

<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Understanding India - India's Futures?</b>
<b>Programme Title</b>	Undergraduate Programme
<b>Mode, Level, Course Code</b>	M1, L 6
<b>Course Type</b>	Core
<b>Common Curriculum Type</b>	Understanding India
<b>Credits</b>	3
<b>Approval</b>	July, 2016
<b>Course Development Team</b>	Srinivas S V, Stefi Barna, Kade Finnoff, Shomen Mukherjee, Tarangini Sriraman

### **Rationale**

“India’s Futures” is the third of five courses that make up the Understanding India component of the Common Curriculum. The course extends the questions raised in Understanding India 1 (“What is ‘India’?”) and Understanding India 2 (“Who is ‘Indian’?”) to explore how to address the country’s stark social and economic inequity within the context of limited natural resources and the entanglements of a globalised world.

### **Format**

Unit 1, entitled ‘Is Another World Possible?’, is similar across all sections. It reviews the social and ecological challenges facing the country and examines various models for improving the quality of life for all (development), within the context of limited natural resources (sustainability).

Unit 2, entitled ‘Equity and Sustainability’, examines the tensions between equity and sustainability as they relate to the fields of development, education, health and democracy.

### **Course learning objectives**

1. Describe the relationships between human communities and ecological systems in India
2. Identify the root causes of unsustainable development practices and how power structures and political systems influence development
3. Identify the risks and benefits of various development choices to different demographic groups intra- and inter-generationally
4. Describe the ways in which your discipline can contribute to new models of development for a just and sustainable India

## Syllabus

### Unit 1 (10 weeks): Is another world possible?

In the first half of the course students explore how India's future over the coming century may be affected by its ecological context, its development models and its political systems.

#### **Week 1: India's presents and India's futures**

Introduction to the course frame, content and pedagogy. Discussion: How should we define the 'good life'? What concepts does it include and how would you define them? How would you describe the economic, political and ecological situation in India? How could you imagine them unfolding over the coming 50 years which form the span of your working life?

#### **Reading**

Rai, Shirin. 2011. "The History of International Development: Concepts and Contexts" in Visvanathan et al. *The Women, Gender & Development Reader* (second edition). Zed Books: London.

#### **Week 2-3: Ecological integrity, resilience, adaptability**

A series of case studies that examine the functional integrity and resilience of the ecological processes and biological diversity, their role in the maintenance of life on earth, and the ecological limits within which human economies and societies can thrive. Issues include the dependence of communities in India on wildlife and ecosystems, how environmental degradation has affected them (i.e. environmental refugees), leading to both social (human migration) and wildlife conflicts,

#### **Reading**

Madhav Gadgil, Ramachandra Guha (1995). *Ecology and Equity: The Use and Abuse of Nature in Contemporary India*. Routledge. p. 223. [chapter]

M Rangarajan and K. Sivaramakrishnan ed. (2014) *Shifting Ground, People, animals and mobility in India's Environmental history*. Oxford University Press. [chapter]

#### **Week 4-5: Participation, responsibility, freedom, equity and justice**

Does each person (or community) have a right to participation in the decisions affecting their lives? What responsibilities does that entail? Should collective decisions be made on principles of socio-economic equity, ecological integrity, or some other idea? Are decisions better when taken at State or local level? Should humans also consider the needs and 'rights' of non-human life?

### Reading

Mitra, Amit 'Chipko: An Unfinished Mission', Down to Earth, 30 April 1993, see <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1n-x-o3RFQrkbW6Iq1TqFHHaQU2ZveOfhuFshLPVozXk/edit>

'Seeds of a Divide', Outlook, 28 January 2013, <http://www.outlookindia.com/magazine/story/seeds-of-a-divide/283594>

Kohli, Kanchi, 'Cultivating Diversity', Frontline, 10 October, 2003. <http://www.frontline.in/static/html/fl2020/stories/20031010001908500.htm>

Bollywood film, Bhopal: A Prayer for Rain (2014) directed by Martin Sheen.

### Week 6-7 Commons, competition, conflict, solidarity

Is it possible for all people, in current and future generations, to have access to the socio-cultural, economic, political, ecological conditions needed for adequate food, water, shelter, clothing, energy, and satisfying social/cultural relations? What are the collective and co-operative opportunities based on socio-cultural, economic, and ecological commons? How can common custodianship, individual freedom and innovation exist within collectivities? Should we re-define concepts such as the "good society" or what it means to be "prosperous"?

### Reading

Roy, Arundati. 2016. 'Walking With The Comrades'. Outlook India, March 29th 2010. <http://www.outlookindia.com/magazine/story/walking-with-the-comrades/264738>

Mundoli, Seema et al. 2015. 'Effects of Urbanisation of the Use of Lakes as Commons in the Peri-urban Interface of Bengaluru, India'. *International Journal of Urban Sustainable Development*. Vol 7(1).

Agarwal, Bina. 2015. 'Caring by the Hour: Now That Bihar's Women Have Voted What About Their Economic Rights'. Indian Express. Nov 19th 2015. <http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/caring-by-the-hour/>

### Week 8-9 Diversity and interconnectedness

The diversity of environments and ecologies, species and genes, cultures and knowledge systems, values and livelihoods, economics and politics, and their relationship to principles of sustainability and equity. The inextricable connections between environmental, economic, social, cultural, and political 'development' goals. The 'right' of all species to survive in the conditions in which they have evolved.

## Reading

Ashish Kothari “India 2100: Towards Radical Ecological Democracy”, *Futures* Oct 2014

## Week 10 New relationships

Is it possible to forge relationships to the land, to economic systems, to political systems, to knowledge/ education? Can we think of different technologies, economic arrangements, social–political institutions, and ways of relating to nature and each other? This week we will conduct imaginative exercises to posit the role that each of our academic disciplines might play in new models of development.

## Unit 2: Equity and Sustainability (6 weeks)

In the second part of the course students will explore a specific area of practice in greater depth, and apply their knowledge and skills to the links between equity, sustainability and one of these fields:

Section 1: Development, Equity, Sustainability	Kade Finnoff
Section 2: Democracy, Equity, Sustainability	Tarangini Sriraman
Section 3: Health, Equity, Sustainability	Stefi Barna
Section 4: Education, Equity, Sustainability	Sujit Sinha

### **Section 1: Development, Equity, Sustainability**

This unit explores the relationship between development, equity and environmental sustainability. It is organized into three main learning modules which will each take two weeks to cover. Module 1 is an introduction and overview of development, equity and sustainability. In this section we will examine definitions, dimensions and measures of development, equity and sustainability. The last component of this module will be reflective and give a critique of development and sustainability. Module 2 gives an overview of the practice and understanding of development, inequality and sustainability within India. This module introduces concepts of ecological poverty, democratizing natural assets and environmental stewardship. Module 3 explores innovative solutions and challenges of moving knowledge of development, equity and sustainability into action. Students will apply their knowledge to their own field and propose new strategies for a more just, equitable and sustainable future.

Week	Learning Objectives	Assessment	What to Read/Watch
<b>1-2: Overview of key terms and major debates</b>	Describe the ways in which development, equity and sustainability can be measured and the limitations to different approaches.	Timeline of major schools of thought within development and sustainability	Ul Haq. " <a href="#">The Human Development Paradigm</a> " Kates et al. (2005). " <a href="#">What is sustainable development? Goals, indicators, values and practice.</a> " <i>Environment</i> , 47(3), 8-21. Econ4: The Challenge ( <a href="http://econ4.org/films">http://econ4.org/films</a> )
<b>3-4: Development, inequality and sustainability within India</b>	Examine the way different systems of resource ownership and management affect sustainability and equity.	Using a set of case studies, mapping of economic systems, resource ownership and class relationships.	Panos South Asia. (2008) " <a href="#">Alchemy of Inequity: Resistance &amp; Repression in India's Mines</a> ". Film "Revolutionary Optimists"
<b>5-6: Innovative Solutions and Challenges</b>	Evaluate initiatives and policies within India on the basis of development, equity and sustainability criterion.	Evaluate the Indian Development Report 2011 or the Constitution of India on the basis of criterion covered in this unit.	Government of India. " <a href="#">Indian Human Development Report 2011: Towards Social Inclusion</a> " or Government of India " <a href="#">Constitution of India</a> ".

## Section 2: Democracy, Equity, Sustainability

Concepts such as equity and sustainability will be meaningful only in a context where rights, equal access, representation and a humanitarian politics have found deep root. Barring some exceptions, it is usually within a democracy that the conditions for just and fair distribution of social, political and ecological resources are realized. The relationship between these three concepts (democracy, equity and sustainability), cannot be understood by merely relying on a definition of democracy that is borrowed from the West. For these purposes, we need a sensitive approach that is mindful of the specificities of India's ecological crises and the everyday livelihood struggles of its minority communities around existing resources.

The access of people to their ecology and government benefits is often affected by the privileges and hurdles posed by gender, caste, class, tribal group and religion. For these reasons, we need rich and layered democratic perspectives of development. The

structures of power, legal frameworks, policies, and the schemes of constitutional rights we have in place must be made to support and enhance rights organized around land, forests, environment and political arrangements. In this section, we will critically question in theory and practice, any dominant view of the 'science of development' and any internationally and nationally endorsed technology that threatens to alter the environment as it is lived and shaped by the communities who stay in it. While posing questions regarding the life-threatening forces of certain science and technology practices, we will also inquire into other alternatives including the ecological viability of local and cultural resources.

Any inquiries into the science of development, concepts of 'machines', big and small will have to be attentive to innovations proposed by Gandhi, Lohia, Kumarappa and Bhave. In studying this course, we will also seek comparisons of environmental struggles in India with similar movements in other parts of the world, especially in Asia and Africa to get a sense of international possibilities of radical change. Case studies in India will pay due attention to histories of ecological struggles and social movements by women, tribal groups, agrarian and Dalit communities. These will include but may not be confined to instances such as the Bodh Gaya movement in Bihar, the Chipko movement in the Uttarakhand region, the Narmada Bachao Andolan in Rajasthan, the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sanghatan-led movement for the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, the anti-mining (BALCO) resistance in Orissa.

Week	Learning Objectives	Assessment	What to read/watch
1-2 overview of democracy as a concept specific to Indian ecological crises	Trace the philosophical foundations of ecological development and democracy within the Indian tradition.	Summarize through a presentation the key Indian innovations in thinking of ecological conservation	Vinoba Bhave, 'From Bhoodan to Gramdan' <a href="https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B-ZWGF0lkaCBXzU4REhpVElFams/edit">https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B-ZWGF0lkaCBXzU4REhpVElFams/edit</a>  Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, 2 very small chapters from Hind Swaraj, ed. Anthony Parel (Civilization p.34-38), (Machinery, p. 107-111)  Rammanohar Lohia, <i>Wheel of History</i>
3-4 specialized debates on legal approaches to ecological	Analyze laws that have sought to protect the rights of communities around	Write an essay discussing the ways in which a law and constitutional provisions can be set up and interpreted to enable ecological	<i>The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006</i> OR <i>The Forest Rights Act, 2006</i> download the Act from <a href="http://fra.org.in/">http://fra.org.in/</a> Article 21 of the Indian Constitution

<p>conservation</p> <p><b>5-6</b></p> <p>overview of histories of ecological struggles and social movements by women, tribal groups, agrarian and Dalit communities</p>	<p>ecological resources</p> <p>Describe how caste, class, gender and tribal community are crucial to make discussions of ecological conservation more meaningful</p>	<p>conservation and just access to the environment.</p> <p>Through a case study approach (presentation or essay-based), critically examine the ideas of justice that emerge in social movements around the construction of dams and technologies of agricultural modernization. Discuss in a comparative framework</p>	<p>Amita Baviskar, 'Politics of the Sangath' in the book 'In the Belly of the River: Tribal Conflicts over Development in the Narmada Valley', New Delhi: OUP, 1995</p> <p>'Women in the Forest' in Vandana Shiva's <i>Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Survival in India</i>, 1988</p> <p>Blog post Vandana Shiva, '<a href="#">From Seeds of Suicide to Seeds of Hope: Why Are Indian Farmers Committing Suicide and How Can We Stop This Tragedy?</a>' (2009)</p> <p>A Narmada Diary directed by Anant Patwardhan and Simantini Dhuru</p>
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### Supplementary readings:

- Bhave, Vinoba (1956). 'Five Years of Bhoodan', *Bhoodan Weekly* 1 (1): 4
- Gadgil, Madhav and Ramachandra Guha (1994) 'Ecological Conflicts and the Environmental Movement in India', *Development and Change* 25 (1): 101-36.
- Kumarappa, J.C. (1958) *Ecology of Permanence: A Quest for a Social Order based on Non-Violence*, Kashi: Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangh publication.
- Baviskar, Amita (2009). 'Tribal Politics and the Discourses of Environmentalism', *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, 31 (2): 195-223.
- Agarwal, Bina (1994) *A Field of one's Own: Gender and Land Rights in India*, New Delhi: CUP.
- Jayal, Niraja Gopal (2001). *Democracy in India*, New Delhi: OUP.
- Macpherson, C.B. (1973) *Democratic Theory: Essays in Retrieval*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Prakash, Gyan (1999) *Another Reason: Science and the Imagination of Modern India*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Sheth, D.L. 1983. 'Grass-roots stirrings and the future of Politics', *Alternatives* 9 (1): 1-24.
- Smitu, Kothari (1996). 'Whose Nation? The Displaced as Victims of Development', *EPW* 31 (24): 1476-85.

- Ferguson, James with Larry Lohmann (1994) 'The Anti-Politics Machine: Development and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho', *The Ecologist* 24 (5): 176-181.
- Nandy, Ashis (2001). 'Dams and Dissent: India's first Modern Environmental Activist and his Critique of the DVC Project', *Futures* 33 (8-9): 709-31.
- Ninan, Anup Sam (2009). Gandhi's Technoscience: Sustainability and Technology as Themes of Politics', *Sustainable Development* 17(3): 183-96.

### Section 3 & 4: Education, Equity, Sustainability

This section examines how education systems and formats can support or hamper the development of an equitable and sustainable world. We will look at examples of educational initiatives in India that have attempted to address these issues. In keeping with the 'futures' focus of the course we will also consider how schooling can prepare graduates to manage and shape conditions which will be increasingly characterised by change, uncertainty, and complexity.

Week	Learning Objectives	Assessment	What to Read/Watch/Visit
1	Describe the education system in India, its constitutional provisions and the social and institutional environment within which it functions	Timeline: Describe major phases in educational reform and the rationale for their introduction; identify those you find most important and justify your argument (10%)	Visit: Somapura primary school Read/watch: APF Schools; Pachasaale (Deccan Development Society), AP; Adharshila Learning Centre, MP, Adivasi Academy, Tejgadh, Gujarat, the Barefoot College, Tilonia, Rajasthan; the <i>jeevan shalas</i> of the Narmada Bachao Andolan <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qfr0OhFe54E">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qfr0OhFe54E</a> ; Anand Niketan Nai Talim school. Education for Sustainable Development WWF-India
2-3	Evaluate the outcomes of the struggles of marginalized groups for access to, and representation in, formal education		
4-6	Document innovations in educational practice and critically evaluate their relevance for a just, equitable and sustainable future	School observation comparing educational initiatives (formative 15%, summative 15%)	3 Visit one of the following: APF-linked school, Ejjipura school for migrant children Bangalore; Marudam Forest School Tiruvanamalai; Centre for Learning, Bangalore.



#### Section 4: Health, Equity, Sustainability

Over the past two centuries, dramatic improvements in nutrition, sanitation and healthcare access have allowed people to live longer, healthier lives. Global average life expectancy has increased from age 30 to age 66, and the global population has increased from one billion to seven billion. At the same time, there is a growing gap in life expectancy and health outcomes between different demographic groups in India, largely fuelled by the processes of economic globalization. It has become clear that 'health' is not just the outcome of genetic or biological processes but is created by the cultural, political, economic and ecological conditions in which we live. These influences are called the 'social determinants of health' and they determine how health and illness are produced, accessed and experienced.

Week	Learning Objectives	Assessment	What to read/watch/do
1	What is health? Describe the social construction of disease, the medicalization of physical/ mental health, and its implications for well-being	Reflection paper 'Health beliefs'	Biomedicine and other health systems Indian healthcare system – from colonial period to today
2	Health and equity Describe the social determinants of health and their interactions in India	Report on health clinic visit	Introduction to Structural Violence Site visit/focus groups with patients (Sarjapur PHC and St Johns Mugulur health centre)
3	Health and sustainability Describe the mechanisms by which pollution, climate change and biodiversity affect health	Quiz	Video and teaching cases
4-6	Health projects Demonstrate an understanding of the links between sustainability, equity and health	Poster presentation	

**Teaching and Learning**

The course is designed to help students develop the conceptual and practical skills to engage in the intersectionality of development, equity, and ecological sustainability, using academic literature, case studies, perspective-building discussions, and hands-on experience. It values engagement with real-world and local community issues as much as traditional classroom methods.

**Evaluation and Grading**

A variety of methods are used to demonstrate student understanding of the intersectionality of politics, economics and environment. They include formative tasks that enable the development of critical thinking and problem-solving, opportunities to apply these skills to real-world problems, and synoptic assessments that explore the relationship between sustainability and students' academic discipline. Unit 1 (10 weeks) carries 50% of the assessment weight, and Unit 2 (6 weeks) carries 40%. Attendance and participation carry 10% across both units. See Unit descriptions for an indication of the planned assessments.

**Appendix 1. Understanding India - Course Formats**

<b>Course</b>	<b>Model</b>	<b>Learning outcomes</b>	<b>Topics</b>
<b>UI 1</b>	Single course	Shared across sections	What is 'India'
<b>UI 2</b>	Single course	Shared across sections	Who is 'Indian'
<b>UI 3</b>	Hybrid course	10 weeks shared, 6 weeks section-specific	India's Futures: Equity, Sustainability and... (1) Development, (2) Democracy, (3) Education, (4) Health
<b>UI 4</b>	Menu of options	Section-specific	E.g. proposed titles: Indian Wildlife; Identity in Cinema; The Indian Constitution; India in the World; etc
<b>UI 5</b>	Free choice	Individually determined	Indian languages (other than English)