Winter Term 2015/16

MA Lecture: Comparative Political Institutions

Prof. Dr. André Kaiser

Fri 12.00 – 13.30
Classroom: Hörsaal des Forschungsinstituts
First session: 23 October 2015

Course Overview
This is an introductory course for the field of comparative political institutions on the MA level. We proceed along fundamental analytical questions: Why do institutions evolve at all? Why do they change and in which way? What are their effects on political actors, political processes and policy making? In order to answer questions like these the most relevant analytical concepts in the field will be introduced: institutional equilibria and equilibrium institutions; institutional design, institutional change, and endogenous institutions; path dependence; preference aggregation, co-ordination, collective action, and principal-agent relations; veto player theory and types of democracy. This conceptual overview will be followed by applications towards the distinction between autocracy and democracy, democratization, and development.

Prerequisites
A good knowledge of general political science concepts, theories and basic quantitative and qualitative methods is required. Students should be able to understand and articulate themselves in English as this will be the general classroom language. Of course, perfection is not required but you should be able to make yourself understood.

Registration
Registration takes place via KLIPS. I strongly recommend registration as this ensures that you may get information about ad hoc changes in the schedule.

Basic Reading Recommendations (optional)

1. Introduction


Recommended reading:
2. Rational Choice Institutionalism


3. Structure Induced Equilibrium


4. Institutional Design and Path Dependence


5. Institutional Change


6. Preference Aggregation: The Effects of Electoral Systems


7. Collective Action

8. **Common Pool Resources**


9. **Principal-agent Relations**


10. **Institutions, Democracy and Autocracy**


11. **Democratization**


12. **Institutions and Development**


Recommended reading:

13. **Veto player theory**


14. **Types of democracy**


15. Exam