International Law from the South: A critical perspective to decolonization (LAW 456)

Credit Hours: 4

Course Pre-Requisites: None

Instructor: Syed Muhammad Azeem

Schedule: Monday to Friday (2 PM – 4.50 PM)

Course Description

From colonialism to post-colonialism and through this age of neoliberal globalization, international law has been shaped by the hegemony of the few dominant nations over a majority of the global ‘South’ or ‘Third World’. ‘ Though the terms ‘South’ and ‘Third World’ will stay contested, this course critically investigates the legal theoretical underpinnings of this hegemony from the perspective of the South. The course will start from the critique of the Westphalian assumptions of universality, positivism, and Eurocentricity in international legal theory and its practice. Part One of the course will lay down the basis of this critique. In Part Two, the course will introduce the most influential critical response (including from gender and race theoretical perspectives) to mainstream international law called Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL). Building on the critique of TWAIL, the Third Part will explore the varied position of the South in contemporary important areas of International Law; Conflict and International Human Rights Law (IHL), the war on terror, global constitutionalism, foreign direct investment (FDI), the Intellectual Property law regime (IP), and environmental legislation. The Fourth Part of the course debates alternatives and struggles to decolonize International Law