South Asia presents a paradox of high economic growth on one hand and equally acute corruption levels on the other. While the sub-region grew at 6 percent plus in the last decade, average corruption perception index score of 30 locates South Asia as most corrupt sub-region in the world. How do we make sense of this paradox? Surely, corruption touches the everyday life of the citizens and especially the poor. What does it mean for governance in South Asia? This seminar will try to unpack, understand and discover the what, why and how of both grand and petty corruption in South Asia.

Greater transparency of the state will surely impact the quantum of corruption. Indeed, the South Asian states have put in place transparency mechanisms to make the processes within the state more transparent. What are these mechanisms? How have they emerged? Have the changes in formal norms also resulted in similar changes in the informal norms or in other words related socio-political patterns? How effective are these policies? What is the role of transparency in development? This seminar will explore (and perhaps try to answer) some of these central transparency related questions.

Transparency and accountability are the two sides of the same coin. If transparency is given, accountability is sought and demanded. Citizens have increasingly become aware of their rights and have regularly sought accountability from the state. What are the tools of citizen led accountability? How does the state respond to this? To find answers to these pertinent questions it is necessary to understand the politics of transparency and accountability. This throws open interesting insights on the state-society relations. In this context this course will critically reflect and examine the patterns of transparency, accountability and corruption in South Asia.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this course the students will:

1. Understand the theoretical and conceptual issues related to transparency, accountability and corruption in South Asia
2. Critically examine the linkages between politics, corruption, public policy and governance
3. Reflect on the ongoing discourse both within the state and society on transparency and accountability
4. Develop pedagogical tools and knowledge to undertake comparative research
5. And be able to link the theoretical concepts to the empirical material

Prerequisite

No prior knowledge is required. 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

I will initiate the core sessions of this seminar on: Corruption, Transparency and Accountability. These core sessions are mentioned in the course outline provided below. Apart from these core sessions, students are expected to make a 15-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 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 lead questions at least two days prior to your presentation day. Presentations and class discussions can be a good starting point to initiate 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).

The Moodle password for this course is: TACSA9708

Note*: Students who desire a “Schein” must register on Moodle by the second week after the lecture begins.

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 March 2020.

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 (22 Oct 2019)

Introduction

This is an introductory session where background and context will be provided to the course. We will discuss the contemporary trends on corruption, transparency and accountability in the south Asian context. 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 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.

To familiarize themselves with the area studies and topic of this course students are advised to look at the following core reading:


Week 2 (29 Oct 2019)

How, What and Why of Corruption: Reflections on Concepts and definitions

Essential Readings


Supplementary

Week 3 (5 Nov 2019)

Corruption in South Asia

Essential Readings


Week 4 (12 Nov 2019)

Country Reflections I (India)


Supplementary


Week 5 (19 Nov 2018)

Country Reflections II (Pakistan)


Supplementary

**Week 6 (26 Nov 2019)**

Country Reflections III (Bangladesh and Srilanka)


**Week 7 (3 Dec 2019)**

Everyday Corruption


Supplementary


**Week 8 (10 Dec 2019)**

Clientelism


**Week 9 (17 Dec 2019)**

Transparency and Accountability


**Supplementary**


**Winter Break 23 Dec 2019- 6 Jan 2020**

**Week 10 (14 Jan 2020)**

**Institutional Response**


**Supplementary**


**Week 11 (21 Jan 2020)**

**Tools of Citizen led Accountability**


Supplementary


Week 12 (28 Jan 2020)

Transcending clientelism


Supplementary


Week 13 (4 Feb 2020) Wrapping Up

Civil Services Reform: Revamping Steel Frame?
