

CET Syllabus of Record



Program: CET Vietnam: Development Studies

Course Title: Development Studies in Southeast Asia

Course Code: VS250

Total Hours: 45

Recommended Credits: 3

Suggested Cross Listings: International Studies, Environmental Studies, Development Studies

Language of Instruction: English

Prerequisites/Requirements: None

Description

Economic development, under-development, developing world, and so on. "Development" seems so commonplace and obvious. Why not reflect on its complex relationship with other "obvious" notions: modernization, modernity, striving to be "modern" or "developed"? In this course we approach these issues from within a metropolis undergoing rapid social change and fast economic growth: our aim is to conceptualize better the complex flows of capital, people, and ideas underlying theories and practices of development and modernization.

We begin with urbanization, one key aspect of these questions in Southeast Asia and Asia. We begin here and now, in Saigon/Ho Chi Minh City. From this grounding in daily life, we reflect on various theories of development. We then move on to politics of development, such as the politics of natural resource use and environmental destruction. This course focuses on urban planning, demolition, and environment. Infrastructure is one of the main interfaces between people and development. What is the role and place of people in development? Who decides on development policies? How are development decisions made, where and by/for whom?

Objectives

Through this course, students gain:

- a more nuanced, sophisticated understanding of notions of 'development,' and the central role of the environment in development initiatives and discourses
- training in participant-observation methods
- theoretical and practical skills to better analyze the Vietnamese situation, and development issues more generally.

Course Requirements

Active participation is essential in this course. Students are expected to attend each class and field trip, to come to class adequately prepared to discuss readings and research, and to turn in assignments well-prepared and on time. Readings average around 50-100 pages per session.

Fieldwork exercises provide an opportunity to raise questions, discuss new theories, and tie in readings to field trips, classes or practicum experiences. We discuss your fieldwork exercises during the seminar after you present them in class.

At the end of the semester, you submit a research essay (10-15 pages). We discuss research topics as part of the seminar. Final papers need to be polished, and describe how you dealt with methodological or practical challenges when conducting research.

You will be responsible for weekly response papers, 3 written exercises, and a final term paper. The objective of these 3 written exercises is to provide you with sustained ethnographic engagement with development issues over the semester. A second aim is to prepare you to write a good, self-reflective essay on key development issues while in Vietnam.

- Written exercise #1: Urban Development/Space
- Written exercise #2: Rural Development/Space
- Written exercise #3: Collaborative Book Review
- Final research paper on a key development and environment issue in Vietnam

Methods of Evaluation

Final grades are determined as follows:

3 Written Exercises	30%
Class Participation	30%
Final Research Paper	40%

All CET programs and courses use this grading scale.

A:	100-93%	C+:	77-79%
A-:	90-92%	C:	73-76%
B+:	87-89%	D+:	70-72%
B:	83-86%	D:	67-69%
B-:	80-82%	D-:	66-60%
		F:	59% and below

Primary Texts

Melanie Beresford, "Doi Moi in Review: The Challenges of Building Market Socialism in Vietnam" *Journal of Contemporary Asia* Vol. 38, No. 2, May 2008, pp. 221-243.

David Biggs, Chapter 3 "Hydroagricultural Crisis," Chapter 4 "Balkanization," and Chapter 5 "Modernization" (pp. 91-196) in *Quagmire* (University of Washington Press 2010).

Trung Dinh Dang, "Post-1975 Land Reform in Southern Vietnam: How Local Actions and Responses Affected National Land Policy" (*Journal of Vietnamese Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (Fall 2010), pp. 72-105).

Mike Davis, "Planet of Slums."

James Ferguson, "Anthropology and Its Evil Twin: 'Development' in the Constitution of a Discipline."

Eric Harms, *Luxury and Rubble: Civility and Dispossession in the New Saigon* (University of California Press 2016). Part 1.

Bill Hayton, *Vietnam Rising Dragon* (Yale University Press, 2010).

Samuel Huntington, "Bases of Accommodation" *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 46, No. 4 (Jul., 1968), pp. 642-656

Vũ Đức Liêm, "Vietnam at the Khmer Frontier: Boundary Politics, 1802–1847" (*Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review*, Volume 5, Number 2, November 2016, pp. 534-564).

Pam McElwee, "Environmental Rule in Vietnam."

T.G. McGee, "The Southeast Asian City: A Social Geography of the Primate Cities of Southeast Asia."

Karl Polanyi, "The Self-Regulating Market and the Fictitious Commodities: Labor, Land, and Money."

James Scott, *Seeing Like a State* (Yale University Press, 1998).

Christophe Robert, "Dead Zone," in *Governing the Dead: Sovereignty and the Politics of Dead Bodies*, ed. F. Stepputat (Manchester University Press, 2014).

AbdouMaliq Simone, "People as Infrastructure: Intersecting Fragments in Johannesburg."

Ananya Roy, "The 21st-Century Metropolis: New Geographies of Theory."

Nguyen Van Suu, "The Politics of Land: Inequality in Land Access and Local Conflicts in the Red River Delta since Decollectivization."

Philip Taylor, "Redressing Disadvantage or Re-arranging Inequality? Development Interventions and Local Responses in the Mekong Delta."

Raymond Williams, "Keywords" (Oxford University Press, 1983). Civilization (pp. 57-60), Development (pp. 103-104).

Katherine Verdery, "What Was Socialism, and Why Did It Fall?"

Outline of Course Content

One to three weeks will be spent on each of the following topics.

- Development in Practice
- Theories of Urban Spaces, Realities of Urbanization
- Asian Cities: Geographies and Mediations
- Unpacking the City: Marginal Spaces, Slums, Infrastructures
- The Making of the Rural Vietnam
- Saigon: War and Nostalgia
- Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh I: Socialism and Post Socialism?
- Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh II: The Good
- Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh III: The Bad and Ugly