



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

WS 403: Women and Change in Developing Countries

Section 00: Summer 2023

Class Meeting Information

Summer 2023 (5/15/2023 - 6/29/2023)

This is a fully online asynchronous class. Throughout the course, we will be using the course website on <https://D2L.msu.edu>. Please make sure you have your D2L email forwarding to your MSU email account as well.

Instructor Information

- Instructor: Priyanka Jayakodi (she/her/hers)
- Email: jayakodi@msu.edu
- Office Hours: By appointment (virtual only)

Layout of Syllabus

Welcome to WS 403! I am excited to have you in this course this semester. This document contains essential information such as the course schedule, policies, university policies, and information about grades and assignments. Therefore, please read this document carefully. **If you need further clarifications, do not hesitate to ask me!** When changes do occur, I promise to let you know as early as possible.

Overview of WS 403: Women and Change in Developing Countries¹

In this course we will explore how economic, political, and social transformations impact women in developing nations with a special focus on women in South Asia. You will learn change and development, and how gender, class, caste, and nationality, and change and development interact. The course aims to provide insight into efforts to promote change in developing countries, and to analyze these efforts through a post-colonial perspective. The course is divided into four sections, which focus on: (01) Key Theories & Frameworks in understanding women and change in the Developing Countries, (02) Economic Development and women in the Developing Countries, (03) Women, & Social and Environmental Change in the Developing Countries, (04) Women, Politics, Institutions & Change in the Developing Countries. Throughout the course, students will learn about grassroots movements and compare these to international organizations and institutions trying to implement programs in developing countries. The course is intended for advanced students and prior knowledge of Women's Studies is recommended.

Course Objectives:

- Utilize Women's Studies principles and ideas in the context of developing nations

¹ While some of the readings, content, and structure of this course syllabus are different from ones that are used in the previous years I have incorporated some parts from the previous syllabi, and I acknowledge the intellectual contributions of these professors who taught this course in previous years: Dr. Elizabeth Brannon and Dr. Rowenn Kalman.

- Analyze and discuss the objectives and significance of international development
- Recognize the interconnectedness of economic, political, and social transformations
- Evaluate the influence of women's agency in international development strategies
- Develop critical thinking, examination, and communication abilities.

Course Expectations

Students are expected to complete all required readings and assignments. This course will be demanding as it will cover a semester's worth of material in a 7-week summer session, requiring students to spend more time weekly than they would during a normal semester. Online courses offer flexibility, but also require students to be organized and diligent. It is the responsibility of students to keep track of deadlines and submit materials on time. Instead of a physical classroom, students will interact with the instructor and classmates through D2L. Students should check D2L regularly to stay on top of the course material, and actively participate in online discussions. Two lectures will be posted on D2L for each module.

Course Materials

All course materials and resources will be distributed via D2L.

Assignments

While we will have readings, podcasts, and videos to engage with during each module, there are also a number of more formal assignments due throughout our time together. For each assignment, please see the appropriate rubric for a breakdown of expectations.

Grading Breakdown

I will commit to providing substantive written feedback as well. My hope is that this written feedback can push you to think about your ideas as you continue to move forward in this course and in your life. Here is a breakdown of the assignments for the semester, and the points possible for each assignment.

Assignment	Points
1. Discussion Questions & Responses (weekly)	30 points
2. Critical Reading Responses (02)	20 points
3. Current Event Analysis (01)	20 points
4. Final Project (01)	30 points
Total	100 points

Here is a breakdown of the letter grade associated with the points you can earn this semester.

Letter Grade	Grade on 4.0 Scale	Total Points

A	4.0	93-100
B+/A-	3.5	86-92
B-/B	3.0	80-85
C+	2.5	75-79
C-/C	2.0	70-74
D+	1.5	65-69
D-/D	1.0	60-64
Failure	0.0	59 and below

Assignments (detailed guidelines will be provided)

1. Discussion Questions & Responses (weekly) 30 points

Since this is a fully asynchronous class that rely on online discussions, I expect you to use this weekly discussion posts and responses as a platform to engage in and facilitate meaningful critical thinking throughout the course. We will use the discussion boards on D2L. For each module, you are required to post **one** discussion post. This must be posted by ... (specific dates will be provided) to allow time for other students to consider and respond to said post. Each student is additionally required to respond to **two** other posts. These responding posts must be made by the module's final deadline. The instructor will additionally post discussion points and responses to help facilitate discussion each module. This is not a formal written assignment but rather a short list of questions or paragraph outlining your critics, relevant connections to other material, or posing questions inspired throughout the module. Posts should be roughly the length of a long paragraph (6-10 sentences).

2. Critical Reading Responses (02) 20 points

Over the course of the semester, you will submit 2 critical reading responses based on modules of your interest. Papers should synthesize the reading(s) and provide critical commentary on the content. Such commentary should highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the material, as well as consider broader questions and connections that can be made from the readings. Reading responses should be 3–4-page essay (Times New Roman 12 pt. font, double spaced, 1 inch margin). Specific deadlines for each module will be specified. Paper must be proof-read, well-written, and logically organized. You are allowed to revise and resubmit (once) for a better grade.

3. Current Event Analysis (01) 20 points

In this class, you will get plenty of opportunities to engage with the class readings and discussion posts based on current events in the developing countries. You will select one current event (within the last 8 months) on women and change in developing countries that resonates with the topics we discuss in this class. You will need to write a 3–4-page essay (Times New Roman 12 pt. font, double

spaced, 1 inch margin) critically analyzing the event using at least one course reading. A detailed rubric will be provided on D2L.

4. Final Project (01) 30 points

For your final project, you can choose from the following two options:

Option A: Analytical Review Paper

For this individual assignment, you will write an analytical review paper on a book/movie of your choice that is relevant to one or more topics discussed in this course. I will provide a list of books/movies for you to choose from, but you can select one of your choices too. Please let me know the title of the book/movie you selected by (date). I will provide detailed directions and questions you could focus on your critical review paper. Papers should be between 5-7 pages long (Times New Roman 12 pt. font, double spaced, 1 inch margin).

Option B: Critical Essay

For this individual assignment, you need to write an essay of 5-7 pages on a topics on women and change in the developing countries. This is not a summary of the course readings. Instead, you should provide interpretations and critical analysis based on your understanding all the material from the class not by regurgitating it but instead by interpreting and analyzing it. This essay should include a debatable thesis statement and your essay must consist of an introduction stating your position in relation to the topic. Papers should be between 5-7 pages long (Times New Roman 12 pt. font, double spaced, 1 inch margin). Your essay must be concluded by emphasizing the importance of your position on this critical issue. More detailed guidelines will be provided.

Units

Module	Dates/ weeks	Topics
Module 01: Key Theories & Frameworks in understanding women and change in the Developing Countries	Week 01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction to Women in Developing countries ▪ Postcolonial Thought and Women in Developing countries
Module 02: Economic Development and women in the Developing Countries	Week 02 and 03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Women, Labor, and Poverty ▪ Women, Globalization, & Aid
Module 03: Women, & Social and Environmental Change in the Developing Countries	Week 04 and 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Women and social change ▪ Women and environmental change in the Developing Countries
Module 04: Women, Politics, Institutions & Change in the Developing Countries	Week 06 and 07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Women in Political movements and War

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Women, Globalization and Politics [revisiting women, labor, poverty]
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Detailed Course Calendar and readings

*Please note that the required readings and viewings are listed by week, and you should complete them by the Sunday of that week (dates will be specified). This course calendar is subject to change and the students will be notified via emails about such changes.

Module 01: Key Theories & Frameworks in understanding women and change in the Developing Countries [week 01]

Week 01: Part 01- Introduction to Women in Developing countries

- Watch: [Who's Counting? Marilyn Waring on Sex, Lies, and Global Economics](#)
- Watch: [Chimamanda Ngozie Adichie. "We Should All Be Feminists" YouTube video](#)
- Jayachandran, S. (2015). The roots of gender inequality in developing countries. *economics*, 7(1), 63-88.
- "Introduction" (Ch. 1) in Launius, Christie and Holly Hassel. 2018. *Threshold Concepts in Women's and Gender Studies: Ways of Seeing, Thinking, and Knowing*. Routledge. (p. 4-17)

Part 02: Postcolonial Thought and Women in Developing countries

- Mohanty, C. T. (2003). "Under western eyes" revisited: Feminist solidarity through anticapitalist struggles. *Signs: Journal of Women in culture and Society*, 28(2), 499-535.
- Lugones, M. (2010). Toward a decolonial feminism. *Hypatia*, 25(4), 742-759.

Module 02: Economic Development and women [week 02 and week 03]

Week 02: Women, Labor, and Poverty

- Kabeer, Naila. 2015. "Gender, poverty and inequality: a brief history of feminist contributions in the field of international development." *Gender & Development* 23(2): 189-205.
- Chant, Sylvia. 2008. "The 'Feminisation of Poverty' and the 'Feminisation' of Anti-Poverty Programmes: Room for Revision?" *Journal of Development Studies* 44 (2): 165-197.

Week 03: Women, Globalization, & Aid

- Guérin, I. (2014). Juggling with debt, social ties, and values: The everyday use of microcredit in rural South India. *Current Anthropology*, 55(S9), S40-S50.
- Hewamanne, S. (2020). From global workers to local entrepreneurs: Sri Lanka's former global factory workers in rural Sri Lanka. *Developing Countries Quarterly*, 41(3), 547-564.

Module 03: Culture & Social and Environmental Change [week 04 and week 05]

Week 04: Women, culture, and social change

- Abu-Lughod, L. (2015). *Do Muslim women need saving?* (Vol. 15, No. 5, pp. 759-777). Sage UK: London, England: SAGE Publications.
- Chowdhury, E. H. (2005). Feminist negotiations: Contesting narratives of the campaign against acid violence in Bangladesh. *Meridians*, 6(1), 163-192.

Week 05: Women and environmental change in the Developing Countries

- Shiva, V. (2018). Development, ecology, and women. In *Living with Contradictions* (pp. 658-666). Routledge.
- Sultana, F. (2009). Fluid lives: subjectivities, gender and water in rural Bangladesh. *Gender, Place and Culture*, 16(4), 427-444.
- Watch: [INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2017 - Ska interviews Vandana Shiva](#)

Module 04: Politics, Institutions & Change [week 06 and week 07]

Week 06: Women in Politics and War

- Cockburn, C., & Enloe, C. (2012). Militarism, patriarchy and peace movements: Cynthia Cockburn and Cynthia Enloe in conversation. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 14(4), 550-557.
- Fluri, J. L. (2008). Feminist-nation building in Afghanistan: An examination of the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA). *Feminist review*, 89(1), 34-54.

Week 07: Women, Globalization and Politics

- Selected chapters from Bananas, beaches and bases [MSU electronic resource]: making feminist sense of international politics / Cynthia Enloe.
 - Chapter 01 Gender makes the world go round: where are the women?
 - Chapter 06 Going Bananas! Where are women in the international politics of bananas?
 - Chapter 07 Women's labor is never cheap: gendering global blue jeans and bakers
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