Governance and Politics of Welfare in South Asia (MA Seminar)
Venue: SAI Room 316

Tuesday 1600 Hrs – 1800 Hrs
Department of political science / Politische Wissenschaft - South Asia Institute
Heidelberg University
Instructor:
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Aim
This seminar introduces students to the emerging governance architecture and politics of welfare in the South Asian countries. In this context we will examine questions such as: What is the politics of welfare and governance? How inclusive is economic growth in south Asia? How do these states make their growth inclusive? What is the politics of ‘including’ the ‘excluded’? By locating the major theoretical and empirical trends within the South Asian region, this seminar will cover contemporary research on governance and welfare, politics of welfare, the role of state and society and the rights based approach towards development. The seminar will examine contemporary situation and cross currents while being sensitive to contemporary history. In this seminar two-dimensions of welfare politics will be examined. First dimensions is about how, why and what of welfare architecture provided by the state in terms of what Marshall (1950) calls ‘social citizenship’ and the second dimension interrogates who gets what, when and how (Lasswell 1936) from this welfare architecture?

Learning Outcomes:
On completion of this course the students will be able to

1. Understand the governance dynamics and the politics of welfare generally and in South Asia specifically
2. Gain knowledge on the historical and contemporary socio-political-economic discourse on poverty, inequality and development in South Asia.
3. Will get orientation towards comparative politics
4. Analyze the role of state, society and institutions
5. Will be able to link the theoretical concepts to the empirical material

This seminar covers South Asia. The course endeavours to cover major South Asian countries. However, not all South Asian countries find place in the readings as on selected issues some countries are better researched than others. Students are encouraged to bring in cases or examples for understanding countries that have not been discussed at length.

Prerequisite

This is an MA Seminar class. No prior knowledge of South Asia is required for this class. However, students taking this course need commitment to the area while being rooted in the discipline of social science. Some amount of sensitivity to the issues covered in this seminar will enrich the discussions.

Organization

For each session, the students will make a 20-25-minutes presentation based on the readings. The presentation will try to address the issues raised in the session brief (provided in the course outline) for that week. It can take shape of a debate as well as a reflection on the readings. Presenters will provide
some leading questions to initiate the discussions. Presentations and class discussions can be a good starting point to start thinking about the paper which I will expect by the end of this semester.

The essential readings will be uploaded on Moodle. It is necessary for the students to engage with the readings for participating in this class. I will be happy to recommend additional readings if one is excited about a topic and desires to read beyond the essential readings.

The password for the Moodle is: Welfare17

**Week 1 (25 May 2017)**

**Introduction**

This is an introductory session where an overview, the scope of the weekly themes and essential readings will be discussed. This session is important for students, as it will introduce the context, meaning of the key terms, broader arguments made in the readings. Prior to starting the discussions on specific topics, this session will familiarize the students with the lay of the land or state of the art. Students should also express their expectations from this module and can discuss the content and orientation of the topics covered, clarify the teaching and learning arrangements.

**Recommended Readings**


**Week 2 (2 May 2017)**

**Welfare, Governance and Citizenship**

Governance and welfare provided by the state has a direct connection with citizenship. What does it mean for the relationship between the state and the citizens? In this session relatedness of state and citizenship will be discussed in the context of welfare, governance and development.

**Essential Readings**


Week 3 (9 May 2017)

Politics of Welfare and Governance

What is the politics of welfare and governance? What are the major shifts? In this session we will engage with some core readings to discuss the contents of the politics of welfare and governance. Students are encouraged to think of some relevant cases from South Asia while discussing the readings.

Essential Readings


Supplementary Reading


Week 4 (16 May 2017)

South Asian Model of Welfare and Governance

Is there a south Asian model of welfare and governance? How and why is it different? This session will discuss some of these questions.

Essential Readings


Supplementary Reading


Week 5 (23 May 2017)

From Programmatic to the Rights Based Approach

Recently, there has been an institutional shift from programs and schemes providing welfare and governance to citizens having rights. What is this shift? What does it mean for the state-citizenship linkages? What explains this shift?

Essential Readings
Week 6 (30 May 2017)

Interest vs Ideas

What explains the shift from the programmatic or schematic approach of providing welfare to the rights based framework. In some cases, it is argued that the prevailing interests in the society favoured this change and state yielded to this demand. Is it a one-way process of societal interests (or demands) playing a consequential role in determining and guiding the state's policy preferences? How about the State and the ideas within it? Does state powers and puzzles as well. In this session we will engage with these two alternate viewpoints.

Essential Readings


Week 7 (6 June 2017)

Please note that there will be no class this week as I will be away for a conference in China. However, we will treat this week as a reading week. The students are encouraged to engage with the following recommended readings:

Essential Readings


Week 8 (13 June 2017)

State and Society

Can state and society work together? How do poor see the state? There is a third strand which establishes the synergy between the state and society working mutually and in tandem shaping the ideas about a specific policy choice. Yet another strand examines how the state seen by the poor. This session engages with these two strands.

Essential Readings


Week 9 (20 June 2017)

Captured Welfare: Patronage and Clientelism

The political parties in power often use welfare and governance selectively. This has been termed by scholars as part of Patronage democracy or clientelism. This argument poses the problem of the state captured by vested interests and instrumental selective use of welfare rather than universalism. In this session we will examine the why and what of the politics of welfare.

Essential Readings


Week 10 (27 June 2017)

Ideas, bureaucracy and the state

But can we neglect role of the state? Can the state captured by the vested interests move? How? In some cases, welfare is provided selectively, but in some others the state responds remarkably well. While it is important to understand state’s failure to deliver, it is equally important to reason the conditions under which it succeeds. Hence, the ideas within the bureaucracy and the bureaucratic culture are important for delivery.

Essential Readings


Cases

Week 11 (4 July 2017)

Right to Work- Employment programmes for the Rural Poor

Essential Readings


Week 12 (11 July 2017)

Gender Rights

Essential Readings


Week 13 (18 July 2017)

Corruption, Transparency and Accountability

Essential Readings


Week 14 (25 July 2017)

Wrapping up
No new topic will be taken up this week. We will reflect on some of the topics and debates emerging from our previous discussions.

Assessment

I will evaluate the students on the basis of: 1. Final Term Paper (5000-6000 words); 2. Book review (1000-1200 words) and 3. Presentation and Participation

Final Term paper (50%): Students are expected to write a term paper on a topic of their choice by the end of this seminar. Term papers are to be 5000 -6000 words in length including footnotes and references. Term papers are due on 30 September 2017 by 5 pm.

Book Review (30%): Students will review a book from the reading list which will be provided by the instructor. Students are also free to choose a book of their own choice. Please note that the books chosen should be relevant to the subject covered in this course. Students will take my prior approval before choosing the book for reviewing. Book reviews are to be 1000-1200 words in length.

Class Presentation, Participation and Attendance (20%): Evaluation will be based on student’s engagement with the topic and demonstrated understanding of the assigned readings. Since, this is a seminar style class, discussions and engagement with the topic assigned will be appreciated. Based on the readings (and perhaps beyond) it is also encouraged to think deeply about the issues assigned each week.

Students are expected to attend the seminar regularly and are encouraged to actively participate in the discussions. They will be evaluated on the basis of their preparation for this seminar. It is pertinent for the students to come prepared for the class on the basis of the essential readings provided in the course outline.