

**HS219f: Policy Making Institutions in the Developing World**  
Spring 2017 Module1 Meets Tuesdays 9:00 - 11:50 am

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**Course Overview and Objectives**

Institutions are often defined as a set of rules and procedures for getting things done—in this case, making policy. Yet institutions are not merely machines or algorithms (if x, then do A). Institutions are also ideas—people have understandings and interpretations about what any institution is and should be, about what goals an institution should serve, and about how to make any institution better serve their goals. The topics of the course are:

Week 1: What are political institutions and why are they important? Nation-building, national identity, rule of law, capable government.

Week 2: The “good governance” ideal and decentralization

Week 3: Building democratic political institutions

Week 4: Corruption and Anti-Corruption Institutions

Week 5: Goals and Indicators as Development Institutions

Week 6: Human Rights as a Socio-cultural Institution

Week 7: Human Rights Commissions

**Reading Materials:** All readings will be available on Latte or through the Brandeis library on-line databases.

**Course Requirements:**

Class Sessions

1. Be present. Do the readings. Start early, give yourself time to savor, ponder and analyze. Ask yourself: what lessons can I as a practitioner take from this reading?
2. Attendance should be perfect unless you have a medical problem or an emergency. If you have to miss a class or leave early/come late, please let me know in advance. Frequent lateness will be noted on the attendance sheet and will reduce your participation grade. Because modules are so short, with only seven class sessions, if you miss more than one class session without a medical or emergency excuse from a dean, you will not be able to pass the course or receive credit for it.
3. I expect everyone to participate actively by bringing your own knowledge and experiences to bear on understanding and applying the course readings. I try hard to make sure everyone speaks at least once in every class session, and will refrain from calling on

people who have already spoken two or three times. It's fine for a few people to get into an in-depth discussion and I will encourage that kind of interaction, but it's not fine for the same five or six people to raise their hands all the time and dominate the classroom. Good participation involves more than simply answering a question or stating a point. It includes

- being sensitive to how much you and others are talking and not “hogging the airwaves”;
- helping your classmates to clarify or expand on their ideas and questions; and
- doing your best to ensure that the emotional climate of the classroom is comfortable for everyone.

If at any time you experience some discomfort in the classroom—anything from your own shyness or language barriers to a sense of hostility or closed-mindedness on the part of anyone else, including me—I urge you to come talk with me.

4. Please let me know if you need any special accommodations for a disability or other life circumstances that might interfere with your attendance, class participation or meeting deadlines. You can learn about the process for documenting disabilities and requesting accommodations through [**Heller staff person to be announced**].

5. Devices: You are welcome to bring your laptops and tablets for note-taking and referring to readings if you don't use hard copies. Any other use, such as Web surfing and e-mail, is the height of rudeness. If I get an inkling that anyone is doing anything but referring to assigned texts and note taking, I'll put an end to in-class device use for everyone. Please keep your phones turned off and tucked away. (Exception: if you have some kind of family emergency and need to be accessible, you may keep your phone on vibrate, but please tell me before class.) In short, back to Requirement #1: Be present and think of the common good.

### Written Assignments

3 short papers due January 24 (Week 2), February 7 (Week 4) and February 28 (Week 6).

Paper format: 3 pages ideal, 5-pages maximum, not counting end notes; double spaced; 12 point font, 1-inche margins. Assignments are written in the syllabus under the respective due dates. All papers are due to be posted on Latte by 9 am of the due date; your papers will serve as platforms for class discussion. Late papers will be docked one letter grade, unless you have a medical or emergency excuse from a dean. There is no final paper for this course.

Grading: Grades will be based roughly as follows:

Class participation: 25%  
Three short papers: 25% each

Not far into the course, you'll figure out that I don't put great stock in objectivity and numerical precision. I do put great stock in improvement over the course of the semester and in active, kind, helpful, cheerful and creative engagement in class sessions.

### **Statement on Integrity**

Professional integrity is broader than academic integrity. In contrast to the prevailing norms in academia about researchers being "objective" and "unbiased," I think that most people do and ought to have moral commitments. We believe certain things are morally right or wrong and we organize our work and careers to act on our moral principles. In the policy world, we all aspire to use policy analysis and policy reform to make the world a better place, but each of us must think deeply about what we mean by "better." In some sense, this question is at the heart of every policy debate.

As researchers and policy analysts, we should not be hired guns. In selecting a thesis topic or a research question, or in deciding whether to accept a job or work on a policy project, we should first question the goals and premises of the work and ask whether they accord with our own moral values. Of course, anyone in public life will face "the problem of dirty hands," as the philosopher Michael Walzer called it. We will have to make compromises with our moral principles, presumably because we think a particular compromise is the best outcome we can obtain under the circumstances. But, as my late friend and colleague Judy Layzer put it, "The point is to be *aware* when you are making compromises, not talk yourself into believing that you're doing the right thing when you really know you're compromising." In short, it is not only permissible but desirable to have moral and ideological commitments and to let them inform your work.

Regarding behaviors that are often called "cheating" and "plagiarism": The prevailing norms in academia forbid collaboration with others except when explicitly allowed by the instructor. According to the standard Heller template on academic integrity (2015): "Each student is expected to turn in work completed independently, except when assignments specifically authorize collaborative effort." That rule reflects the profoundly individualistic political culture of the contemporary U.S. and is out of synch with the more group-based and cooperative cultures of the rest of the world, especially the developing world. *I encourage you to cooperate and collaborate*, to discuss, argue, critique, and *to help each other* develop your ideas. As in the standard university template, I expect you to write your own papers, but you don't have to quote every word or phrase you heard from someone else; it's enough to acknowledge someone in a note with a phrase such as, "I would like to thank so-and-so [or my study group, or my classmates] for suggesting this idea to me." Of course you will put the idea in your own words and develop it. I will post additional thoughts on the appropriate use of quotations on the course website.

## **HS219f: Policy Making Institutions in the Developing World Topics, Readings and Assignments**

### **Week 1 Jan 17: What are institutions and why are they important?**

Francis Fukuyama, *Political Order and Political Decay* (NY: Farrar Strauss Giroux, 2014) Chap. 1 “Political Development,” pp. 23-27 only; Chap. 2 “Dimensions of Development,” pp. 40-51; Chap. 3 “Bureaucracy” pp. 52-65; chapter 12 “Nation Building” pp. 185-97.

Alina Mangiu-Pippidi, “Learning from Virtuous Circles,” *Journal of Democracy* 2016 vol. 27, no. 1, pp. 95-109..

Case Study: National identity as a prerequisite for political institutions

Fukuyama, *Political Order and Political Decay*, Chap. 22 “Lingua Franca,” pp. 321-334 (case study of why Indonesia and Tanzania were able to create national identities, while Nigeria and Kenya were less successful).

### **Week 2 January 24: Good Government and Effective Bureaucracies**

Francis Fukuyama, *Political Order and Political Decay* chap 13, “Good Government, Bad Government,” **only** p. 198 to end of first paragraph on p. 202; and pp. 209-13.

Case Study: Challenging dominant frameworks—how decentralization can lead to effective state-building and service delivery.

Judith Tendler, *Good Government in the Tropics* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997) Introduction, pp. 1-8 (this is not the entire intro); chapters 2 “Preventive Health: The Case of the Unskilled Meritocracy,” (pp. 21-45); and chap. 6 “Civil Servants and Civil Society, Governments, Central and Local,” (pp. 135- 165)

### **Paper Due by 9 am January 24, to be submitted on Latte.**

#### **Paper Topic:**

All of you have been and will be involved with designing, implementing, and/or promoting programs and institutions to foster democratic governance and development. What lessons can you draw from Tendler’s cases studies of successful government reforms for your own work? Drawing on your own experience or other research you have done, think of one organization, program, agency, or situation and reflect on how Tendler’s studies and ideas could help you achieve a successful reform. Be sure to start by describing your chosen program, organization, or agency and its/your objectives.

For paper format requirements, see p. 2 of the syllabus. These papers will be the basis for class discussion. Come prepared to present your analysis.

### **Week 3 Jan 31: Building Democratic Political Institutions**

Frances Fukuyama, *Political Order and Political Decay*, Chapter 18, “The Clean Slate,” pp. 270-84; Chap. 21, “Institutions, Domestic or Imported,” pp. 313-21; Chap. 27 “Why Did Democracy Spread,” read only from the beginning of section titled “The Centrality of Political Parties” to the end of chapter, pp. 408-411.

Barbara Kingsolver, *The Poisonwood Bible*, excerpts: “the first village election,” p.173 (paragraph beginning “Everyone seems”); pp. and 265-6. [3 pages]

Note: This is a novel whose protagonists are an American missionary family in the Belgian Congo, in the village of Kilanga. The chapters are narrated alternately by the four daughters in the missionary’s family: Rachel, Leah, Adah and Ruth May. In the excerpts, Anatole is Leah’s Congolese boyfriend. Tata Ndu is the village headman, and he has proposed to the American father that he would like to marry Rachel, the eldest daughter. Brother Fowles is the head missionary in the Congo. The scenes take place in 1960, as the first democratic election after independence is about to be held. Anatole is helping organize the election in Kilanga and he explains to Leah how it will work and why he thinks democratic elections won’t go over well in the Congo.

#### Case Study: Afghanistan, National Solidarity Program

Andrew Beath, Fotini Christia and Ruben Enikolopov, “The National Solidarity Program: Assessing the Effects of Community Driven Development in Afghanistan,” World Bank Group, Policy Research Working Paper #7415, September 2015. Available at: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/671121468190777792/pdf/WPS7415.pdf>

### **Week 4 February 7: Corruption and Anti-Corruption Institutions**

Frances Fukuyama, *Political Order and Political Decay* chap. 5 “Corruption,” pp. 81-93

Alina Mangiu-Pippidi, *The Quest for Good Governance* (Cambridge University Press, 2015), Chap. 1 “Understanding the Control of Corruption,” pp. 1-17 only;

Alina Mangiu-Pippidi, “Controlling Corruption Through Collective Action,” *Journal of Democracy* 2013 vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 101-15.

Michael Johnston, *Corruption, Contention and Reform* (Cambridge University Press, 2014), Chap.1 pp. 1-4 [up to paragraph that begins “Deep democratization...” in middle of page, and 6-14 [from section “What do we mean by corruption?” ending at heading “Collective Action and Trust”]; and Chap. 3, “”pp. 53-76 only [ending at sub-heading “Important caveats”].

**Paper Due February 7 by 9 am on Latte:**

### **Assignment continues on next page**

**Paper Topic:** Select a type of corruption that you would like to address, and pare it down to something reasonably small. (Ideas: bribery in one government agency or for one type of license, permit, resource allocation; nepotism/favoritism in the distribution of offices and positions, or land titles; stealing money or assets from public). Reflect on two questions: 1) Is this type of type of behavior that you consider corruption deemed corruption by everybody? In what ways if any does it actually conform to some social or cultural norms in your country? 2) Identify ways that this type of behavior either hinders or contributes to development (or both). 3) If you want to reduce this behavior, suggest some reforms based on Johnston's approach in Chapter 3.

For paper format requirements, see p. 2 of the syllabus. These papers will be the basis for class discussion. Come prepared to present your analysis.

### **Week 5 February 14: Goals and Indicators as Development Institutions**

GDP (Gross Domestic Product): Dirk Philipsen, *The Little Big Number* (Princeton University Press, 2015) Ch. 1, "More, Better, Faster," pp. 19-39; Ch. 7 "Today's ABC of GDP, pp. 143-59, but concentrate on pp. 152-59; Ch. 8 "More is Not Enough," pp. 160-83;

MDGs: David Hulme, "The Millenium Development Goals: A Short History of the World's Biggest Promise," University of Manchester (UK) Brooks World Poverty Institute, BWPI Working Paper 100, Sept. 2009. Read Part 3, "Understanding the Making of the MDGs," pp. 43-50. Available at:

[http://www.bwpi.manchester.ac.uk/medialibrary/publications/working\\_papers/bwpi-wp-10009.pdf](http://www.bwpi.manchester.ac.uk/medialibrary/publications/working_papers/bwpi-wp-10009.pdf)

Case Studies:

1. International comparative performance measures: Judith G. Kelley and Beth Simmons, "Politics by Numbers: Social Indicators as Social Pressure in International Relations," *American Journal of Political Science* vol. 59, no. 1, January 2015, pp. 55-70)

2. Review Johnston, chap. 3 in Week 4 as a case study in using indicators to generate political pressure.

3. Report Cards: Martina Bjorkman and Jakob Svensson, "Power to the People: Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment on Community Based Monitoring in Uganda," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* May 2009, pp. 735-69

**Assignment:** Applying the readings to your work as a practitioner (not a paper, but prepare for class discussion) CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

1) Before class, while reading, think about a small problem in your country and how "success" or "progress" is defined. How is it measured?

- 2) In class: report on
- a) succinct capsule summary of the problem
  - b) how does govt or NGO define and measure progress?
  - c) what do you think is omitted from the measure? Or distorted by measure?
  - d) can you suggest another measure, (addition or completely different) that better captures what progress means to people (as in “Waiting”)

## **Week 6 February 28: Human Rights Institutions—social, cultural and legal**

### Required Readings:

Tom Zwart, “Using Local Culture to Further the Implementation of International Human Rights: The Receptor Approach,” *Human Rights Quarterly* vol. 34 (2012), pp. 546-569.

**Excerpt only:** pp. 547-48; 549-564 (sections II-V); the remainder of the article is optional.

Anne Smith, “The Unique Position of National Human Rights Institutions: A Mixed Blessing?” *Human Rights Quarterly* vol. 28 (2006), pp. 904-946, **excerpt only:** p. 904 (abstract) and pp. 912-918 (Section III A “Relationship between Government and NHRIs” and “Independence Through Legal and Operational Autonomy”); and pp. 928-31 (section III C: “Independence Through Pluralism”). The remainder of the article is optional.

Both readings deal with complex problems of creating human rights institutions. Zwart’s article is a profound challenge to the Western understanding of human rights from the perspective of Southern and Eastern countries. It portrays several concrete ways that countries have created human rights institutions based on their own cultural understanding of human rights.

Smith’s article tackles the political dilemma at the heart of national human rights commissions: how can they act independently to hold their government accountable to human rights standards when they are appointed by and dependent on the national government for their legal and budgetary power?

### **Paper Due February 28 by 9 am on Latte:**

For paper format requirements, see p. 2 of the syllabus.

### **Paper Topic:**

Option (a): Using your own country’s national human rights commission and using **either one** of the two articles to generate questions, write an essay about how the problems described in the article are handled—or not handled in your case. You may draw from both essays, but I would rather have you go into some depth about two or three problems that make a superficial list of eight problems.

**Paper assignment continues on next page**

Option (b): If your own country does not have a national human rights commission, you may choose to write a short brief about how you would use the principles from the two readings to design a new HRC for your country.

Option (c) If you are from the U.S. (which does not have a national human rights commission), please choose a developing country that you are most interested in and write your essay using either option (a) or (b) above.

The class session on will be devoted to presentation and discussion of your papers.

**Week 7 March 7 LAST CLASS : Human Rights Commissions**

**If possible, we will have as a guest speaker via Skype: Dr. Sima Samar, Chairperson of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission**

Note: there is a possibility that I will shift the topics and readings of Weeks 6 and 7 depending on Dr. Samar's availability.

Required Readings:

1. "Sima Samar: The Doctor is In," chapter 2 in Sally Armstrong, *Veiled Threat: The Hidden Power of the Women of Afghanistan* (Penguin Books, 2002), pp. 19-40.

2. Sally Engles Merry, "Transnational Human Rights and Local Activism," *American Anthropologist* vol. 108, no. 1 (2006): 38-51.

Reading guide: Merry's article discusses the role of "translators" who help adapt international human rights ideas to local contexts. Dr. Samar exemplifies this role, as described in the biographical essay by Sally Armstrong. Most of you will find yourselves playing the role of cultural translators as well, whether you are translating human rights norms or other international norms about good development practices. As you read Merry's article and the article about Dr. Samar, think about what lessons you can learn about being a cultural translator.

3. Materials on Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC)

Explore the AIHRC website: <http://www.aihrc.org.af/> (if necessary, click on the British or American flag to bring up the English language version). Here are four documents that will be particularly useful. Each of these four is on Latte as a PDF file. These are long reports, typical of commission reports. It's important to learn how to skim for what's useful and interesting to you. I've made suggestions below.

a) AIHRC, "A Brief Introduction to the AIHRC and its Programs and Activities." (first section under the "About" Tab on the website. Also on Latte as PDF. This introduction

describes the Commission's objectives and summarizes the "Law on the Structure, Duties and Mandate of the AIHRC" from 2005.

b) AIHRC "The Situation of Human Rights in Afghanistan 1393 (1915) This report provides the most recent survey of human rights in Afghanistan, and shows you the kind of evidence-gathering and reporting that the AIHRC does. Please read pp. 3-19 for overviews and description of how the Commission does its work. Then skim through the report's headings to see how it is organized and choose two specific rights that interest you and read those sections. (available under the "Publications/Reports" tab on the AIHRC website, and as a PDF on Latte)

c) AIHRC, "Economic and Social Rights Report," updated October 2015. (available under the "Reports" tab on AIHRC's website, and as a PDF on Latte) **Skim the overview, pp. 1-22, and read the section on "Part I, pp. 23-to the chart on top of p. 28 The Right to Work"**

d) AIHRC, "Elimination of Violence Against Women," Nov. 30, 2015  
Available at <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5694bfa04.html> (also on Latte)

If you find this is too much reading, choose either 3 (c) or 3 (d).

**Short Assignment: to be submitted to Latte by 6 pm the night before class, that is, March 6**

Please write one question that you would like to ask Dr. Samar, based on the readings for this week.