

PECO 5504

Issues in Work and Labour: Informal Systems in the Global South

Winter 2023

Carleton University

Time: Fridays, 8:35am – 11:25am

Location: TBD

Course Director: Dr Ashima Sood

Email: AshimaSood@carleton.ca

Office hours: Thursdays, 12:00-2:00pm; or by appointment

Course Description:

This research-intensive module aims to introduce postgraduate students to the genesis and dimensions of informal systems in cities of the Global South. Through secondary research into forms of informality, students will understand the importance of informal systems in retail, transport, construction, security, waste processing and housing, as well as emerging forms of gig labor, among other domains. Students will explore sources of secondary data on the informal economy and be encouraged to critically examine the linkages between informal labor, infrastructure systems and settlement patterns. The aim is for students to connect forms of informality in the Global South and recognize their manifestations in the North American and European context.

The course can also incorporate exposure to primary research through virtual interviews with workers in street vending, casual labor as well as self-employed workers, mediated and moderated by the course instructor.

As an outcome of the module, students will assemble an informal system learning portfolio, consisting of readings and secondary research insights relevant to their research interests.

Course Structure:

The course is structured as a research seminar. Classes will be a discussion rather than lecture-based. At the beginning of each class, students will read and share their learning from published works. After a facilitated agreement on the key sectoral dimensions and open questions around informality in the system under study, students will work on focused research exercises or “challenges”.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completing this course, it is hoped that students can connect informality in the Global South to its manifestations in North America. Students should be able to meet the following learning objectives:

1. Articulate and assess different paradigms of informality.
2. Appreciate the importance of informal systems in cities of the Global South
3. Develop primary research skills suitable for the study of informal systems

4. Identify secondary data sources on informal housing and livelihoods
5. Assess existing research on informal systems.
6. Create a resource base on informal systems based on their research and practice interests

Readings:

This is a reading-intensive course. Students are expected to arrive ready to discuss assigned readings from the published body of knowledge as well as conduct secondary documentary data research as needed. Students are also encouraged to suggest readings from geographies that may be missed in the reading list.

Published articles and where relevant, chapters will be made available in digital format. In addition, students are encouraged to review relevant books from the list provided below and any others they might wish to engage. (See Resource Presentation assignment below).

Boo, K., 2012. *Behind the beautiful forevers: Life, death, and hope in a Mumbai undercity*. Random House Group.

Sethi, A., 2012. *A free man: A true story of life and death in Delhi*. WW Norton & Company.

Anjaria, J.S., 2016. *The slow boil: Street food, rights and public space in Mumbai*. Stanford University Press.

Neuwirth, R., 2016. *Shadow cities: a billion squatters, a new urban world*. Routledge.

Davis, M., 2006. *Planet of Slums*. Verso.

Assignments:

In-class participation and exercises

In-class exercises will be assigned and initiated during the session. However, they may require out-of-class group or individual work for completion. Two kinds of in-class exercises are envisioned – (1) formulation questions for primary research and (2) secondary data/ literature review challenges.

Formulating primary research questions

Students will submit informed questions based on readings to help guide interviews, focus groups and observation with grassroots actors through digital interaction. The exercise aims to help students see the connection between broad research questions and focused interview/ group questions. Working in groups to come up with questions is allowed and encouraged. The questions will be due on a rolling deadline.

Secondary data/literature research challenge (sector-based)

Students will work in groups to research one informal system in the geography of their choice and present their findings to their peers and the instructor. The research can encompass published studies, policy reports as well as insights from secondary data sources. Primary research is encouraged wherever possible. The presentations will be due on a rolling deadline.

Experiencing the informal: Resource presentation

In consultation with the instructor, students will identify and share a fictional or non-fictional depiction of informal systems with their peers to create a class resource repository. Multimedia and audio-visual resources may be included with the instructor's approval. Each presentation must be accompanied by a short analytical note highlighting the key debates and dimensions of informality

the resource elucidates. The aim is to connect the subjective and lived experience of informality with the scholarship. A sign-up sheet will be made available.

Final Paper

Based on work completed in the previous assignments and classes, students will write a policy paper, examining a policy problem associated with any informal systems in a geography of their choice and proposing/ analysing possible solutions. The policy paper must be a minimum of 5000 words, including notes and references. The structure and format will be discussed in class.

Evaluation:

In-class participation and exercises 40%

Experiencing the Informal: Resource Presentation 30%

Final Paper 30%

Contact Information and E-mail:

The best way to get in touch with me is via email. Please make sure to:

- Email from your Carleton university account
- In the subject line, include your full name and the course number PECO 5504/ PSCI 5505/ SOCI 5502

During weekdays, I will aim to respond to all emails within 24 hours, and often much sooner. I am also happy to meet in person or online during my office hours, otherwise if the time does not suit you. Just send me an email and a calendar invite.

Session and Assignment Schedule:

Week of	Readings	Assignment deadline
Session 1: 13th January 2023	Informal or Formal? Chen, Martha. 2012. The Informal Economy: Definitions, Theories and Policies. WIEGO Working Paper No. 1, Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing, Washington DC. Ghani, E., & Kanbur, R. (2013). Urbanization and (in) formalization. World Bank Policy Research Working Paper, (6374).	

<p>Session 2:</p> <p>20th January 2023</p>	<p>Informal labor I</p> <p>Hart, K. (1973). Informal income opportunities and urban employment in Ghana. <i>The journal of modern African studies</i>, 11(01), 61-89.</p> <p>Heintz, J. and Pollin, R., Informalization, economic growth, and the challenge of creating viable labor standards in developing countries. In Kudva, N. and Beneria, L., 2005. <i>Rethinking informalization: poverty, precarious jobs and social protection</i>, p.44.</p> <p>Chen, M.A., Jhabvala, R. and Lund, F., 2002. Supporting workers in the informal economy: A policy framework. Geneva: International Labour Office.</p> <p>Herrera, J., Kuépié, M., Nordman, C.J., Oudin, X. and Roubaud, F., 2012. Informal sector and informal employment: Overview of data for 11 cities in 10 developing countries. <i>Women in the Informal Economy Globalizing and Organizing</i>, Cambridge, available at: www.wiego.org/sites/wiego.org/files/publications/files/Herrera_WIEGO_WP9.pdf.</p>	<p>In-class participation and exercises due</p>
<p>Session 3:</p> <p>27th January 2023</p>	<p>Informal labor II</p> <p>Graham, M. and Anwar, M., 2019. The global gig economy: Towards a planetary labour market? <i>First Monday</i>, 24(4).</p> <p>Millar, K.M., 2017. Toward a critical politics of precarity. <i>Sociology Compass</i>, 11(6), p.e12483.</p> <p>Pang, I., 2019. The legal construction of precarity: Lessons from the construction sectors in Beijing and Delhi. <i>Critical Sociology</i>, 45(4-5), pp.549-564.</p> <p>Chatterjee, M., 2005. Social protection in the changing world of work: experiences of informal women workers in India. In Kudva, N. and Beneria, L., 2005. <i>Rethinking informalization: poverty, precarious jobs and social protection</i>.</p> <p>Moussié, R. and Alferys, L., 2022. Pandemic, informality and women's work: Redefining social protection priorities at WIEGO. <i>Global Social Policy</i>.</p>	<p>In-class participation and exercises due</p>

<p>Session 4: 3rd February 2023</p>	<p>Informal transport systems</p> <p>Cervero, R. and Golub, A., 2007. Informal transport: A global perspective. <i>Transport policy</i>, 14(6), pp.445-457.</p> <p>Evans, J., O'Brien, J. and Ch Ng, B., 2018. Towards a geography of informal transport: Mobility, infrastructure and urban sustainability from the back of a motorbike. <i>Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers</i>, 43(4), pp.674-688.</p> <p>Harding, S. and Rojesh, S., 2014. Battery Rickshaws in New Delhi and the Regulation Conundrum. <i>Economic & Political Weekly</i>, 49(35), p.43.</p> <p>Sood, A., 2012. A future for informal services? The cycle rickshaw sector as case study. <i>Economic and Political Weekly</i>, pp.95-102.</p> <p><u>Grassroots Interaction 1</u></p>	<p>In-class participation and exercises due; Resource presentation</p>
<p>Session 5: 10th February 2023</p>	<p>Informal retail I</p> <p>Roever, S. and Skinner, C., 2016. Street vendors and cities. <i>Environment and Urbanization</i>, 28(2), pp.359-374.</p> <p>Roever, S., 2005. <i>Enforcement and compliance in Lima's street markets: the origins and consequences of policy incoherence toward informal traders</i> (No. 2005/16). WIDER Research Paper.</p> <p>Schindler, S. (2014). Producing and contesting the formal/informal divide: Regulating street hawking in Delhi, India. <i>Urban Studies</i>, 51(12), 2596-2612.</p>	<p>In-class participation and exercises due; Resource presentation</p>
<p>Session 6: 17th February 2023</p>	<p>Informal retail II</p> <p>Anjaria, J.S., 2006. Street hawkers and public space in Mumbai. <i>Economic and political weekly</i>, pp.2140-2146.</p> <p>Sood, A., 2013. 85. Green informal services in India? Rickshaws, rag-picking and street vending. <i>World Social Science Report</i>, p.476.</p> <p><u>Grassroots Interaction 2</u></p>	<p>In-class participation and exercises due</p>

<p>Session 7: 3rd March 2023</p>	<p>Informal waste processing</p> <p>Fergutz, O., Dias, S. and Mitlin, D., 2011. Developing urban waste management in Brazil with waste picker organizations. <i>Environment and Urbanization</i>, 23(2), pp.597-608.</p> <p>Gill, K., 2007. Interlinked contracts and social power: Patronage and exploitation in India's waste recovery market. <i>The Journal of Development Studies</i>, 43(8), pp.1448-1474.</p> <p>Ruiz-Restrepo, A. and Barnes, S., 2010. WIEGO report on the policy environment of informal urban waste pickers and artisanal mine workers in Colombia. Cambridge, MA: WIEGO.</p> <p>McFarlane, C., Desai, R. and Graham, S., 2014. Informal urban sanitation: Everyday life, poverty, and comparison. <i>Annals of the Association of American Geographers</i>, 104(5), pp.989-1011.</p>	<p>In-class participation and exercises due</p>
<p>Session 8: 10th March 2023</p>	<p>Informal Housing I</p> <p>Fernandes, E., 2011. Regularization of informal settlements in Latin America (p. 52). Cambridge: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.</p> <p>Shatkin, G., 2004. Planning to forget: Informal settlements as 'forgotten places' in globalising Metro Manila. <i>Urban Studies</i>, 41(12), pp.2469-2484.</p>	<p>In-class participation and exercises due; Resource presentation</p>
<p>Session 9: 17th March 2023</p>	<p>Informal Housing II</p> <p>Bhide, A., 2009. Shifting terrains of communities and community organization: reflections on organizing for housing rights in Mumbai. <i>Community Development Journal</i>, 44(3), pp.367-381.</p> <p>Satterthwaite, D., Archer, D., Colenbrander, S., Dodman, D., Hardoy, J., Mitlin, D. and Patel, S., 2020. Building resilience to climate change in informal settlements. <i>One Earth</i>, 2(2), pp.143-156.</p>	<p>In-class participation and exercises due</p>

<p>Session 10: 24th March 2023</p>	<p>Grassroots Innovation and Collective Action</p> <p>Chen, M., Jhabvala, R. and Kanbur, R., 2007. Membership-based organizations of the poor: Concepts, experience and policy. In Membership Based Organizations of the Poor (pp. 23-40). Routledge.</p> <p>Arputham, J., 2012. How community-based enumerations started and developed in India. <i>Environment and Urbanization</i>, 24(1), pp.27-30.</p> <p>Smith, A., Fressoli, M. and Thomas, H., 2014. Grassroots innovation movements: challenges and contributions. <i>Journal of Cleaner Production</i>, 63, pp.114-124.</p> <p><u>Grassroots Interaction 3</u></p>	<p>In-class participation and exercises due; ; Resource presentation</p>
<p>Session 11: 31st March 2023</p>	<p>Conceptualizing Informal Systems</p> <p>Simone, A., 2004. People as Infrastructure: Intersecting fragments in Johannesburg. <i>Public Culture</i>, 16(3), pp.407-429.</p> <p>Banks, N., Lombard, M. and Mitlin, D., 2020. Urban informality as a site of critical analysis. <i>The journal of development studies</i>, 56(2), pp.223-238.</p> <p>Banks, N., Lombard, M. and Mitlin, D., 2020. Urban informality as a site of critical analysis. <i>The journal of development studies</i>, 56(2), pp.223-238.</p>	<p>In-class participation and exercises due</p>
<p>Session 12: 7th April 2023</p>	<p>Informality beyond binaries</p> <p>Roy, Ananya, 2009. Why India Cannot Plan Its Cities: Informality, Insurgency and the Idiom of Urbanization, <i>Planning Theory</i>, 8 (1), 76-87.</p> <p>Roy, A., 2011. Slumdog cities: Rethinking subaltern urbanism. <i>International journal of urban and regional research</i>, 35(2), pp.223-238.</p> <p>McFarlane, C., 2018. Fragment urbanism: Politics at the margins of the city. <i>Environment and Planning D: Society and Space</i>, 36(6), pp.1007-1025.</p>	<p>Reflective essay due</p>

Academic Accommodations:

This course includes ongoing, in-class assignments and evaluations. In case you need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term, the processes for an accommodation request are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: Email me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For accommodation regarding a formally-scheduled final exam, you must complete the [Pregnancy Accommodation Form](#).

Religious obligation: Email requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details [click here](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally scheduled exam (if applicable).

Survivors of Sexual Violence: As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>.

Accommodation for Student Activities: Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Email requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more information, see:

<https://carleton.ca/senate/wpcontent/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

In case you need an extension for an exceptional reason not listed here, please set up a time to speak with me to discuss a suitable timeline. Unexcused late submissions may be penalized.

Final Grades:

“Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.”

Students are reminded to keep back-up copies of all submitted coursework.

Plagiarism:

The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course’s instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course or even suspension or expulsion from the University.

Academic Regulations and Policies:

Please take some time to acquaint yourself with Carleton University policies, regulations, and procedures. Rules regarding registration, withdrawal, appealing marks and anything else you might need to know are available on the following website:

<https://calendar.carleton.ca/grad/gradregulations/>

Use of Laptops and Other Electronic Devices During the Seminar

Classes will be held in-person, except in rare cases of university-notified emergencies. Class exercises Sessions held online require more, not less participation. You are required to please keep your video on during any online sessions.

In-person classes may also require the use of digital devices for reference as well as class exercises. When not required, however, please keep your device closed to minimize disturbance to your peers.

Diversity and Democracy:

Carleton University’s Institute of Political Economy has long embraced the notion of an intellectual community committed to the values of democracy and equality, freedom and social justice, as well fairness and sustainability. It also has long been recognized that the realization of these values has often been crippled and deflected by power, property, and privilege.

This course offers a voice for diversity along many dimensions, including class, caste and race, ethnicity and national origins, as well as gender, sexuality, and religion. Everyone will have the chance to speak. We will remain, at the same time, mindful of the potential of power dynamics developing and ensure that all perspectives are heard and deliberated respectfully. Preparation and research will go a long way in ensuring healthy discussions.

Land Acknowledgement:

Carleton University acknowledges it is on unceded territories of the Omàmiwininiwag (Algonquin Anishinaabeg). Carleton acknowledges it has a responsibility to the Algonquin people.