



**Centre for the Study of Law and Governance
Jawaharlal Nehru University
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Outline of Optional Course

LG 631 Thinking about Institutions

What are institutions? How do institutions function? How do they evolve? What are the different tradeoffs in designing institutions? This course will examine these questions conceptually. The second half of the course will use the theoretical materials of the first half to shed light on some India's leading public institutions. Why do some institutions function better than others? How do we appraise institutional effectiveness?

What Are Institutions?

- economic approaches
- anthropological approaches
- evolutionary approaches
- political approaches

Issues in Institutional Design

- rules v/s discretion
- statutory autonomy
- transparency v/s effectiveness
- incentive structures

Explaining Institutional Change

- are institutions dependent or independent variables/
- theories of institutional transformation

India's Public Institutions: Design and Performance

- Parliament
- Independent Commissions-
- Institutions of Oversight-
- Institutions of Regulation

Explaining Variation across Institutions

- Why do some institutions fare better than others?
- can institutional performance be explained by statutory design
- incentive structures within institutions

Institutions and Civil Society

- Is Civil Society in India 'weakly' institutionalized?
- Does the character of social relations have an impact on institutions?