**SPINAKER Winter School course**

**Resilience, Governance and Complex International Relations**

**Course description**

Today the biggest challenge facing policymakers is the problem of complexity. In a complex world, it is seemingly much more difficult to govern, and to act instrumentally to fulfil policy goals. The course introduces students to the theoretical frameworks and practices of the politics of complexity, the debates that have been triggered, and the way that complexity understandings have developed, especially in the 2000s and 2010s. Emphasis is placed upon introducing students to some of the conceptual frameworks deployed in understanding system effects on political, economic and social life and how these enable us to rethink governance, power and agency. This course is also very practically orientated, it engages with how complexity is reflected in new approaches to policy-making and understanding, particularly focusing on how problems are responded to and the distinctions between preventive policy-understandings, resilience/bouncing back approaches and more transformative understandings of how to engage with a complex world.

**Subject’s learning outcomes**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Outcomes in terms of** | **Examination methods** |
| **Knowledge – Student knows and understands:** |  |
| * Students can analyse different conceptualisations of politics and complexity and how these developed in relation to different political and societal problems, from economic crisis to coronavirus and climate change * Critically evaluate a range of approaches to complexity as they affect political understandings of the role and practices of government. | Article review |
| **Skills – Student can:** |  |
| * Demonstrate a sound critical and advanced understanding of the different ways in which complexity thinking is deployed as both a limit to political power and also as a way of enabling political change. * Critically evaluate how the politics of complexity interrogates and challenges liberal modernist binaries of politics/economics, state/society, public/private, subject/object, mind/body, human/nature, threat/security referent, inside/outside, means/ends etc. | Article review |
| **Social competences – Student is ready to:** |  |
| Articulate thoughts in a succinct way both in speech and writing and to concretise and articulate concepts and theories | In-class discussions  Article review |

**Calculation of ECTS points**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity form** | **Activity hours\*** | |
| Lecture | 6 | |
| preparation for classes | 10 | |
| preparation for the exam | 10 | |
|  | | |
| **Student workload** | **Hours**  20 | **ECTS**  1 |
| **Workload involving teacher** | **Hours**  6 | **ECTS**  1 |

\*hour means 45 minutes

**Study content**

1. **Introduction: Complexity and the Critique of Power**

Tobias Rees, ‘From The Anthropocene To The Microbiocene: The novel coronavirus compels us to rethink the modern concept of the political’, *Noema,* 19 June 2020. <https://www.noemamag.com/from-the-anthropocene-to-the-microbiocene/>

James C Scott, *Seeing Like A State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven, CT, USA: Yale University Press, 1998 Introduction <https://libcom.org/files/Seeing%20Like%20a%20State%20-%20James%20C.%20Scott.pdf>

Douglass North, ‘Dealing with a Non-Ergodic World: Institutional Economics, Property Rights, and the Global Environment’, Duke Environmental Law and Policy Forum, Vol. 10, No.1 (1999), pp.1-12.

1. **Resilience: The Governance of Complexity**

C. S. Holling, ‘Understanding the Complexity of Economic, Ecological and Social Systems’, *Ecosystems*, Vol. 4 (2001), pp. 390-405.

L Rist et al, ‘Applying resilience thinking to production ecosystems’, *Ecosphere* (open access) (2014) <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1890/ES13-00330.1/abstract>

**Video** ‘How Wolves Change Rivers’ narrated by George Monbiot<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysa5OBhXz-Q&app=desktop>

1. **Complexity and International Intervention**

Ulrich Beck, ‘Emancipatory catastrophism: What does it mean to climate change and risk society?’, *Current Sociology* 2015, Vol. 63(1) (2014): 75–88.

Thania Paffenholz, Perpetual Peacebuilding: A New Paradigm to Move Beyond the Linearity of Liberal Peacebuilding, *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 15:3 (2021) 367-385.

Cedric de Coning, ‘From peacebuilding to sustaining peace: Implications of complexity for resilience and sustainability’, *Resilience*, 4(3), (2016): 166-181. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/21693293.2016.1153773>

1. **Complexity and The Problem of Knowledge**

Benjamin Bratton, The Revenge of the Real: 18 Lessons of Quarantine Urbanism, *Strelka Magazine*, 3 April 2020. <https://strelkamag.com/en/article/18-lessons-from-quarantine-urbanism>

Kenneth Neil Cukier and Viktor Mayer-Schoenberger, ‘The Rise of Big Data: How It's Changing the Way We Think About the World’, *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2013. <http://m.foreignaffairs.com/articles/139104/kenneth-neil-cukier-and-viktor-mayer-schoenberger/the-rise-of-big-data>

Friedrich Hayek, ‘The Theory of Complex Phenomena: A Precocious Play on the Epistemology of Complexity’, in Hayek, *Studies in Philosophy, Politics and Economics* (London: Routledge, 1967), pp. 22-42.

**Course advanced**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activities** | **Examination methods** |
| In-class lectures and discussions | Article review of 1 of the 3 obligatory readings |

**Literature**

**Obligatory**

* Tobias Rees, ‘From The Anthropocene To The Microbiocene: The novel coronavirus compels us to rethink the modern concept of the political’, Noema, 19 June 2020.

https://www.noemamag.com/from-the-anthropocene-to-the-microbiocene/

* James C Scott, Seeing Like A State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed. New Haven, CT, USA: Yale University Press, 1998 Introduction

https://libcom.org/files/Seeing%20Like%20a%20State%20-%20James%20C.%20Scott.pdf

* Douglass North, ‘Dealing with a Non-Ergodic World: Institutional Economics, Property Rights, and the Global Environment’, Duke Environmental Law and Policy Forum, Vol. 10, No.1 (1999), pp.1-12.

**Optional**

* C. S. Holling, ‘Understanding the Complexity of Economic, Ecological and Social Systems’, Ecosystems, Vol. 4 (2001), pp. 390-405.
* Ulrich Beck, ‘Emancipatory catastrophism: What does it mean to climate change and risk society?’, Current Sociology 2015, Vol. 63(1) (2014): 75–88.
* L Rist et al, ‘Applying resilience thinking to production ecosystems’, Ecosphere (open access) (2014) http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1890/ES13-00330.1/abstract
* Video ‘How Wolves Change Rivers’ narrated by George Monbiot https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysa5OBhXz-Q&app=desktop
* Thania Paffenholz, Perpetual Peacebuilding: A New Paradigm to Move Beyond the Linearity of Liberal Peacebuilding, Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding, 15:3 (2021) 367-385.
* Cedric de Coning, ‘From peacebuilding to sustaining peace: Implications of complexity for resilience and sustainability’, Resilience, 4(3), (2016): 166-181.

http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/21693293.2016.1153773

* Benjamin Bratton, The Revenge of the Real: 18 Lessons of Quarantine Urbanism, Strelka Magazine, 3 April 2020. https://strelkamag.com/en/article/18-lessons-from-quarantine-urbanism
* Kenneth Neil Cukier and Viktor Mayer-Schoenberger, ‘The Rise of Big Data: How It's Changing the Way We Think About the World’, Foreign Affairs, May/June 2013. http://m.foreignaffairs.com/articles/139104/kenneth-neil-cukier-and-viktor-mayer-schoenberger/the-rise-of-big-data
* Friedrich Hayek, ‘The Theory of Complex Phenomena: A Precocious Play on the Epistemology of Complexity’, in Hayek, Studies in Philosophy, Politics and Economics (London: Routledge, 1967), pp. 22-42.