COURSE DESCRIPTION

Formal institutions (e.g., laws) and organizations (e.g., courts, firms) and informal institutions (e.g., norms) are important determinants of individual and group decisions and behaviors. Individual and group decisions and behaviors, in turn, create and change formal and informal institutions and organizations. In this seminar, we will review, discuss, and compare some important analytical approaches to understanding these interrelationships between institutions and behaviors. One of those approaches is the Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) framework associated with the Ostrom Workshop at IU and what is sometimes called the “Bloomington School.” This framework was developed and refined over time to aid theory and research on how organizations and institutions (including laws, rights, and other rule-governed relationships) develop, operate, and change, and how organizations and institutions shape individuals’ choices and actions.

COURSE DESIGN AND BASIC WORKPLAN

The central idea of the course is to understand the framework by examining its fullest presentation – Elinor Ostrom’s 2005 book, Understanding Institutional Diversity. We will read and discuss that book along with several other readings.

Some of the readings are collected under the general heading of “influences.” They are presentations of ideas or lines of thought the IAD either assumes or explicitly draws upon. There is not a direct historical trajectory to these readings, though – some of them appeared decades before the IAD, others appeared contemporaneously with it, and two were written by either Vincent Ostrom or Elinor and Vincent Ostrom. Nevertheless, they are good representations of ideas that influenced the development of the IAD.

Another group of readings is collected under the heading of “aids and bridges.” Some of them explain or elaborate certain aspects of the IAD. Others describe ways in which the IAD is or can be useful.

A third group of readings is collected under the heading of “extensions, critiques, and links other literatures.” These are generally more recent works that have either built upon the IAD in some way or pointed out deficiencies and offered ideas for improving the
framework. Although the IAD framework first came together in the 1980s, it continues to undergo critique and refinement, and is used in new ways.

We will all read *Understanding Institutional Diversity*, plus two readings by Michael McGinnis about the IAD framework and a book chapter by Scott Shackelford on collective action at the global scale.

We will divide up the other readings – the 27 articles or chapters listed below under Influences, Aids, and Extensions. Each of those readings will be assigned to a seminar participant whose task will be to read that selection and present a brief (5-minute) summary of it during a live Monday seminar meeting.

During the live seminar meetings, students will summarize the readings they were assigned, and we will all discuss those as well as the readings we have all done.

Students will go beyond reading and discussion of the two frameworks by applying them to a subject of the student’s interest and choosing, subject to my approval. This will be done in the form of a research paper. The paper should combine relevant readings from this seminar with whatever outside sources are pertinent to the student’s chosen topic.

Early in the semester, students will identify a paper topic and share it with everyone in the seminar. Students may then proceed to work on their papers throughout the semester once I have approved their topics.

In the last two weeks that we meet live, on November 30th and December 7th, students will make brief presentations about their papers to one another.

Final papers are due on or before December 14th.

**THE READING LIST**

[Note: all readings other than Ostrom 2005 are posted on Canvas.]

*To be read by everyone*


Additional Readings (to be divided up and assigned)

Influences


Aids and Bridges


Extensions, Critiques, and Links to Other Literatures


**WEEK-BY-WEEK SCHEDULE**

**Monday, August 24th**
*We meet live via Zoom from 9:30am to 11:45am, Eastern Time U.S.*
- Introduction to the seminar

**Monday, August 31st**
*We meet live via Zoom from 9:30am to 11:45am, Eastern Time U.S.*
- Everyone reads and discusses: Ostrom, Chapter 1 and McGinnis 2011.

**Monday, September 7th**
We do not meet and there are no assignments.

**Monday, September 14th**
We do not meet and there are no assignments.

**Monday, September 21st**
Blomquist will be on Zoom from 9:30am to 11:45am, Eastern Time U.S., but we do not meet.

Monday, September 28th

*We meet live via Zoom from 9:30am to 11:45am, Eastern Time U.S.*

- Students describe their paper topics.
- Everyone reads and discusses: Ostrom, Chapters 2 and 3.

Monday, October 5th

Blomquist will be on Zoom from 9:30am to 11:45am, Eastern Time U.S., but we do not meet.

Monday, October 12th

*We meet live via Zoom from 9:30am to 11:45am, Eastern Time U.S.*

- Everyone reads and discusses: Ostrom, Chapters 4 and 5.

Monday, October 19th

Blomquist will be on Zoom from 9:30am to 11:45am, Eastern Time U.S., but we do not meet.

Monday, October 26th

*We meet live via Zoom from 9:30am to 11:45am, Eastern Time U.S.*

- Everyone reads and discusses: Ostrom, Chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9, and McGinnis 2019.

Monday, November 2nd

Blomquist will be on Zoom from 9:30am to 11:45am, Eastern Time U.S., but we do not meet.

Monday, November 9th

*We meet live via Zoom from 9:30am to 11:45am, Eastern Time U.S.*

Monday, November 16th
We meet live via Zoom from 9:30am to 11:45am, Eastern Time U.S.

Monday, November 23rd
We do not meet and there are no assignments.

Monday, November 30th
We meet live via Zoom from 9:30am to 11:45am, Eastern Time U.S.
- Students present their draft final papers and we all discuss them.

Monday, December 7th
We meet live via Zoom from 9:30am to 11:45am, Eastern Time U.S.
- Students present their draft papers and we all discuss them.

Monday, December 14th
We do not meet – final papers are due.