Corruption and Governance MA (online)

Modules

The course is comprised of twelve 15-credit taught modules.

Defining corruption
15 credits
Defining what you’re analysing is key to conducting rigorous social science. However, defining what corruption is, is not easy. That has not stopped many people from trying to do precisely that and this module introduces the most prominent of the definitions in contemporary use. This module also crosses disciplinary boundaries by then using a variety of case studies to illustrate the strengths and weaknesses as well as the practical utility of the most well-known of those definitions.

Measuring corruption
15 credits
There are now multiple ways of measuring corruption. This module begins by introducing the most well-known of the aggregate indicators of corruption (Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index, CPI, the World Governance Indicators’ ‘Control of Corruption’) before explaining why in reality they have only limited usage. Newer, more focussed measures of corruption are then assessed, as are some of the now larger array of proxy indicators of corrupt practice.

Explaining corruption
15 credits
Why does corruption exist? For some, it is an integral part of human nature. For others, it is something that is learned and ingrained over time. This module assesses the ‘rational choice’ approaches to understanding why corruption takes place, before contrasting these with more constructivist understanding of why corruption occurs. This will be supplemented by case study analysis of a low and high corruption country.

Fighting corruption
15 credits
Every government now claims to want to fight corruption. There is subsequently no shortage of anti-corruption tools and mechanisms out there. This module unpacks the logics of anti-corruption in international, national and local arenas. It also begins to unpack what works, what doesn’t and why.
People power and anti-corruption
15 credits
A new wave of initiatives that put people at the centre of anti-corruption thinking has swept the world. This involves empowering individuals to report back on corrupt experiences they may have had, helps them see deep inside government to probe for corrupt practices and allows them to increasingly shape their own lives away from the clutches of corrupt power-holders. This module assesses the impact of people-power initiatives.

Narratives and metaphors of corruption
15 credits
Stories about corruption abound. This module assesses the narratives and metaphors that go hand in hand with corrupt practice, explaining how corruption is talked about and reported upon. This module illustrates that corruption remains a complex phenomenon with unclear boundaries, and that the use of metaphorical devices not only illuminates but also hides some of its attributes.

International actors and anticorruption
15 credits
Over the last 20/30 years a range of international actors have ‘discovered’ corruption. This module introduces the anti-corruption efforts of those actors (UN, OECD. World Bank etc.) before evaluating their relative successes and failures.

Corruption and gender
15 credits
An increasingly diverse body of literature looks at the relationship between gender and corruption. For some corruption has an inherent male bias. For others, the relationship is more complicated. This module assesses these competing perspectives before analysing to what extent increasing gender equality can also be an effective anti-corruption tool.

Compliance in international business
15 credits
Compliance has become one of the buzzwords of global capitalism. This module explains why ever more companies have compliance strategies and evaluates their successes in helping to mitigate against corrupt practice in international business.

The Natural Resources Curse: oil, gas and corruption
15 credits
Is it a coincidence that states with multiple natural resources appear to have some of the most severe corruption challenges? If so, why? This module helps students understand why certain states fall in to the ‘natural resources trap’ whereas others – Norway, for example – manage to avoid it.
Money in politics
15 credits
This module enables students to assess the impact of money on political processes. Whilst perceived wisdom has it that money helps shape and influence political outcomes, in reality the relationship is more complicated than that. The module will introduce a number of models for financing politics, before evaluating their respective impacts. The module will help students understand that no matter how you fund political life, corruption challenges will remain.

Project
15 credits
Students will undertake a project linked with anti-corruption issues within a specific firm, organisation or setting. The project will enable students to introduce a given (anti-) corruption ‘problem’, evaluate strategies for counteracting it and then assess attempts to enact change.