LAW, ECONOMICS, DEVELOPMENT AND GEOGRAPHY:

Course Objective:

The course aims to facilitate new or advanced research into the interrelationship between law and geography, so as to facilitate the development of a research paper that would be suitable for academic publication. Geography here includes economic geography (the spatial distribution of economic activity) and cultural geography (the spatial effects of different human cultures), often collectively referred to as human geography. The course will show that both these kinds of geography have considerable impact on what the law can do and what it needs to focus in domestic or local legal systems. It will then work with the individual student to help them identify and research linkages that they find particularly interesting.

The classes themselves will explore these linkages primarily through the methodology known as systems theory. But students in their own research may use whatever methodology they find useful. The examples of law-geography linkages discussed in class will revolve primarily around economic geography (and associatedly, law and development). But students in their own research may focus on other kinds of geography should they so wish. Our investigation into law include investigation into soft law and social law. Again, the ultimate objective of the course is to facilitate the student’s own research into the subject matter.

Teaching style:

Teaching style is fluid, and depends on the size of the class. The first four sessions will focus primarily on lecture-presentations and conveying core background information regarding law and economics, law and development, systems theory, economic geography, and varieties of capitalism. After that, classes will be structure around the discussion of particular exemplary texts, which may vary depending on class interest.

In addition, considerable class time will be devoted to aiding the student in conducting their own research. The instructor will with each student individually at least twice to discuss their research progress. For smaller classes, students will present a preliminary progress report before the class. Specific lectures will address how to identify a possible research topic; how to go about researching that topic once you have identified it; and how to organize a research paper that would be suitable for publication. Students will be asked to keep a research log, which will serve as the basis for one-on-one meetings with the instructor.

Tentative syllabus:

1. Meet and greet
2. Overview of law and development / law and economics
3. Introduction to systems theory
4. The core-periphery ordering / comparative advantage / agglomeration effects
5. Varieties of capitalism
   • Begin preparing research logs (if you haven’t already done so)

6. ‘Poor economics’

   * * * Recess Week * * *

7. Consultation week (no class, individual meetings)
   • Research logs due

8. The global organization of capital

9. Global patterns of labor organization

10. The geography of values

11. What is development?

12. Class presentations /

13. Class presentations / or no class-research week (depending on class size)

    Mode of assessment:

    Research Paper - 70%
    Class Performance - 30%;