This graduate seminar focuses on issues such as emergence, maintenance, and change in informal institutions— theoretically and for different types of institutions in a variety of empirical settings. It is a point of departure for thinking and developing research on this topic, whatever your field in political science. For the most part, I have selected required readings that do not assume strength in either inferential statistics or formal theory. If you are not a doctoral student in political science, however, please consult me about your enrollment in this seminar.

The seminar has an associated course website at Learn@UW. Required journal articles and book chapters will be placed on the website. Use the website to submit to me your discussion questions and comments by 5:00 a.m. throughout the semester. As for other required writing assignments, submit them to me on the course website before 1:20 p.m. and bring a hard copy to seminar.

Expectations and Evaluation

Seminar Discussion, Questions, and Comments. I and your fellow students assume you have completed required readings and are prepared for informed, constructive participation in seminar discussion. Arrive at each seminar with at least one thoughtful comment and at least one question to prompt discussion—and contribute to discussion of these and to the questions of others. 15 percent

Referee’s Report on One Reading. Once at any time in weeks 2–14, prepare a referee’s report for a journal article in readings for that week. Write as though you have agreed to evaluate the article as a paper submitted for consideration for publication in American Political Science Review, Comparative Political Studies, World Politics, or Comparative Politics—your choice. Make the targeted journal clear at the outset. Not longer than three pages single-spaced, i.e., about 1,500 words. 15 percent

Preliminary Paper or Research Plan. Once at any time in weeks 2–14, prepare a short substantive development paper that takes readings for that week as a point of departure. Apply the readings in either preliminary research or a plan for such research. Focus on an area of thematic and geographic interest to you. Present in the form of a grant application for exploratory dissertation research (e.g., fieldwork, archival research, analysis of existing data) or a report on research in progress. Roughly five pages single-spaced, i.e., about 3,000 words, excluding front and back matter, tables, and figures. 25 percent

Literature Review or Research Paper. Drawing on readings surveyed in this seminar, prepare either an analytical and critical literature review or a working paper that shows significant progress from the preliminary paper or plan and makes an original contribution to knowledge. Clearly, these papers impose different demands: take into account your intellectual interests, previous scholarship, and stage of your graduate career in deciding which option to choose. I look favorably on an effort at a research paper and take into account its greater demands. Roughly 12 pages single-spaced, i.e., about 8,000 words, excluding front and back matter, tables, and figures. 45 percent (if research paper: presentation 5 percent, paper 40 percent).
Special accommodation. If you need special accommodation to enable full participation in this course, let me know in the first few weeks of class. Information will remain confidential. You also may wish to contact the McBurney Disability Resource Center at 608.263.2741 regarding campus policies and services.

TOPICS AND READINGS

2 September: Conceptualization


Further reading:


9 September: Community Management of Common Property Resources


16 September: Property Rights (19th-century United States, 19th-century High Seas, Peru, Brazil, Russia, India, China, Ghana)

Informal Institutions, Fall 2014, 3


23 September: Private Property Protection and Contract Enforcement (Italy, Russia, Poland)


30 September: Economic Performance


7 October: Corruption (Ukraine, China, United Nations NYC, United States)


14 October: Rule of Law (Brazil, Argentina, Mexico)

Informal Institutions, Fall 2014, 4


21 October: Clientelism (Benin, India, Latin America)


28 October: Democracy (Italy, Argentina, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary)


4 November: Culture (Russia, Yemen)


11 November: no meeting, extended meeting on 9 December

18 November: Grassroots Governance (Afghanistan, China)

Informal Institutions, Fall 2014, 5


25 November: U.S. Congress


2 December: U.S. Supreme Court


9 December: Presentations of Research Questions, Sources and Methods, Preliminary Findings
Reschedule meeting for later in day, followed by dinner at 3930 Plymouth Circle