Course to be taught by Prof Suri for the winter semester 2018-2019

Course 1: Vorlesung

Time: Classes take place once a week, on Wednesdays between 11 AM and 1 PM at the South Asia Institute: INF 330 / SAI R E11.

Course title:

Indian Democracy at Work

Brief description:

India is the world’s largest established democracy. That this democracy operates in a developing society marked by high social pluralism and high levels of economic backwardness of its people brings a distinct character to India’s democracy.

This Lecture course deals with India’s basic framework of governance and the working of various agencies such as political parties and Political leadership that breathe life into this framework. The focus will be on the points of intersections of the state, society and economy. We will analyse India’s political process concentrating on certain key issues that dominate the India’s political life in recent decades. Topics include institutions of governance, federalism, party system, leadership, economic reform policies and governance issues.

The aim is to enable students who are not very familiar with Indian politics to make sense of the noisy democracy in the large diverse developing nation, to examine the challenges India faces in the contemporary times and to arrive at a critical and balanced view of Indian democracy at work.

Course content:

Foundational values: Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles
Institutions of governance: Union, State, and Local governments
Challenge of federalism: Union-State relations
Social justice: Caste based reservations
Social identities: Caste and politics
Secularism debate: Religion and politics
Party system stability and change
Elections and shifts in electoral support
Leadership: Populism and autocratic leadership
Economic reform policies
Governance issues: Clientelism
The rise and consolidation of the Bharatiya Janata Party
Assessing Indian democracy: How Indians view India’s democracy?

Readings:
Select chapters from the following books and a few other articles in journals.

Evaluation: Presence and active participation in classroom discussions. There will be a written examination at the end of the semester. Teaching and the final written examination will be in English.

Students interested in attending this course may please register by sending an email to k.c.suri@sai.uni-heidelberg.de