Course Overview

Different images come to our mind when we think of modernity and modernization: skyscrapers of modern Dubai and rural communities of West Africa, industrial revolution of Western Europe and five-years plans of the People’s Republic of China. All these images reflect the various degrees of modernization processes that countries have gone through. For years many scholars and theorists debated the question why some nations have been successful in modernizing their lives and others are not, are there any universal prerequisites and solutions for successful modernization, how and why economic and political development are related.

The purpose of the course is to address the notion of modernity as well as the basic theories of modernization, retrace the evolution of modernization thinking, evaluate their relevance and controversies, compare different views on paths of development and explain the current challenges of the development processes. The theories will be examined in terms of state, nation, economy and regime. The course is intended to be both theoretical and pragmatic. The first half of the semester will be devoted to the most outstanding works of modernization thinking, while during the second half of the course we will be testing the theories through a number of relevant case studies. However, for independent research students can go beyond the proposed limits and choose any countries or regions they are specialized in.

At the end of a semester, students are supposed to understand main theories of modernization, to be able to think critically about development, to apply their knowledge in assessing historical and contemporary progress, evaluate alternative solutions of different regional and international problems and future prospects. Students will learn how to write a research paper and to evaluate the works of their classmates through peer review. Working on a group project they will get an idea how to define a problem, extract alternatives, rank priorities and combine different objectives into coherent foreign policy.

The course is intended to senior undergraduate or graduate students of International Relations, Area Studies or Political Science. The working language of a course will be English.

Requirements and Evaluation:

Students and required to attend seminars and to participate in discussions, write one short research paper in the form of a policy memo. Additionally, students
are required to write a short evaluation of one of the classmate papers and participate in a presentation of a group project during last classes.

Grading system is the following:
10% - attendance
30% - participation in class discussions
30% - writing assignments
30% - a final oral exam.

**Writing a research paper and presentation:**

Writing a research paper will combine two processes: writing and simulating. For example, a task for a team will be the following: France would like to provide foreign assistance for Sudan in order to modernize and stabilize civil society and democratize the political system. Students of a team will be responsible for allocating the money. The first student of a team will write a policy memo of possible fund allocation, considering French security interests in Sudan, the second student will write a paper considering interests of democratization of Sudan, the third will consider French private business in the area, etc. Based on written papers a team should submit a coherent broader political memo for money allocation. Writing this policy strategy student should clearly define a problem, different alternatives and develop a series of criteria. They should identify priorities and justify what alternative to take. During last classes students will need to present the policy memo as their team project. Such simulation of foreign policy may be drawn from contemporary issues and have a taste of predictions, or they can be events of the contemporary history.

**Academic integrity:**

Students are encouraged to use variety of sources for writing their essays as well as their own ideas. However, they are required to indicate the sources all the time when they are using someone else thoughts, concepts, data or information. Failure to do that will be resulted in disqualification from a course.

**Week 1: Introduction and Overview. (2 hours).**
Main definitions and concepts of modernity, post-modernity, no-modernity, modernization and development. Normative and actual, tangible and intangible dimensions of modernity. Desirableness and rejection of modernity. Correlation of modernization and development.

No readings.

**Section I: Development theories**

**Week 2: Intellectual precursors of modernization theories. (2 hours).**
Readings:
Week 3: Debates on modernization and democratization. (2 hours).

Readings:

Recommended readings:

Week 4: Debates on economic modernization and industrialization. (2 hours).

Readings:

Recommended readings:

Week 5: Critiques of Modernization Theory by Dependency Theorists. (2 hours).

Recommended readings:

Week 6: Debates on Primacy Development over Democracy after the Cold War. (2 hours).

Recommended readings:
Jose Antonio Cheibub, Presidentialism, Parliamentarism and Democracy (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006);

Week 7: Development and Democracy: contemporary ideas (2 hours)

Reading:

Recommended readings:
Section II: Patterns of Modernization.

Week 8-9: Comparative perspective of the models of modernization in the USSR and Latin America. (4 hours).

Readings:
Kotkin S. Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization. (excerpt).

Week 10: Modernization theory in the US foreign policy: Kennedy’s approach toward Latin America. (2 hours).

Readings:

Recommended readings:

Week 11: Sovereign Democracy: A Russian path toward Modernization? (2 hours)

**Week 12: A model of East Asian modernization: China. (2 hours).**

Recommended reading:

**Week 13: Modernization of the Islam world. (2 hours).**
Roy O. Globalized Islam: The search for a new ummah.(excerpt)

**Week 14-15: Symposium. Presentation of Student Papers. (4 hours).**

**Week 16: Concluding session. Course Review and Exam Preparation. (2 hours).**