Course Syllabus

This course is an introduction to the vast social changes occurring in the South Asian subcontinent. In the first half of the course, our focus will be placed on India and Pakistan – two of the most populated countries in the world – though issues involving other countries will be addressed as appropriate. We begin with a brief overview of the subcontinent, looking at the major ‘Great Traditions’ as well as other internal and external social forces that have had a great impact on these societies, culminating in Independence from Britain. We then focus on post-independence paths of development in India and Pakistan, looking in particular at patterns of industrialization, economic planning, political crises, challenges, and institution building.

Building on this, we turn our attention to major issues in the arena of development and social change including demands for literacy and women's rights (i.e., empowering the previously socially disempowered); the struggle to alleviate poverty and promote sustainability while ensuring livable cities; and political institution building challenges, particularly in light of religious/ethnic conflict and associated human rights concerns. There are fewer assigned readings in the second half of the course as it will focus a great deal on student participation and sharing your research with the class.

Course Objectives:
1. To gain an awareness of the historical background of the subcontinent and the influence of history on contemporary society;
2. To understand the sociocultural similarities yet significant diversity within this culture area;
3. To learn about the political and economic realities and challenges of this region;
4. To understand the rapid social changes the region is experiencing;
5. To brainstorm on possible regional solutions to challenges confronting the region.

Grading for the course will be assessed on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>% of final grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>a. In-class mid-term exam on Monday May 6th</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>b. Participation in classroom discussions (not simply attendance):</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Group project portfolio (see separate handout):</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<td>d. Final essay, handed out in class on May 22nd and will be due in class on Wednesday June 5th.</td>
<td>20%</td>
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All readings should be completed before the class in which they will be addressed to facilitate discussion. While there is no additional requirement, per se, for graduate students, it is expected that they will be eminently prepared for all in-class discussions and will take the lead – or share the lead – in facilitating the group projects.

The following four required books are available for purchase at the U of O bookstore:
Margaret Alston (ed.) *Women, Political Struggles and Gender Equality in South Asia* Palgrave Macmillan, 2016
Kumar, Rajiv and Omita Goyal (Eds.) *Thirty Years of SAARC: Society, Culture and Development* Sage, 2016.
Course Outline

WEEKS I & II  Introduction: Contextualizing History, Culture and Society
April 1-3, 8-10

Film to be screened: The Story of India

We will explore the cultural background of the Great Traditions of Hinduism and Islam in the subcontinent, the basis of social organization as well as cover the social impact of the British Raj.

Required Readings:
Alston, pp. 1-13
Guneratne & Weiss, pp. 1-18, 21-92
Kumar & Goyal, pp. xv-xxi
Talbot, “Introduction” (pp. 1-10), “Land, Society, Environment” (pp. 32-46), “British Rule” (pp. 65-79), “The ‘High Noon’ of Empire” (pp. 80-97)

WEEK III  Post-Independence Political and Economic Goals and Challenges: India
April 15-17

Required Readings:
Alston, pp. 155-168
Guneratne & Weiss, pp. 105-147
Kumar & Goyal, pp. 1-11
Talbot, “The Nation and Beyond” (pp. 117-129), “Independence with Partition” (pp. 130-145), “Nehru and the ‘New India’” (pp. 149-163), “Challenges to Nehruvian India” (pp. 181-195)

WEEK IV  Post-Independence Political and Economic Goals and Challenges: Pakistan
April 22-24

Required Readings:
Alston, pp. 58-70, 72-81
Guneratne & Weiss, pp. 169-207
Kumar & Goyal, pp. 96-108
Talbot, “Pakistan’s Failure in Democratic Consolidation” (pp. 164-177), “Pakistan’s National Crisis and the Birth of Bangladesh” (pp. 196-209), “Bangladesh since Independence” (pp. 210-225), “Pakistan since 1991” (pp. 226-241)
WEEK V  Why Inequality Matters: The Social Costs of Militarism in the Region
April 29-May 1

**Required Readings:**
Kumar & Goyal, pp. 65-75, 1163-169
Talbot, “Borders and Boundaries” (pp. 13-31), “The Contemporary
International Relations of South Asia” (pp. 254-269)

WEEK VI  In-Class Mid-term Examination
May 6

WEEK VI  Regional Concerns: the Promise of SAARC and SAFTA
May 8

**Required Readings:**
Kumar & Goyal, pp. 25-40, 42-52, 134-142
SAARC website: Look at “Areas of Cooperation”

From now on, the class format will change, and we will be fully engaged with each of the five countries of South Asia. On Tuesdays, we will discuss the larger arenas of the issue as well as the readings; these are selected readings, for you to read as you would like (but do read some of them each week!). On Thursdays, we will begin each class with 5-7 minute oral presentations from each of the five groups, take a caucus break and then explore possibilities for regional cooperation on the issues under discussion.

WEEK VII  Women's Empowerment: Literacy, Employment and Political Participation
May 13-15

**Required Readings:**
Kumar & Goyal, pp. 176-182

WEEK VIII  Urban Environmental Challenges and Poverty Alleviation
May 20-22

Final essay topic will be handed out in class on May 22nd and will be due in class on Wednesday June 5th.
**Required Readings:**
Alston, pp. 117-133
Kumar & Goyal, pp. 53-64
Talbot, “India Shining” pp. 242-253

**WEEKS IX & X  Political Challenges and Religious/Ethnic Conflict**
May 29 and June 3

**Required Readings:**
Alston, pp. 193-207, 209-223, 225-236
Guneratne & Weiss, pp. 218-221
Kumar & Goyal, pp. 239-251

**WEEK X  Discussion: Struggles over Rights and Seeking Common Ground**
June 5

This last day of class, we’ll be discussing various struggles over rights discussed in Guneratne & Weiss, exploring the results of the group process, and our visions of South Asia’s future. *We can discuss this in advance: shall class instead be held at the Evergreen restaurant for lunch?*

**Required Readings:**
Alston, pp. 254-256
Guneratne & Weiss, pp. 157-163, 332-337, 393-399
Talbot, TBA