

Students are required to prepare a comparative study/analysis. One potential question that may be considered: is (x) development colonizing or decolonizing? The essay must examine the experiences of an Indigenous group/community located in a Canadian setting with one from another country studied within the course (US, Mexico, Latin America, Antipodes, Scandinavia). The study should provide analysis in light of the themes and topics covered in the course, including issues arising in political, economic and cultural development. Potential topics include gender and development; mining and development; land conflicts and/or ecological dilemmas.

COURSE OVERVIEW:

Week 1: 8-Sept  Course Introduction
Week 2: 15-Sept  Settler Colonialism in Canada
Week 3: 22-Sept  Imperialism and Indigenous Methodology
Week 4: 29-Sept  Theorizing Indigenous Development (meet 10:30!)
Week 5: 6-Oct  Colonialism, Capitalism and Class
Week 6: 13-Oct  Neoliberal Globalization
Week 7: 20-Oct  Economics of Dev. I: Non-Renewable Resources
Week 8: 27-Oct  Reading Week – no classes
Week 9: 3-Nov  Economics of Development II: Alternatives (Tourism)
Week 10: 10-Nov  Politics of Development I: Institutional Representation
Week 11: 17-Nov  Politics of Development II: Social Movements
Week 12: 24-Nov  Cultural Development I: Gender
Week 13: 1-Dec  Indigenous Resurgence and/v. Reconciliation
Weekly reading assignments

THEORETICAL TOOLS AND ANALYTIC CONCEPTS

Week 1:  8-Sept    INTRODUCTION Canada


Week 2:  15-Sept    Thinking “Through” Settler Colonialism in Canada


Recommended:


Week 3:  22-Sept    Imperialism and Indigenous Methodology


STRONGLY Recommended you review these key documents:

- AANDC: Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Development in the Canadian Arctic [http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100037493/1100100037495]
- York University: [http://www.yorku.ca/research/support/documents/index.html]

Week 4: 29-Sept Theorizing Indigenous “Development”


**Recommended:**


**Week 5: 6-Oct Colonialism, Capitalism and Class**


http://thenewinquiry.com/features/thesis-2-capitalism-no-more/ (read this excerpt)

Recommended:


Week 6: _______13-Oct _______ Neoliberal Globalization

Canada-


United States-


Central/South America-


Recommended:


DEVELOPMENT TOPICS IN COMPARATIVE CONTEXT

Week 7:   20-Oct    Economics of Development I: Non-Renewable Res.

Canada-


Central/South America-


New Zealand/Australia-


Recommended:


Week 8: 27-Oct Reading Week (no classes)

Week 9: 3-Nov Economics of Development II: Alternatives (Tourism)

General/Comparative –


Central/South America –


Northern Europe –


Week 10: 10-Nov Politics of Development I: Institutional Representation

Canada-


New Zealand/Australia –


**Northern Europe –**


**Week 11: 17-Nov Politics of Development II: Social Movements**


**United States –**


**Central/South America –**


**Recommended:**


Week 12: 24–Nov  Cultural Development: Gender

Canada-


United States-


New Zealand/Australia-


Central/South America-


Recommended:

Week 13: 1-Dec  Indigenous Resurgence or “Reconciliation”


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Indigenous Interests in the Age of Globalization. Arctic Center, University of Lapland, Rovaniemi, June 17.


Recommended: