



## **Colloquium Series: Efficiency: A Three Hundred Year Social and Political History**

Speaker:

Deepak Malghan, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore

Date / Time:

April 26, 2012 - 3:15pm

Venue:

Room 307, Third Floor, Pixel B, APU

Abstract:

One idea dominates the modern world like no other. It is the idea of efficiency. Indeed, the modern discourse can be characterized as an attempt understand (and build) an efficient society. We present an outline of the intellectual and social history of the idea of efficiency that originated in the Scottish Enlightenment. Retooling diverse societies in the interest of engineering, ecological, and above all economic efficiency has been at the heart of the unprecedented expansion in production and consumption starting with the industrial revolution. The "efficiency project" has also been directly responsible for numerous social, political, economic upheavals in the last 250 years. After presenting a framework for understanding the moral and material consequences of the efficiency project, we argue that the currently dominant understanding of efficiency is incompatible with a society that is just and biophysically sustainable.

A Note on the Speaker:

Deepak Malghan is an ecological economist with primary interest in theoretical models of the economy-ecosystem interaction problem. He is currently working on a multi-year project that aims to reformulate ecological economics from a "scale" perspective. Scale measures the physical size of the economy relative to the ecosystem that contains and sustains it. His empirical research interests include social metabolism and ecological distribution. Dr. Malghan's research is highly interdisciplinary and routinely uses technical tools from economics, chemical engineering, and ecology. Deepak is an assistant professor at the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore. He holds a Ph.D. in ecological economics from the University of Maryland and an MPA from Princeton University.