

Development Geographies: Current Debates

Course Description:

We live in unprecedented times, when 'normality', including around development processes, was perforated by the CoVID-19 pandemic initially, followed by a war in Ukraine, soaring prices of essentials (food and fuel), an impending global recession and debt distress for at least some 53 countries, according to the UN and likely projected up to 73 countries. It has hence become a moment for reflection on social harms (to people's lives and livelihoods, for instance) and recompense (the environment) of these interlocking crises, with this awkward phase rightfully nudging us to revisit questions on the nature of the global economy and development processes. This course is on development geographies. Yet, instead of revisiting the depth and richness of the development paradigm and its contested nature, we use the current contemporary moment as a point of departure to focus on current debates around feminism and social reproduction, debt distress and degrowth. These contemporary discussions will help us disrupt development geography, as we have known it – and hopefully, help craft a toolbox that brings to the forefront the need for a regenerating state that recognizes the depletion and social harm four decades of market-centric global economy has wrought.

We will organize the course around three pivot points:

- a) depletion, social reproduction and regeneration – to make feminist and gender debates central to contemporary contributions around global development;
- b) development and degrowth in rebalancing the global economy;
- c) debt distress and social life – the calls for disrupting and uprooting the development paradigm from its neo-colonial moorings.

Credits: 7.5 ECTS

Course convenor and contributors:

Convenor: Kanchana N Ruwanpura, Professor – Human Geography, University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg, Sweden

Co-convenor: Lowe Börjeson, Associate Professor, Department of Human Geography, Stockholm University, Sweden

Deadline and process: June 15th 2024 (or to new cohort of students 2024/25, September 1st 2024), please e-mail a copy of the application (see document) to kanchana.ruwanpura@gu.se and Lowe.Borjeson@humangeo.su.se

Guest speakers (Tentative; TBC and expanded):

Grieve Chelwa, New School University, USA (located in Lusaka, Zambia)

Julie McLevy, Bristol University, UK (Editor-in-Chief - *Geoforum*)

Caroline Faria, University of Texas – Austin, USA

Stuart Corbridge, Durham University, U.K.

Keith Richard, Cambridge University, U.K. (former editor – *The Geographical Journal*)

Bhumika Muchchala, *Third World Network*, USA

Ilda Lindell, Associate Professor, Department of Human Geography, Stockholm University, Sweden

Diversity/Climate Statement: The course hopes to draw upon a diverse group of academics based globally, and hence they may be joining us via Zoom. This will also resonate with the climate policies of various Swedish universities – although all of us (Swedish-based academics)

and students will be present in person. All local participants are encouraged to travel via public transport (i.e. avoid flying) for climate-related reasons.

Course Admission:

This course is directed to geographers, anthropologists, sociologists, political economists and global studies, and economic historian scholars pursuing research that relates to development subjects in some way. The course is conducted as a Swedish national PhD-course in Human Geography, which means that in case of a large number of applications, priority will be given to PhD-students at member departments, ie human geography departments in Sweden. However, the course is also open to doctoral students in cognate disciplines both from Sweden and beyond; as well as in rare cases to early career researchers.

Language of instruction/Syllabus:

English

Approximately 1,000 pages of compulsory readings.

Course Fees:

There is no course fee, but participants will have to cover travel, accommodation etc. by their own arrangements. PhD candidates from the Departments of Human Geography in Sweden make the arrangements with their home institutions.

Location (as at January 2024):

September: University of Stockholm

November: University of Gothenburg

Timing of Course:

September 18th-20th 2024

November 6th- 8th 2024

Session 1:

Week 38 (September 18th – 20th) – Come with a 2-slide introduction with images and text with details on:

- (a) PhD project;
- (b) what is important in terms of development;
- (c) connections to the world outside of academia

Be prepared to speak around an outline of one's PhD project and its connection to development and the world outside of academia and reflect on:

- i) What does development geography mean today?; and
- ii) Where is development geography today?

Session 1: September (September 18th-20th): STOCKHOLM

Introduction to the course, including guest speakers virtually connecting

D1: September 18th 2024

12.00 pm: Lunch connection: students and convenors (own costs)

1.30 pm: Introduction: Students and Convenors: Students present a 2-page PPT.

3.00 pm: Guest speaker panel:

6.00 pm: Dinner together (at own expense)

D2: September 19th 2024

10.00 am–12.00 pm: Seminar: Reflections on current debates

12.00 pm: Break for lunch

1.15 pm–3.00 pm: Seminar: Discussing assigned readings

3.30–5.00 pm: Seminar: Guest lectures

D3: September 20th 2024

10.00 am–12.30 pm: Seminar: Reflections and debrief guest lecturers and readings

12.00 pm: Break for lunch

13:30 hours: END

October 31st 2024: Draft essay for peer review (at least 2,000 words)

Session 2: November 6th-8th 2024: GOTHENBURG

D1: November 6th 2024

10.00 am: Peer review session in groups

12.30 pm: Lunch

3.00–5.00 pm: Seminar: Discussing assigned readings

D2: November 7th 2024

9.00 am–12.00 pm: Research Ethics Course: Doing Research in the Global South (Quantitative and qualitative research methods)

1.00–2.00 pm: LUNCH break (own costs)

2.00–4.00 pm: Session with Editors

1. Presentation and Q&A for students on editorial expectations and role as an editor for shorter pieces in *Geoforum*, *Geographical Journal*, *Gender, Place and Culture* or *Transactions*.
2. Discussion around conceptually based writing; exposing students to other forms of writing.
3. Give insight into the editorial process and the normality of revising and resubmitting decisions; the varied forms of editorial guidance.

4.30 pm: Follow up after the journal review and peer review

D3: November 8th 2024

10.00 am–12.30 pm: Writing workshop I: Group writing session (self-administered)

12.30–2.00 pm: Lunch.

2.00–4.00 pm: Wrap up session: Connecting the dots – speakers and readings

5.00 pm: END OF COURSE MEAL

November 25th 2024: Submit revised essay 3,000–4,000, inclusive of references. The essay also should draw on and integrate the preliminary readings provided here. This can take the form of a critical review, research note, Q&A session, or blog entries (circa 1k each) – to possibly submit to different publishing forums.

Course Assessments:

The course assessments will consist of continuous evaluation of class participation and engagement, along with an obligatory 4,000-word essay framed alongside viewpoints, critical reviews, and research notes (including references).

We anticipate students to use the readings we provide as a starting place and integrate them into their own writings but also to develop their own relevant readings to write commentaries or critical reviews, which they may also consider submitting to several possible journals. The course organizers and contributors will offer comments with a view to this possibility.

Course literature (further readings to be added):

Required Readings:

Abazeri, Mariam (2022) “Decolonial feminisms and degrowth” *Futures* 136 (February 2022)
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0016328722000027>

Ali, Tariq, Mirza Hassan and Naomi Hossain (2021) “The moral and political economy of the pandemic: Weak states and strong societies during CoVID-19” *World Development* 137(January): 105-216

Mawdsley, Emma and Jack Taggart (2022) “Rethinking d/Development” *Progress in Human Geography* 46(1):3-20

Mosley, Layna and Peter Rosendorff (2023) “The Unfolding Sovereign Debt Crisis” *Current History* 122(840): 9-14 <https://doi.org/10.1525/curh.2023.122.840.9>

TOPIC I: Feminism and gender: Depletion, social reproduction and regeneration

Rai, Shirin, Benjamin Brown and Kanchana N Ruwanpura (2019) “SDG8: Decent work and economic growth – A gendered analysis” *World Development* 113(C): 368-380

Elias, Juanita, and Shirin Rai (2015) “The Everyday Gendered Political Economy of Violence.” *Politics & Gender* 11 (02): 424-29.

Sultana, Farhana (2021) “Climate change, CoVID-19 and the co-production of injustices: A feminist reading of overlapping crises” *Social and Cultural Geography*

TOPIC II: Development and degrowth

Clapp, J., & Moseley, W. G. (2020). This food crisis is different: COVID-19 and the fragility of the neoliberal food security order. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 47(7), 1393-1417.

Hickel, Jason (2020) “What does degrowth mean? A few points of clarification” *Globalizations*, 1-7.

Head, Lesley (2022). Beyond Green: Human–environment geographies for the ‘new’ century. *Environment and Planning F* 1(1): 93-103

Schmelzer, Matthias (2022) “From Luddites to limits? Towards a systematization of growth critiques in historical perspective” *Globalizations* 20(3): 447-464
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2022.2106044>

TOPIC III: Debt distress and social life

Ghosh, Jayati (2021) *Gender concerns in debt relief* IIED/IDRC Issue Paper: December 2021
<https://www.iied.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/2021-12/2069iied.pdf>

Sallan, Iolanda Fresnillo (2020) "Debt and climate: Entangled emergencies derailing women's rights and gender justice" *Gender and Development* 28(3): 499-513

Zajontz, Tim (2022) "Debt, distress, dispossession: Towards a critical political economy of Africa's financial dependency" *Review of African Political Economy* 49(171): 173-183