The Course
How can we design democratic institutions to deal with environmental and social problems? Are there universal approaches to solving political problems in physically and socially diverse communities? Do people come up with different institutional ways to address shared problems because of environmental or cultural differences?

By examining basic principles of institutional design you will learn how to analyze constitutions, public policies, international treaties, and other "rule ordered relationships" that different people have created to handle environmental concerns and, generally, the health and welfare of their communities. Our readings and discussions in this introduction to institutional analysis and development draw from a number of disciplines including anthropology, economics, law, political science, public administration, political philosophy, and sociology to learn about individual and collective choices, rules, and the constitution of relationships.

We start from the assumption that there are several core questions facing all societies and cultures about how to organize and take action as a whole. Although the dilemmas confronting a particular group, association, or society may manifest as different “issues,” owing to different cultural understandings, periods of institutional development, and so forth, we can step back from the specifics to think about general problems of coordinating our individual activities to produce mutually beneficial or mutually destructive results for the group. People in any association or society have a stake in how the relationships of the group are constituted; if we find even a few general principles about constituting relationships, that knowledge would be (as they say in Minnesota) “pretty good” to have.

A primary question of the course asks how people do constitute their relationships; as a first premise, we assume that we have choices—the rules and so forth are not simply given by nature, but are a result of human artisans who craft institutional arrangements. There are a variety of institutional designs available for dealing with various categories of problems. Why take one approach instead of another?

Rules establish parameters of choice. At one of the most basic levels of choice, that of constitutional choice, rules structure the basic conversations about every choice that follows: how do we talk about what can, must, and must not be done? Who is authorized to speak and act under various circumstances of choice after we constitute our community?

Even more basic than constitutional choice are the informing epistemic choices that we humans make. These are conventions and strategies that we adopt to make sense of existence and deal with questions of existence about which humans can never have certain knowledge (e.g. Do we exist in a uni-verse or a multi-verse?) Foremost, the rules of language shape our foundational
thinking, informing our ideas as part of the on-going constellation of our epistemic choices. For example, when we think about how various types of rules structure choice, we must make some assumptions about human beings. Many institutional analysts picture a rational actor responding to the various incentives established by rule-ordered relationships. This description of individuals deserves a great deal of attention, so we will spend several sessions thinking about what political economists and other scholars mean when they talk about making rational choices. We will also look in detail at theories of decision making that reject some or all of the assumptions on which the rational actor ideal is based.

As we start considering what kinds of behavior or choices we might expect or predict in a particular instance (for instance individual choices relevant to environmental quality), we will enter the complex world of “given situations” or institutional structure. We will examine some of the basic choice situations that seem to come up again and again, the various collective approaches that organized groups seem to take, and compare different organizational structures, given the different conditions that may face a group. All of these interactions become even more complex as associations and individual interact in a matrix of relationships. We will look at these complexities more closely in a “case study” of one of the most significant and difficult problem facing us, climate change.

Readings
The readings for the course have been drawn from a number of books and journal articles available on reserve at the library. You may make copies for your personal use.

Grades will be computed as follows on the assignments listed below:

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<th>Assignment</th>
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<td>Lit Review &amp; Viz representation</td>
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<td>Discussion Paper (individual)</td>
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<td>Participation</td>
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Assignments

Movie Response Paper
On three Wednesday evenings we will meet outside of our class time to view a film related to the themes of the course. On the either the same evening or on the Thursday following these sessions we will discuss these films. On the following Tuesday you may submit a 2-3 page response paper (typed, double spaced 12 point font). While these papers are open with regard to specific topic (any point of entry into the discussion is acceptable), they must endeavor to
incorporate relevant course readings. Students must submit ONE paper; to ensure an even distribution of the students analyzing one of the two films, you will be asked to sign up in advance to write a paper for the specific film of interest to you.

**Discussion Leading and Discussion Papers**

On Tuesday and Thursday of Weeks 5, 6, and 8 (Feb. 3, 5, 10, 12, and 24) we will devote our class time to three questions:

1) Who should/does pay for climate change mitigation? (And Why?)
2) Can we balance development and environmental protection?
3) What policy initiatives make sense/might we propose based on our theories of governance?

Each of you will sign up to organize our discussion for either the Tuesday or Thursday readings pertaining to ONE of these questions. The readings for these days include “additional resources” that carry the arguments and theories concerning these questions beyond the readings required for our general discussion.

Working in groups of three to four students for each day of readings (including the additional resources), you will develop a response to the central question for the week. The group members may advance different views and disagree in their responses; the idea is to present ideas that will help the class understand the various facets of the question and how one might use theory and evidence to respond with “answers.” Your *group presentation, including the visualization(s) used to convey the point* may take any form and use any medium of your choice. You can think of structuring the presentation as a debate, as a presentation with discussion, as a game or simulation, as an interactive power point…. The form and media are up to you; one-half of the presentation grade is based on your visual presentation of the main idea or goal of the presentation.

**DURING THE CLASS PRIOR TO YOUR DISCUSSION OF THESE TOPICS YOU WILL MAKE AN ASSIGNMENT DRAWN FROM THE READINGS FOR YOUR CLASSMATES TO PREPARE.** For example, you may wish to divide the class into groups and assign specific readings to each group.

Each student presenter will be required to submit a paper of no more than 5 pages (typed, double spaced 12 point font) explaining your response to the question. The researching and writing of these papers is intended to serve as preparatory exercises for our in-class session. The *paper is due on the day of the presentation.* You may draw on any of our readings in crafting your response, but in you are specifically tasked with explicating the readings assigned for the day of your presentation in your written analysis.

It is expected that each member of the group will “take the floor” in the presentation—but the specific activities involved and how you divide the work and presentation will be for the group to decide. *For each of these discussion sessions the remaining five-sixths of the class, who are not presenting on this day, should prepare for these sessions by completing the relevant readings and any other assignments (e.g. preparation of discussion questions) that the presenting group may ask of you.* Regardless of the presentation style and form, time should be allotted for questions and general discussion from the class or debriefing of the activity. The
class will contribute to the presenters’ work by asking challenging questions. This participation will be a significant component of your participation score (see below).

**Viz Projects**
Your final project (see below) involves a public presentation of your research findings in media of your choice. In preparation for making outstanding public presentations of your research story and qualitative or quantitative findings, you will learn several technical methods of presentation—and, more importantly, some of the foundational ideas at the heart of visual representation. The Viz Assignments are designed to build toward this presentation. Viz Assignment 1 accompanies a Lit Review assignment to be completed individually. Viz Assignments 2 and 3 are designed as group projects. In Viz Assignment 2, your discussion leading group (discussed immediately above) will locate at least one visual representation of an idea—quantitative or qualitative information—presented in graphic form. This representation may come in the form of an infographics, a form that we will discuss at length during our class. During your presentation you will show and critique this infographics/representation as a portion of your lesson to the class. Viz Assignment 3, Creating Informational Graphics and Representations of Quantitative and Qualitative Data, is a group project that will become part of your final research finding presentation.

**Final Group Project**
The final group project offers an opportunity to form a research team to see how the ideas from our readings and other media help us understand a challenge that you choose to investigate. The “challenge” need not be a problem or institutional failure; it could be a case in which the people involved have organized to deal with the challenge in a successful way! In previous classes students have created projects to study: the effectiveness of disaster aid following a natural disaster; the causes of institutional failures noted in the FEMA response to Hurricane Katrina; local educational institutions and US immigration policy; local farming communities, ethanol production, and food security….just to name a few ideas. The project can have a local dimension that permits such methods as depth interviews with members of a local community; it can be a case study of a challenge faced currently or historically. Your project could look at a organizational challenges of local CSA and the local food movement, institutional arrangements influencing the impact of user groups on the Arboretum, the impact of cooperative economic enterprises and the coop movement on competitive business practices in a specific economic sector…You define the project. The challenge can be a specific climate change effect or another aspect of environment and institutions relevant to the class. Research groups will present the data collected (excerpts from interviews, graphics relevant to the research, video, audio…) along with an analytical interpretation of these materials during common time on the last day of our class. You may present in a medium of your choice; prior classes have opted for infographics, Prezis, documentary films….In addition to the visual presentation of your research findings, you will submit for my review (grading) documentation of the motivating question, research protocol, analysis, interpretation of results, and conclusions/vision for future research.

More information on technique and guides for this project will be forthcoming. **Put “Common Time—Public Presentation for POSC 211” on your calendar today.** You must be present to win ☺!
Participation
Enthusiastic participation in the reading-centered discussions throughout the term, the discussion leading session, the movie discussions, and critique sessions on the Viz Assignments is essential to each student’s learning process and our classroom community. Participation will be judged relative to an average score of 8.5 pts (85%). Below average or above average participants will earn bonuses or deductions from that baseline value in accordance with the instructor’s evaluation of their conscientious preparedness, commitment, and engagement with the material.

Weekly outline with readings and assignments


WK 1 Tues Jan 6  Studying Institutions as Human Artifacts
   I. An Overview
      I will be discussing ideas from the following

      Listen to John Searle after class:
      [https://www.ted.com/speakers/john_searle](https://www.ted.com/speakers/john_searle)

   II. Visual Representation of Politics—Overview of Assignments and Representation Strategies

Thurs Jan 8  I. Common Sense as Ordering Principle
   II. Can We Understand Existing Institutional Diversity?

WK 2 Tues Jan 13  Moral Understandings and Rule Order

Wed Jan 14 **********Screening of Film *Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room**********
I. Epistemic Choice


II. Visual Representation of Politics—Narrative and Visualization: Representing Political Ideas in Oral Presentation

Our discussion leads to Viz Assignment 1: Visual Representation of Literature Review. Using the readings of the first three class sessions (January 6-13) choose one idea or topic and write three paragraphs in which you: explain the topic (drawn from your readings), explain the conventional wisdom about this topic (what the experts think), and what you think should be the next step in the study of this topic. (What should a researcher do next to “test” or further examine some aspect of the conventional wisdom, in order to “confirm,” discount, or disagree with some aspect of the conventional wisdom?) THEN find a visual representation of some aspect of this narrative (the story you are telling about this topic). You use any visual medium. You may put several images together or use a single image—whatever tells your story visually. This assignment is due January 20

Part 2: The Idea of “Rationality” and Reasonable Expectations of Rational Actors, Collective Action, and Assurance Problems

WK 3 Tues Jan 20 Overview of Collective Choice:

Two Understandings of Individual Choice and Collective Action

I: Moral Commonwealth
For our discussion of Enron film
Review V. Ostrom Reading Jan 15 for Enron film discussion
Review Selznick reading Jan 13 for Enron film discussion

II: Rational Choices, Non–exclusion, and the “free rider,”
Potential Middle Ground

*****Viz Assignment 1 Due in Class*****
Wed Jan 21 **********Screening of Film: *Amartya Sen: A Life Reexamined* **********

Thurs Jan 22

I. Constitutional Choice and Expectations of Reciprocity, Feedback, and Exchange

   Read: Mary Parker Follett. 1995 [1925].

II. Class Discussion of Viz assignment 1

WK 4 Tues Jan 27

Rationality, Commons Governance, and Sustainable Institutions


Thurs Jan 29

Frameworks for Institutional Analysis of Climate Change


Part 3: A Case Study on Institutions and Climate Change

VIZ Assignment 2: Using the “depth” readings assigned for your group presentations (Tues or Thurs of weeks 5, 6, and 8) choose at least one idea or topic that is central to your presentation and find a visual representation of the narrative (the story you are telling about this topic). You may use any visual medium. You may put several images together or use a single image—whatever tells your story visually. At the end of your presentation to the class we will ask you to explain the point of your visual representation(s) and how they helped the narrative flow of your oral arguments.

WK 5 Tues Feb 3

Discussion Leaders Sign Up to Present “Answers”
The Problem of Fairness—Who (Should/Does) Pay and Why?

http://www.pewclimate.org/docUploads/pol_equity.pdf (OR D2L)
Pew Center on Global Climate Change “Climate Change Mitigation Measures in the People’s Republic of China” and “Climate Change Mitigation Measures in India”


Additional Depth Reading.


Jonathan Pickering, Steve Vanderheiden, and Seumas Miller. “‘If Equity’s In, We’re Out’: Scope for Fairness in the Next Global Climate Agreement,” Ethics & International Affairs. 26(4): 423–443.
Wed Feb 4  
Screening of Film *The Day After Tomorrow*  
Read for discussion: Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman. 1986.  

Thurs Feb 5  
Discussion Leaders Sign Up to Present “Answers”  
The Problem of Fairness Continued—Science Knowledge and Communication, Uncertainties and Asymmetries of Information and other Resources: Framing, Imperfect Information, and “Bounded Rationality”


Additional Depth Reading.


Mon Feb 9  
MIDTERM BREAK

WK 6 Tues Feb 10  
Discussion Leaders Sign Up to Present “Answers”
Can we balance development and environmental protection?
Criteria for Evaluating Institutional Performance in Environmental Policy and Development
NOTE: THESE CHAPTERS ARE IN ONE BINDER ON E-RESERVE

Additional Depth Reading.


*******VIZ Project 2 and Paper Due in Class*******

Thurs Feb 12  
Discussion Leaders Sign Up to Present “Answers”
Can we balance development and environmental protection?
Analyzing Centralized Institutional Arrangements Used in Environmental Policy and Development
Shivakumar Ch 3, “The Aid Effectiveness Puzzle,” pp. 21–38
Additional Depth Reading


*******VIZ Project 2 and Paper Due in Class*******

WK 7 Tues Feb 17 Analyzing Decentralized Institutional Arrangements

Thurs Feb 19 Analyzing Polycentric Institutional Arrangements

WK 8 Tues Feb 24 Discussion Leaders Sign Up to Present “Answers”
What policy initiatives make sense/might we propose based on our theories of governance?
Examples from US Cities and States


Thomas J. Belletteri. “Reducing Your Carbon Footprint,” CQ Researcher. 18 (42), 985-1008.

http://www.southwestclimatechange.org/impacts/land

Additional Depth Reading


*******VIZ Project 2 and Paper Due in Class*******

Thurs Feb 26  Forests, Carbon Sinks, Ecosystems and Species


http://www.pnas.org/content/103/51/19224.full


Full citation for King et al. is:

Full citation for Pacala et al. is:

WK 9 Tues Mar 3  Oceans and Lakes: Water and Climate/Climate Change and the Impact on Water

Thurs March 5  Wind Power and Energy Alternatives


Either: Katherine Hayhoe, et al. Climate Changes in the Midwest, Union of Concerned Scientists. (Has better graphs)
OR
(Is a juried journal article)

Watch Interview with Katherine Hayhoe:
https://vimeo.com/88814969

*****VIZ Project 3, Conveying Research Findings Due Class Presentation & Discussion******

Part 4: Conclusions

WK 10 Tues March 10  Project Presentations