Political Economy of Gender in South Asia
Spring 2019
[Meeting Time]
PROVISIONAL SYLLABUS
Last Updated: 10/04/2018

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Office Hours:

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course focuses on the political and economic underpinnings and implications of gender inequality in South Asia. We will draw on evidence from Bangladesh, Pakistan and India to guide our theoretical and empirical inquiry into the following broad questions:

1) What is gender, and what approaches do social scientists use to study gender inequality?
2) How does gender inequality manifest in different social, economic and political spheres e.g. the household, the labor market, the electorate, the government?
3) What are the cultural and structural drivers of gender inequality?
4) How effective are different approaches to tackling gender inequality in South Asia?

The course introduces students to a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches, patterns and predictions emerging from empirical research, and context specific lessons.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
By the end of this course, students will be able to do the following:
• Be conversant in key theories and empirical patterns of gender inequality
• Engage critically with, and arbitrate between competing theories
• Use the concepts and theories learnt to evaluate evidence from new cases
• Construct clear arguments that evaluate, build on and challenge the ones presented in the syllabus readings

PREREQUISITES:
No formal prerequisites. Previous coursework in statistical data analysis will be helpful in reading some of the assigned papers but is not required. I will provide handouts and support during office hours on how to read quantitative empirical articles in the social sciences for those who are unfamiliar.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS & ASSESSMENT:

Attendance & Participation ..................................................................................20%
Attendance and active participation is mandatory and integral to achieving the learning objectives of this course.

Students will be assessed on regular attendance, the substantive quality of their contributions to the class discussion, responses to questions posed by the instructor and peer discussion leaders, and their ability to respond to and build upon their peers’ comments to generate fruitful conversation.

This is a reading intensive course. Successful participation will depend on closely reading the required texts before each week’s seminar, and adhering to the discussion guidelines collectively set by course participants.

Peer Discussion Guide.........................................................................................5%
Each student will be responsible for serving as a discussion guide for 1 week during the semester. This task will involve preparing and distributing a set of discussion questions pertaining to the assigned readings 24 hours in advance of that week’s seminar meeting, and moderating part of the class discussion based using the prepared questions. I will distribute guidelines and a signup sheet on the first day of class.

Reading Responses x 3.......................................................................................30%
Students will be expected to write 3 short reading response papers (1-2 pages) throughout the course of the semester. Response papers must engage primarily one of the assigned texts for a particular week. Good papers will avoid summarization, advance an original and clearly stated argument about the reading, and draw connections with at least one other reading from the same week, or one of the prior weeks.

The first 2 response papers must be submitted during Weeks 2-6. The third response paper must be submitted during Weeks 7-13. The response papers will be due online by 5pm on the day prior to that week’s seminar time. Students may not submit a response paper during the week they are serving as a peer discussion guide. Only one response may be submitted in a particular week.

Final Paper.........................................................................................................45%
Students are required to write a 15-20 page original research paper for this seminar that (i) advances an original theoretical argument related to one of the themes of the course, and (ii) tests this argument using evidence. I will distribute detailed guidelines for the paper. The assessment for this assignment is broken down into 5 sub-components:
• 1 page topic memo due Week 7…………………………………………….5%
• Instructor meeting during Week 10……………………………………no grade
• First draft of paper due Week 12………………………………………...15%
• 1-2 page commentary on peer paper due Week 13……………………5%
• Final draft of paper due by email 12noon, Monday, May 6……………..20%

COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance:
Attendance is mandatory and unexcused absences will negatively impact your grade. You will have 1 excused absence during the semester – no questions asked. In case of illness, other obligations, or conflict with a religious observance, please email me to arrange an appropriate accommodation.

Electronic Devices:
You may use laptops and tablets for course related purposes during the seminar. Use of these devices for purposes unrelated to the course during seminar time will negatively impact participation grades. I request that all cell-phones remain silent and off the table during class.

Email:
In general, email should be used for logistical and short queries and you can expect a reply within 48hrs during weekdays. Substantive questions and concerns should be brought to office hours, where I look forward to seeing you!

Late Work:
Response papers and discussion guide questions submitted after the deadline will not be accepted. Other late work will be downgraded by 1/3rd of a letter grade (A to A-, A- to B+ etc.) for each day after the deadline. As with attendance, in case of illness, family emergency, or conflict with a religious observance, please email me to arrange an appropriate accommodation.

Academic Integrity:
It is your responsibility to be aware of the various forms of academic dishonesty and plagiarism, related university regulations, and to adhere to these regulations. Ignorance of will not constitute an excuse for violation. Please refer to the Yale Undergraduate Regulations (http://catalog.yale.edu/undergraduate-regulations/) for more detail, and to the Yale Writing Center (https://ctl.yale.edu/writing/using-sources) for guidance on how to appropriately cite sources in your work.

Disability:
I will work to provide the appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities. Please contact the Yale University Resource Office on Disabilities to discuss your needs and request accommodations.
Inclusivity and Classroom Climate:
An inclusive and safe learning environment for all students is a priority for this course. To this end, we will use time on the first day of class to set collective guidelines for discussion. In general, disagreement is highly encouraged and disrespect will not be tolerated.

A note that Week 9 of the course involves material pertaining to gender-based violence. If you are concerned about your ability to participate this week, please reach out to me to discuss this. Please be aware that if you discuss an incident of potential sexual misconduct with a staff/faculty member, they are obligated to inform the college’s Title IX coordinator about the basic facts of the incident. The coordinators will not take action or plan response without the complainant’s consent and can be asked to maintain confidentiality.

COURSE SCHEDULE & READINGS

WEEK 1: Introduction
_Gender and gender inequality as a subject of inquiry (Read by Week 2)_


WEEK 2: Population
_Why are women missing in South Asia?_


Recommended:

WEEK 3: Marriage & the Household

Marriage and the household as sites of the production and reproduction of gender roles and inequality


Recommended:

WEEK 4: Labor

Why do women make up a small portion of the South Asian labor force? How should we think about the work that women do?


Recommended:

**Week 5: Land**

*Do property rights reduce gender inequality?*


**Recommended**


**Week 6: Political Representation I**

*Descriptive Representation*

**LAST WEEK TO SUBMIT READING RESPONSE #2**


**WEEK 7: Political Representation II**

*Substantive representation*

**FINAL PAPER TOPIC MEMO DUE IN CLASS**

Recommended:

Week 8: Political Participation
Gender gaps in different forms of political participation


Week 9: Violence
Forms, drivers and consequences of gender based violence

5. To Watch: *India’s Daughter*. Dir. Leslee Udwin. 2015

**Week 10: Religion, Culture and Norms**

Is Islam/Hinduism/South Asian culture bad for women? What’s wrong with this question?

**FINAL PAPER MEETING WITH INSTRUCTOR THIS WEEK**


**Recommended**


**Week 11: Structure and Economic Development**

Relationship between economic structures, development and gender equality


**Week 12: Law**

*When are gender-equalizing laws passed? Can legal reform achieve equality?*
FIRST DRAFT OF FINAL PAPER DUE


Week 13: Imagining Equality
This week is an opportunity to reflect on alternative arrangements and the potential for transformative change

PEER COMMENTARY DUE
LAST WEEK TO SUBMIT READING RESPONSE #3