

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND (de)COLONISATION – Semester 1 2024-2025

Course Description

Today, Indigenous Peoples' rights are outlined in international law conventions such as the United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) or the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (through the Nagoya Protocol). This course will investigate how and whether these rights are being put into action through norm and regulation processes around the world at the national and local levels. In order to do this, it will take a deeper look at the theories of postcolonialism, decolonisation and anti-colonialism proposed by academics and activists. Mainly focusing on British settler societies, this course will also investigate the different methods of colonisation: trade, religion, culture, science, mapping, and knowledge production. It will discuss the pre-colonial, the colonial period and its aftermath. We will explore such questions such as, what are traditional knowledge, customary law systems and the different forms of indigenous governance? What are Indigenous Peoples' connections to Nature and how do they differ to Western practices? How was colonial power enforced and what are its remnants today? How is justice perceived and can it be achieved for Indigenous Peoples? What are Indigenous Peoples doing to attain what they want? What (re)conciliation processes exist between Indigenous and non-indigenous peoples in settler colonies? In taking this course, students will be asked to reflect on the notion of 'Western society', and analyse what the features of a true 'postcolonial society' might be and whether one can exist.

Weekly Themes

1. Indigenous Peoples: What, where, when? Identity politics
2. Postcolonial and decolonisation theory: What is the current state of academic thinking?
3. Anticolonial: Indigenous Peoples' activist movements across the globe
4. Indigenous Peoples' international institutions
5. Customary Law: Different ways of Thinking
6. Traditional Knowledge: Different ways of Knowing
7. Living with Nature: Different ways of Being
8. Power and colonisation: Western governance and governmentality
9. British forms of colonisation: Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa
10. Binary forms? Western and Other cultures

Learning Outcomes

After following this course students will:

- Comprehend and be able explain the main features of the colonisation process: its history and how it affects the world today;
- Describe identity politics and how this plays a role in modern society;
- Understand the legacies of the 'Western': legal system, knowledge production, and systems of power; and
- Contrast and critique different societal values

Course Requirements:

For each class you need to carry out the required readings or viewings of document(s). You are also expected to participate in class discussion.

Evaluation*

EVALUATION ACTIVITY 1

50% of FINAL GRADE

LEADER OF SMALL GROUP

DISCUSSION:

- For each week of class there are essential documents to read or watch. You will be responsible for guiding your fellow students on one of these.
- What are the main arguments of the document? What are its positive and negative aspects?
- You will lead a discussion/activity on the document helping your fellow students understand it fully.

EVALUATION ACTIVITY 2

40% of FINAL GRADE

ORAL ACTIVITY/QUIZ/GAME:

Design a 20-minute class activity for your classmates to help them 'enjoy' and understand the week's topic

EVALUATION ACTIVITY 3

10% of FINAL GRADE

CLASS PARTICIPATION

- Do you engage in class discussions?
- Do you participate in class?