



Wintersemester 2018/2019

Seminar (BA)

Seminar Vergleichende Politikwissenschaft

BA/S Political Institutions and Democracy in Africa

Time: Mondays, 12.00-14.00
Venue: F21/03.79
Start Date: 15 October 2018
Registration in: 1-29 October 2018 (Deregistration until 29 October 2018)
Instructor: Martin Acheampong, M.A.

Zulassungsvoraussetzungen/Entry Requirements

None

Erwerb eines Leistungsnachweises/Assessment

Portfolio consisting of at least one seminar presentation (25%) and one written essay (75%)
ECTS credits: 6

Programme/Course Description

How weak or strong are political institutions in Africa and how can we situate enduring legacies of institutional vulnerability in recent democratic developments on the continent? Many scholars have claimed that the African continent is "institutionless". What this means is that political institutions in Africa such as legislatures, judiciaries and constitutions are fragile and susceptible to manipulation. However events following the third wave of democratization in Africa in the early 1990s show that this characterization is problematic and no longer tenable. In this seminar, we use specific case studies to focus our attention on how institutions shape political outcomes in Africa. The course is divided into three parts. The first discusses the contemporary relevance of informal institutions such as clientelism, ethnicity and neo-patrimonialism in the politics of Africa. The focus of the second part will be on formal institutions like legislatures, elections, civil societies and constitutions and their constraining capacity on African political behaviour. In the third and last part, a synthesis of the two debates will be offered, particularly focusing on the ways formal and informal institutions interact to shape political developments across the continent.

Literatur zur Einführung/Introductory Reading

Cheeseman, Nic (2015). Democracy in Africa: Successes, Failures, and the Struggle for Political Reform. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Hyden, Goran (2013). African Politics in Comparative Perspective. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Posner, Daniel (2005). Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa. Cambridge University Press.