Course Description
This lecture course provides an introduction to the study of civil society and development. The course will engage with both conventional socio-political views and emerging socio-cultural perspectives of civil society. In recent years, international development actors and institutions have paid attention to the positive influential role played by civil society groups. According to the World Bank’s definition, “the civil society sector” includes a wide range of non-state actors, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), faith-based groups, trade unions, indigenous people’s organizations, community groups, foundations, and other non-state stakeholders. These civil society actors are increasingly regarded as a panacea for development in terms of driving “good” social change by advancing positive outcomes in the core development concerns of democracy, poverty, education, health, gender, human rights, and the environment. However, scholars have also documented emerging tensions and problematic outcomes of civil society. These critiques mainly relate to
the Euro-centric liberal assumptions of civil society and the negative impact of neoliberal constraints on civil society actors’ behavior.

The course will employ political, sociological, and anthropological perspectives to understand the multifaceted, and socio-cultural implications of civil society in both developing and developed countries. We will examine civil society’s impact, capacity, and behavior through a wide range of development themes. The course will place a strong emphasis on transnationalism, neoliberalism, gender, and human rights.

The course is divided into three main sections. The first section (weeks 1-5) will provide an analytical foundation for the study of civil society and development. We will discuss key conceptions of civil society, including the promotion of civil society by the UN and the World Bank, and its relationship to democracy, participation, social capital, social movements, hegemony, and resistance. We will also explore the contested behavior of civil society that challenges the conventional understanding of liberal state-society relations. Here we focus on how civil society relates to illiberalism and authoritarianism and why civil society can sometimes be apolitical. We will also address the effects of neoliberalism on civil society. The second section (weeks 7-8) will discuss emerging development concerns that relate to the environment. These include food insecurity and safety, environmental activism, and natural disaster relief. We will pay particular attention to the impact of neoliberalism on civil society groups’ capacity to engage with these emerging concerns. The third section (weeks 9-13) will focus on the roles of civil society actors through the lenses of mobility, human rights, and belonging. We will examine the role of faith-based organizations, migrant activism, indigenous activism, borderland activism, sex work activism, LGBT rights, transnational social movements, and urban movements.

During the course of the semester, we will invite practitioners who are directly involved in specific development issues. Through dialogue with guest speakers, we will gain first-hand insight and perspectives on the impact of civil society actors. By the end of the course, students should be familiar with the key analytical concepts, approaches, critical discourse,
contextual variation, and impact of civil society on development practice that are integral to the study of civil society and development.

**Course Requirements:**

1. **Lectures**  
Students are expected to come to class having done the required readings beforehand in order to contribute to class discussion in lectures or in conferences. Readings will average 80 pages per week. Students are strongly encouraged to actively engage with lectures and contribute ideas in class.

2. **Conferences**  
Conferences start in the fourth week of the semester (the week of January 29). Please sign up for one of the conference groups on Minerva and attend it throughout the term. Attendance of conferences is mandatory. Please note that weekly lectures will be held between 10:05-10:55am once conference sessions commence.

The primary goal of the conferences is to deepen students’ understanding of development issues addressed in the lectures and readings. The format provides you with an opportunity to participate actively and to facilitate an engaged and critical discussion of civil society and development issues.

Grading for the conferences will be based on attendance and participation. In conference, students will be encouraged to identify key words from the readings as well as to engage with overarching questions based on lectures and readings. There are a total of 8 conferences in this course. To get full points for participation, you must participate consistently and thoughtfully. If a conference is missed because of illness, a doctor’s note must be provided to your TA.

3. **Group presentation in conference**  
Students are required to make an oral presentation in conference by working in a group comprised of 4-5 people. Each group is assigned to a specific week to discuss the given theme of that week (one group
presentation per week). Within that week, students will choose a case study to deepen the analysis of that week’s particular theme. The key goal of this group exercise is to facilitate and deepen our knowledge regarding the effects of civil society on a particular development issue. We will begin this exercise from the week of **February 26**.

**Requirements of the group presentation**

(a) **Topic:**
Each group has the freedom to choose a case study as well as a specific civil society actor that interacts with the given weekly theme. In order to visualize the local complexities of the given development issue, the analysis should be done based on a civil society actor in a specific local context.

(b) **Analysis:**
The main goal of the presentation is to analyze and contextualize the impact of civil society in relation to a specific development issue. To demonstrate a solid analysis of the given case study, each group must address the following four macro analytical questions: (1) Why is the lens of civil society significant to the study of the specific development issue? (2) What are the key characteristics of the civil society actor? (3) What are the limitations faced by the civil society actor? (4) How do you evaluate the overall capacity of the civil society actor in addressing the development problem?

(c) **Discussion questions and active interaction with the audience:**
Each group should prepare at least two analytical discussion questions during the presentation. Your discussion question could be a debate or a critical question that engages with the given development issue. Group members should interact with the audience by deepening discussion questions.

(d) **Division of labor:**
In order to ensure equal group participation, you have to make clear the division of labor among the group members. Each member should play a clear role in the group presentation. Please specify each role in the beginning of the presentation.
(e) Presentation format:
Each group will have 15-20 minutes (not exceeding 20 minutes) to present. After the presentation, we will proceed to Q&A and further class discussion over the issue. Your group is required to provide a powerpoint presentation (or an equivalent format) to your conference TA by 5pm the day before the conference meeting.

(f) Scheduling:
In the first conference meeting, we will discuss and clarify the arrangement of this exercise, including weekly topics, group members, and presentation schedule.

4. Midterm in-class exam
The midterm exam will be scheduled in class on Thursday, February 15. The exam is a combination of short answers and identification questions. These identifications will focus on concepts discussed in the course. Each identification must be explained in at least two paragraphs. Potential identification questions will be given in class. If you are unable to take the midterm exam due to an illness, you must inform me prior to the exam and must then provide me with an official medical note. Only medical problems will be considered legitimate excuses for taking the makeup exam. Only one makeup midterm exam date will then be scheduled about one week after the official exam.

*Re-grading policy for the midterm exam:
Please respect the following procedures concerning any re-grading of the midterm exam.

1. If it is an obvious and simple error in grading (such as a miscalculation or a typo), please talk directly to your conference TA.

2. If your request for a re-grade involves more substantive issues, then you must explain in writing the matter for which you are requesting a re-grade. In your written document, you must provide a substantive explanation as to why you believe you deserve more points. This document must be provided to Professor Takamura during office
hours. Please note that any re-grade will entail a re-assessment of the whole exam, which can mean that the grade of the exam may go up or down. Please also note that you must hand in a document requesting a re-grade no later than 2 weeks after your exam has been returned to you.

5. Final take-home exam
The final exam is a take-home paper in 3,000-3,300 words (about 10-11 double-spaced pages, Times New Roman) due on Tuesday, April 24. Students will be given a question to answer in the last week of the course based on some of the themes addressed during the semester. The question will require the use of lecture notes and course readings, as well as external materials. I will provide more detailed instructions on the final take-home exam. The exam paper must be submitted via MyCourses by 11:59pm on Tuesday, April 24. If you submit the final paper after the deadline, your mark will be automatically deducted 10 points per day. Only valid medical issues will be granted exception to the penalty deduction. If there is a medical issue, you must inform me prior to the deadline for the exam and must later provide a written medical note.

6. ISID McDonald Currie Lecture (Participation)
On March 20, the Institute for the Study of International Development (ISID) is organizing the McDonald Currie Lecture. Students are strongly encouraged to attend the event. Attending students will gain extra credit (1%) that will count toward their participation grade (10 points out of the 100 participation points). Please note that participation is never to exceed the percentage established for the course. The detail information (the topic, time, and the venue) will be announced in class. At the conference there will be a sign-up sheet at the reception. Students should put their name, student ID, and signature. Students leaving early from the conference will not receive the extra credit.

**Grade Distribution:**
1. Conference participation: 10%
2. Group presentation 15%
3. Midterm exam: 30%
4. Final exam: 45%
**Course Materials:**
All the assigned articles will be placed on MyCourses. **NOTE:** There is no coursepack available for this course.

**Plagiarism:**
*McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/) for more information)*

L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/)).

**Policy on Languages:**
*In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.*

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l’étudiant de l’Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l’un des objets est la maîtrise d’une langue)

**Course Evaluations**
End-of-course evaluations are one of the ways that McGill works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student's learning experience. You will be notified by e-mail when the evaluations are available on Mercury, the online course evaluation system. Please note that a minimum number of responses must be received for results to be available to students.
**General Information:**
If you have a hearing, visual and mobility impairment, please contact the instructor immediately (in advance of any evaluations or other class requirements).

**Notare Bene:**
This course syllabus is subject to change in case of unforeseen circumstances.

**Course Schedule**

*Key dates:*
- Conferences: begin in the week of January 29
- Midterm In-class exam: Thursday, February 15
- Conference presentations: begin in the week of February 26
- McDonald Currie Lecture: Tuesday, March 20
- Final take-home exam due: Tuesday, April 24

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<td>January 9</td>
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<td>What is Civil Society?</td>
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**Week 2: Locating Civil Society in Development**

| January 16 | Promotion of Civil Society |
| January 18 | Participation, Trust, and Democracy |

**Week 3: Framing Civil Society**

| January 23 | Social Movements |
| January 25 | Hegemony and Resistance |

**Week 4: Contested Behavior of Civil Society**

| January 30 | Apolitical and Collaborative Civil Society |
| February 1 | Civil Society against Democracy |

**Week 5: Neoliberalism and Civil**

*Conferences begin! Conf. #1: Framing Civil Society
Conf. #2: Contested
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<td><strong>Week 6: Midterm Exam Week</strong></td>
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<td>*No conferences this week</td>
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<td>February 13</td>
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<td>February 20</td>
<td>Food Insecurity and Resistance</td>
<td>Conf. #3: Neoliberalism</td>
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<td>February 22</td>
<td>Food Safety after Natural Disasters</td>
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<td><strong>Week 7: Food Security and Gender</strong></td>
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<td>February 7</td>
<td>Environment Activism</td>
<td>Conf. #4: 1st presentation (Food security)</td>
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<td>March 1</td>
<td>Natural Disaster Relief</td>
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<td>*Study Break between March 5 and 9</td>
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<td>March 13</td>
<td>Role of Faith in Development</td>
<td>Conf. #5: 2nd presentation (Environment)</td>
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<td>Faith-Based Organizations and Displaced Populations</td>
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<td><strong>Week 10: Migration, Advocacy, and Resistance</strong></td>
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<td>March 20</td>
<td>Migrant Illegality and Citizenship</td>
<td>Conf. #6: 3rd presentation (Religion)</td>
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<td>March 22</td>
<td>Migrant Activism and Resistance</td>
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<td><strong>Week 11: Indigenous and Borderland Activism</strong></td>
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<td>March 27</td>
<td>Indigenous activism</td>
<td>Conf. #7: 4th presentation (Migration and Resistance)</td>
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<td>March 29</td>
<td>Borderland Activism</td>
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**Week 1: Introduction**

**January 9: Introduction**
*Discuss the key objectives of the course, the course structure, reading materials, and the course requirements.*

**January 11: What is Civil Society?**
Significance, approaches, and perspectives

Readings:


**PART I. FRAMING CIVIL SOCIETY**
Week 2 Locating Civil Society in Development

January 16: Promotion of Civil Society

Readings:


January 18: Participation, Trust, and Democracy

Readings:


Optional:

Week 3 Framing Civil Society

January 23: Social Movements

Readings:


Optional


**January 25: Hegemony and Resistance**

Readings:


**Week 4: Contested Behavior of Civil Society**

**January 30: Apolitical and Collaborative Civil Society**
Readings:


**February 1: Civil society against Democracy?**
Guest Speaker: Erik Martinez Kuhonta, Department of Political Science, McGill University

Readings:


Optional:


**Week 5 Neoliberalism and Civil Society**

**February 6: Neoliberalism and Depoliticization of Civil Society**

Readings:


**February 8: Rhetoric of “Partnerships”**

Readings:


Optional:
Week 6 Midterm and Review Session

February 13: Review Session

February 15: Midterm In-Class Exam

PART II. ENVIRONMENT, NEOLIBERALISM, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Week 7 Food Security and Gender

February 20: Food Insecurity and Resistance

Readings:

February 22: Food Safety after Natural Disaster

Readings:

Week 8 Environmental Activism and Natural Disaster Relief

February 27: Environmental Activism and Resistance

Readings:


**March 1: Natural Disaster Relief**

Readings:


Optional:


**PART III. MOBILITY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND BELONGING**

Week 9 Faith-based Organizations (FBOs)
March 13: Role of Faith in Development

Readings:


March 15: Faith-Based Organizations and Displacement
Guest Speaker: Action Refugees Montreal

Readings:


Optional:


Week 10 Migration, Advocacy, and Resistance

March 20: Migrant Illegality and Citizenship
Readings:

Optional:

March 22: Migrant Activism and Resistance

Readings:


Film Screening: Migrant Dreams (Lee Ming Sook 2016)

Week 11 Indigenous and Borderland Activism

March 27 Global Indigenous Movements

Readings:


**March 29 Borderland Activism**

Readings:


**Week 12 Gender and Sexuality**

**April 3 Precarious Sexual Labor and Activism**

Readings:

**April 5 Sexuality and LGBT Rights**

Readings:


Optional:

**Week 13 Transnational Social Movements**

**April 10 Transnational Social Movements**

Readings:


Optional:

**April 12 Conclusion**

No readings