New York University
Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service

Institutions, Governance, and International Development

P11.2214
Spring 2010

Section 1  Coslovsky  Wednesdays, 2:00 – 3:40PM  Silver 504
Section 2  Iskander  Mondays, 2:00 – 3:40PM  Silver 514
Section 3  Iskander  Mondays, 6:45 – 8:25PM  Silver 504

Instructors:

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Office Hours: by appointment

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Office Hours: Tuesdays: 5-7 pm (or by appointment)

Description:

This course introduces the theory and practice of institutional reform in developing and transitional countries. It reviews the evolution of international development paradigms, examining how the role, structure, and management of institutions, the public sector, and non-governmental organizations have changed in response to shifting economic and political trends, with a particular emphasis on accountability. The focus is on major institutional and managerial reforms intended to promote good governance as less developed economies liberalize and their societies democratize. Key topics include issues of property rights, knowledge and innovation, learning, the rule of law, decentralization/ intergovernmental relations, civil service reforms, anti-corruption, citizen engagement, and public-private partnerships. In addition, the roles of international development aid and the external institutions that support institutional and managerial reform in developing and transitional countries are introduced. The course concludes with a synthetic review and a comparative case study exercise.
Goals:

The main goals of the class are:

1) To familiarize students with the evolution of the theory and practice of the relationships between institutions, governance, public sector reform, and development in developing and transitional countries, with a focus on current trends and challenges;

2) To introduce students to international development aid and the various types of organizations that support it; and,

3) To help students think analytically and synthetically about current trends in public sector institutional and managerial reform and the actors involved in it.

Requirements:

The grade will be based on the following:

30% Class Participation
   10% participation in discussion,
   20% postings to the class blog

30% Midterm Exam

40% Group Exercise
   15% group presentation
   25% final paper

Active class participation means coming to class prepared to engage in a thoughtful and reflective discussion, and being able to ask good questions at least as much as being able to answer them. As part of the participation requirement, each student is required to prepare 400-500 word blog postings on the week’s readings twice during the semester (two postings total). The blog postings should not summarize the readings; they should provide commentary on the readings, linking the main themes and insights presented to current events where appropriate. You should also feel free to comment on other blogs postings for that week, or from previous weeks touching on the same themes. These entries will account for 20% of the final grade and they will be graded on their insightfulness, pertinence to the discussion, and originality. (Maintaining a civil tone is required of all postings). Postings should be concise and to the point, and should not reiterate arguments made by colleagues in posting already made that week. Posting should be made at least 6 hours before the class in which the readings you comment on will be covered. There will also be one ungraded assignment for an in-class exercise.

A take-home midterm exam will be distributed two-thirds of the way through the class. It will consist of two essay questions, with a maximum of 5 pages each – 10 pages total. The exam is
open book, open note and you will have two weeks to complete it. Please note that the exam is an individual exercise, and should not be discussed with your colleagues in class.

The group exercise is a synthetic analysis of materials on institutional reform in a particular country. The class will be divided into country groups, and each group will examine one aspect of the institutional makeup and suggest courses for its reform in the country studied. Groups are expected to choose an area of institutional reform to study. They must prepare a 1 page abstract of the topic by February 17 for Coslovsky’s section and March 1 for Iskander’s sections, and they must clear that topic with the professor by February 24 for Coslovsky’s sections and March 8 for Iskander’s sections. Groups will conduct research on their topic, using a wide range of sources. The groups will meet outside of class time to discuss the case materials, prepare group presentations, and write a final group paper of approximately 25 pages in length.

Presentations:
Coslovsky: Groups will make their presentations to the class on April 14 and 21
Iskander: Groups will make their presentations to the class on April 26. (We will have an extended class session).

Papers—due date:
Coslovsky: Group papers will be due on May 5, at noon
Iskander: Group papers will be due on May 7, at noon.

Readings:

There are two required books for the course:


These required/recommended books are available for purchase at the NYU Professional Bookstore and are also on reserve at Bobst Library.

All the other required readings are either available on Blackboard or available online. This syllabus provides additional instructions on how to obtain readings not posted on Blackboard, as needed.

Finally, this syllabus does not include optional readings, but there are plenty of those available. If interested, consult the instructors.
Overview of Course Schedule – COSLOVSKY (revised)

January 20  Introduction and Garbage Dreams

SECTION I: THE CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS AND PRACTICAL CHALLENGES OF INSTITUTIONS IN DEVELOPMENT

January 27  Evolving Development/Institutional Reform Paradigms: From Plan…
February 3  To Market…and Back
February 10  *Class canceled due to snow emergency*

SECTION II: INSTITUTIONS AND GOVERNANCE

February 17  Overview of Development Aid Agencies and the Governance Agenda
February 24  Rule of Law

  *Abstract for final project due*
March 3  Property Rights and Governance

SECTION III: INSTITUTIONS, GOVERNANCE, AND PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM

March 10  Knowledge
March 24  Accountability, Anti-Corruption and Good Governance

  *EXAM HANDED OUT*
March 31  Civil Service Reform and Decentralization
April 7  Public-Private Partnerships and Citizen Engagement

  *EXAM DUE*

SECTION IV: SYNTHESIS: INTEGRATED INSTITUTIONAL REFORM IN COMPARATIVE CONTEXT

April 14  Governing Knowledge
April 21  Country Case Presentations
April 28  Country Case Presentations / Wrap-Up
May 5  *GROUP PROJECT FINAL PAPER DUE*

  *Hardcopy in professor’s box by 12 noon*
Overview of Course Schedule -- ISKANDER

January 25  Introduction and Garbage Dreams

SECTION I: THE CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS AND PRACTICAL CHALLENGES OF INSTITUTIONS IN DEVELOPMENT

February 1  Evolving Development/Institutional Reform Paradigms: From Plan…
February 8  To Market…and Back
February 15  President’s day -- no class
February 22  Overview of Development Aid Agencies and the Governance Agenda

SECTION II: INSTITUTIONS AND GOVERNANCE

March 1  Rule of Law
Abstract for final project due
March 8  Property Rights and Governance
March 22  Knowledge

SECTION III: INSTITUTIONS, GOVERNANCE, AND PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM

March 29  Accountability, Anti-Corruption and Good Governance
EXAM HANDED OUT
April 5  Civil Service Reform and Decentralization
April 12  Public-Private Partnerships and Citizen Engagement
EXAM DUE
April 19  Governing Knowledge

SECTION IV: SYNTHESIS: INTEGRATED INSTITUTIONAL REFORM IN COMPARATIVE CONTEXT

April 26  Country Case Presentations – extended class
May 3  Wrap-Up
May 7  GROUP PROJECT FINAL PAPER DUE
Hardcopy in professor’s box by 12 noon
Institutions, Governance and International Development

Outline and Reading List

Introduction


I. The Conceptual Foundations and Practical Challenges of Institutions in Development

A. Evolving Development/Institutional Reform Paradigms: From Plan…


Interview with Dr. Norman Borlaug:
http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/podcasts/BorlaugMexico.m4v

B. To Market…and Back


C. Overview of Aid Agencies and the Governance Agenda


*Class Assignment:* Overview of Aid Agencies

II. Institutions and Governance: Property Rights, Knowledge, and Organizational Learning

A. Rule of Law


B: Property Rights & Governance


C: Knowledge


Case:


III. Institutions, Governance, and Public Sector Reform

A. Accountability, Anti-Corruption, and Good Governance


**B: Civil Service Reform and Decentralization**

Osborne, David and Ted Gaebler (1992), *Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector*, chapter 5 “Results-Oriented Government” and chapter 6 “Customer-Driven Government” (pp.138-194)


**C: Public-Private Partnership and Citizen Engagement**


**D: Governing Knowledge: Organizational Learning and Change**


Innovation in a Web 2.0 world, a podcast with Professor Eric von Hippel


**IV. Synthesis: Integrated Institutional Reform in Comparative Context**

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