

## **Public Policies and Institutions in South Asia: Persistence and Change (MA Seminar)**

**Winter Semester 2018-19**

Venue: SAI Room 316  
Tuesday 1400 Hrs–1600Hrs  
Department of political science / Politische Wissenschaft  
South Asia Institute  
Heidelberg University

Instructor:  
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Please Email to seek an appointment.

The objective of this seminar is to understand policy and institutional change as well as its persistence in South Asia. Broadly, this course will address the central question: How do policies and institutions change? Institutions and policies are often change resistant and it is difficult to exit from the status quo. This is especially true of the south Asian countries where public policies and related institutions are historically path dependent. Hence, when the institutional paths do alter, they are puzzling. This seminar seeks to unravel these puzzles by capturing social, economic and political changes in the countries of South Asia. Through specific country cases we will try to unravel the why, how and what of policy and economic persistence and change. For instance, what led to change in economic policies from a relatively closed to a more liberal economic order from the early 1990's onwards? What factors resulted in the changes in welfare policies in South Asia? Why some sectors are successful and others are lagging behind? Why are some public policies implemented more successfully than others? What are the causes of uneven development in South Asia? These are some of the pertinent questions that will guide the logic and content of this course. This seminar will help students understand institutions, public policy frameworks and encourage them to critically examine the linkages between institutional and policy change and existing political, social and economic realities in South Asia.

### **Learning Outcomes**

On completion of this course the students will be able to

1. Get a deep grounding in theoretical concepts of institutions and policies
2. Analyze the role of state, institutions and public policies
3. Will get orientation towards comparative politics
4. Gain knowledge on the historical and contemporary socio-political-economic discourse in South Asia.

### **Prerequisite**

No prior knowledge of institutions or public policy 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**

This seminar is divided in weekly thematic sessions. I will initiate the weekly sessions by giving an introduction to the assigned topic in that week. After my intervention, for each session, students will make a 15 - 20 minutes' presentation based on the readings followed by class discussion. Students can choose their presentation slots according to their interests. **These slots will be assigned on the principle of first come first serve, so, please inform me of your preferred presentation slot at the earliest.** Presentations should address the issues raised in the readings and topic assigned for that week. They can take shape of a debate as well as a reflection on the readings. Presenters will provide some leading questions to initiate the discussions. Please send in your reading questions at least two days prior to your presentation day. 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 essential readings to meaningfully participate in this class. I will happily recommend additional readings (beyond the supplementary readings) if you are interested in a particular topic.

**The Moodle password for this course is: Persistence1819**

### **Assessment**

I will evaluate students on the basis of: 1. Final Term Paper; 2. Book review 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 (3000-4000 words for BA students) including footnotes and references. Term papers are due by 31 March2019.

**Book Review (30%):** Students will review a book from the reading list which will be provided by me. 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 in the class which necessitates engagement with the essential readings provided in the course outline

## **Week 1 16 October 2018**

### **Introduction**

## **Week 2 23 October 2018**

### **About institutions and policies**

North, Douglass.1990. *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hudson, J. and Lowe, S. (eds.) .2004. *Understanding the Policy Process*, Policy Press. (Read Introduction and Conclusion)

## **Week 3 30 October 2018 Puzzle of Institutional Change and Policy Change**

Boettke, P. J., Coyne, C. J., & Leeson, P. T. (2008). Institutional stickiness and the new development economics. *American journal of economics and sociology*, 67(2), 331-358.

Olsen, J. P. (2009). Change and continuity: an institutional approach to institutions of democratic government. *European Political Science Review*, 1(1), 3-32.

Capano, G. (2009). Understanding policy change as an epistemological and theoretical problem. *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis*, 11(1), 7-31.

## **Week 4 6 November 2018 Types of Institutionalism**

Hall, P.A and Taylor, Rosemary, C.R. Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms. *Political Studies*, 44(4). 1996.P- 936-57

Roland Gérard. Understanding Institutional Change: Fast-Moving and Slow-moving Institutions. *Studies in Comparative International Development*, Winter 2004.

Steinmo,Steven. 2008. Historical Institutionalism, Chapter 7 In. Donatella Della Porta, Michael Keating Ed. *Approaches in Methodologies in Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspective*. Cambridge University Press.

## **Week 5 13 November 2018 How do we capture change? History Matters- why is it important?**

Acemoglu Daron and Robinson James A. 2012. *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty*. New York: Crown Business. (Read Chap 1, 2 and 6)

North Douglass C. and Weingast Barry R.1989. Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in the Seventeenth –Century England. *The Journal of Economic History*. Vol.49, No.4: 803-832.

### **Week 6 20 November 2018 Critical Junctures**

Cappoccia, Giovanni. and Kelemen, R. Daniel. 2007. The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative, and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism. *World Politics* 59 (3) :341-369.

Krasner, Stephen.D. 1984. Approaches to the State: Alternative Conceptions and Historical Dynamics. Review Article. *Comparative Politics* 16 (2): 223-246.

Niles, Mark. C. 2002. On the Hijacking of Agencies (and Airplanes) : The Federal Aviation Administration, “Agency Capture”, and Airline Security. *Journal of Gender, Social Policy & the Law* 10 (2) 2002.

### **Week 7 27 November 2018**

#### **Slow Moving- endogenous Gradual Change: Do Ideas Matter?**

Hall, Peter. A.1983. Policy Paradigms, Social Learning, and The State: The Case of Economic Policy Making in Britain. *Comparative Politics* 25 (3): 275-296.

Rahul Mukherji. 2013. Ideas, Interests, and the Tipping Point: Economic Change in India. *Review of International Political Economy* 20 (2) :363-389.

Greif Avner and Laitin, David.D. 2004. The theory of Endogenous Institutional Change. *American Political Science Review* 98 (4): 633-652.

### **Week 8 4 December 2018 Social Movement centric and state-society synergy**

Giugni Marco , Doug McAdam, Charles Tilly. 1999. *How Social Movements Matter?* University of Minnesota Press (Read Introduction, Chapters 1 &5)

Tarrow, Sydney.G. 2011. *Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. Cambridge University Press (Read Introduction, Chaps 5,9 and the Conclusion)

Roy, A., & Dey, N. (2002). Fighting for the Right to Know in India. *Development Dialogue*, 1, 77-90.

### **Week 9 11 December 2018 Interest Based Arguments**

Ashutosh Varshney. 1998. Mass Politics or Elite Politics? India’s Economic Reforms in Comparative Perspective. *The Journal of Policy Reform* 4 (2) :301-335

Rob Jenkins.1999. *Democratic Politics and Economic Reform in India*.  
**Cambridge:** Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. (Read Introduction, Chaps 6  
&7)

## **CASES**

### **Week 10 18 December 2018**

Cases- Economic Change- Pakistan and Bangladesh

### **Week 11 8 January 2019**

Economic Change in India and Srilanka

### **Week 12 15 January 2019**

Social Change- Rights Based legislations

### **Week 13 22 January 2019**

Social Change- Rights Based legislations Contd...

### **Week 14 29 January 2019**

Political Change- divergent cases of India and Pakistan, Monarchy to democracy:  
Bhutan and Nepal

### **Week 15 5 February 2019**

Wrapping up