

University of Innsbruck  
Research Centre  
*Spheres of Governance: Institutions & Agency*  
Doctoral Programme  
*Political Institutions and Leadership in a Contingent World*

## Statute

### Preamble

The Doctoral Programme *Political Institutions and Leadership in a Contingent World* enquires into how political institutions and leadership interact in, and react to, a contingent world. Institutions are the very foundation of organized human coexistence as they provide a framework in which individual and collective actors operate and interact with each other. Yet institutions neither determine the behaviour of actors nor do they remain static. Individual and collective actors, and in particular political leaders as eminently powerful and capable actors, drive things forward by (re)interpreting and challenging institutions and thus also contributing to their evolution or demise. The Programme addresses this nexus between institutions and leadership from an interdisciplinary perspective that integrates Comparative Politics and International Relations and is also open to contributions from neighbouring disciplines such as Sociology, History or Law.

The Programme and its members are committed to international standards of excellence in scientific research. In particular, they aspire to publish the findings of their research in leading academic journals and with major university presses using rigorous (double-blind) peer review. Therefore, the faculty of the Programme is strongly committed to introducing Doctoral Students to the craft of international academic publishing and international standards in the political and social sciences at the earliest possible stage of their academic careers.

The Programme seeks to include accomplished scholars and Doctoral Students from within the University of Innsbruck and beyond. Interested scholars and students are cordially invited to join the Programme by following the procedures outlined below.

## I. Faculty Membership

1. The two types of faculty membership in the Programme are Active Membership and Passive Membership.
2. **Active Membership** in the Programme shall be open to all members of the faculty at the University of Innsbruck and other academic institutions. It hinges on the following conditions:
  - a. The possession of the required qualifications for supervising doctoral theses at the University of Innsbruck or other academic institutions (i.e. Full Professor, Associate Professor, Junior Professor, Substitute Professor, scholars having been awarded the *venia legendi*, as well as, in exceptional cases, holders of a PhD with an outstanding international reputation in their respective field).
  - b. Supervision of at least one doctoral thesis in the Programme in a period of five years.
3. Active Members who have not supervised a doctoral dissertation related to the Programme in the past five years shall lose their active membership status and become Passive Members until they supervise a doctoral project within the Programme.
4. In the foundational phase of the Programme (i.e. three years after the coming into force of the statute), the Speaker of the Programme shall designate a foundational group of Active Members.
5. Active Members shall be eligible for the Faculty Assembly and the Steering Committee.
6. Passive Membership in the Programme shall be open to all members of the faculty at the University of Innsbruck and other academic institutions who have a track-record of high-quality research and publications within the topical scope of the Programme (see the Appendix to this Statute).
7. Faculty members seeking passive membership shall send a written request to the Speaker. The Speaker shall notify the Faculty Assembly by a written statement on the prospective Passive Member. The Faculty Assembly shall then decide on the request with simple majority.
8. Passive Members are entitled to participate in meetings of the Faculty Assembly and the General Assembly as observers. They do not have the right to participate in meetings of the Steering Committee.
9. Active and Passive Members can resign at their own request, and shall send a written notification to this effect to the Speaker of the Programme.

10. Active and Passive Members can be excluded from the Programme in the case of serious violations of the standards and rules for good scientific practice (as defined by the Austrian Agency for Research Integrity) or the neglect of duties as doctoral-supervisors. In a case of violation or neglect, the Speaker shall issue a written statement to the member and demand clarification. If the matter is not clarified and resolved within a period of four weeks, the Speaker shall inform the members of the Faculty Assembly. The Faculty Assembly shall then convene as soon as possible thereafter, shall discuss the matter, and arrive at a binding decision about the possible exclusion of the faculty member with a two-thirds majority. If a doctoral-supervisor is excluded from the Programme, the Speaker shall inform the Dean of Studies of this decision. The Dean of Studies will then nominate a new supervisor, according to § 25 Para 6 of the Statute section on study-law regulations.

## II. Positions and Bodies of the Doctoral Programme

11. The Programme shall consist of a Speaker of the Doctoral Programme, a Scientific Manager, a Faculty Assembly, a Steering Committee, and a General Assembly.
12. The Speaker of the Research Centre “Spheres of Governance: Institutions and Agency” shall be the **Speaker of the Doctoral Programme**. It shall be the task of the Speaker to:
  - a. represent the Programme within the University of Innsbruck and beyond.
  - b. provide strategic guidance for the development of the Programme.
  - c. nominate two Active Members for the Steering Committee, and a Scientific Manager.
  - d. designate a foundational group of Active Members.
  - e. notify the Faculty Assembly with a written statement about requests for Passive Membership in the Programme.
  - f. conduct the process of evaluating, and deciding upon, the status of faculty members and Doctoral Students in the Programme as specified in Articles I(10) and III(33) of the present statute.
13. The Speaker of the Doctoral Programme shall nominate an Active or Passive Member of the Programme as **Scientific Manager (SM)**. The Faculty Assembly shall then decide on the nominee with simple majority.
14. The Scientific Manager’s period of service shall be limited to a period of three years. Re-election shall be possible.
15. It shall be the task of the Scientific Manager to:
  - a. support the Speaker in all matters of scientific and administrative coordination

- b. be a non-voting member of the Steering Committee.
  - c. support the Steering Committee and the Faculty Assembly in the preparation of their meetings and the implementation of their decisions.
  - d. support the General Assembly in the preparation of its meetings.
16. The Scientific Manager can resign at his or her own request and shall send a written notification to this effect to the Speaker of the Programme.
17. The **Faculty Assembly (FA)** is a meeting of Active and Passive Members of the Programme.
18. The FA elects a Chair from the group of Active Members for a period of two years. The Speaker of the Programme shall chair the first meeting of the FA, until a Chair is elected.
19. The FA has a quorum if at least two-thirds of the Active Members are present. Members, unable to attend a meeting, can transfer their right to vote to another Active Member.
20. The Members of the Steering Committee are allowed to attend meetings of the Faculty Assembly and also have the right to vote.
21. Passive Members do not have the right to vote in the FA.
22. The FA shall:
- a. be convened by the Speaker at least once a year.
  - b. decide with a simple majority on the admission of new Passive Members and Doctoral Students, nominations for membership in the Steering Committee, nominations as Scientific Manager.
  - c. decide with a two-thirds majority on the exclusion of Doctoral Students, changes in the statute, and the termination of the Programme.
  - d. decide with a two-thirds majority on the exclusion of a Member. An Active Member, who is subject to the decision, shall not have the right to vote on the exclusion.
23. The **Steering Committee (SC)** consists of the Speaker of the Programme, two Active Members of the Programme, and the non-voting Scientific Manager of the Programme.
24. The Speaker shall nominate two Active Members of the Programme for membership in the SC. The Faculty Assembly shall decide on the nominations with a simple majority.
25. Elected Membership in the SC shall be limited to a period of three years. Re-election of members shall be possible.

26. The SC shall:
  - a. support the Speaker.
  - b. coordinate the activities of the Programme (e.g. prepare administrative meetings, research meetings, workshops or similar activities).
  - c. ensure the quality of research and teaching.
  - d. and make written recommendations to the Faculty Assembly.
27. The Speaker shall chair the meetings of the SC.
28. Elected members of the SC can resign at their own request and shall send a written notification to this effect to the Speaker of the Programme.
29. The **General Assembly** is a meeting of the Active Members, Passive Members, the Speaker, the Scientific Manager, and the Doctoral Students.
30. The General Assembly shall
  - a. be convened by the Speaker at least once a year.
  - b. discuss all relevant matters of the Programme.
31. The Speaker shall chair the meetings of the GA.

### **III. Admission and Exclusion of Doctoral Students**

32. The admission of Doctoral Students into the Programme shall be a two-step process.
  - a. In a first step, prospective students shall submit a proposal including a letter of motivation, an outline of the proposed research project, an academic CV, and two references to the Speaker. The Steering Committee shall assess the qualification of the prospective students and the quality of the proposed projects. It shall then make a written recommendation to the Faculty Assembly.
  - b. In a second step, the Faculty Assembly shall decide on the admission of a student to the Doctoral Programme. This decision includes a formal acknowledgment of the first and second supervisor of this student, with the former to be selected from the group of eligible faculty members, and is to be made by a simple majority vote.
33. The affiliation of a Doctoral Student to the Programme ceases automatically after his or her successful completion of all duties set out in the respective PhD studies curriculum. On graduation, Doctoral Students receive a certificate, to be signed by the Speaker, stating her successful participation in the Doctoral Programme.

34. Doctoral Students can be excluded from the Programme in the case of serious violations of the standards and rules for good scientific practice or the neglect of duties as Doctoral Students. The latter include repeated absence from obligatory meetings of the Programme and lack of substantive progress of the doctoral project. If one of these cases applies, the supervisor of the student shall issue a written statement to the student concerned and demand clarification. If the matter is not clarified and resolved within a period of four weeks, the supervisor shall inform the members of the Faculty Assembly. The Faculty Assembly shall then convene as soon as possible thereafter, shall discuss the matter, and arrive at a binding decision about the possible exclusion of the Doctoral Student with a two-thirds majority.

#### **IV. Doctoral Thesis**

35. A doctoral thesis shall be supervised by two Active Members of the Programme. One Active Member shall be the primary supervisor, the other Active Member shall be the secondary supervisor.
36. Primary supervisions by scholars who are not Active Members of the Programme are not allowed.
37. Secondary supervisions by scholars who are not Active Members of the Programme are allowed, provided that:
  - a. the suggested supervisor meets the requirements for Active Membership in the Programme as outlined in Art. 2 of the Statute.
  - b. the suggested supervisor submits a written notification on the acceptance of the supervision.
  - c. the Faculty Assembly accepts the external supervisor with a simple majority prior to the decision on the admission of the Doctoral Student.
38. The doctoral thesis can be submitted as a monograph or a collection of published articles with an introduction that establishes an overarching framework that integrates the individual contributions. The Doctoral Students and the primary supervisor shall agree on the type of thesis not later than six months after the beginning of the supervision. In the case of a cumulative thesis, the Doctoral Student and the supervisor shall discuss and agree on a publication strategy (i.e. the expected number of articles and journals in which the student seeks to publish his or her research).
39. The doctoral thesis shall be reviewed and graded by the primary supervisor and by another eligible scholar who must not have been involved as secondary supervisor. The second reviewer/examiner shall be drawn from a list of three eligible scholars that PhD candidates are expected to send to the Dean of Studies

when submitting their PhD thesis. The final decision on the second examiner shall be made by the Dean of Studies.

## **V. Curricular Activities**

40. To foster the organizational structure of established doctoral programmes at the University of Innsbruck, the School will not develop an alternative/additional doctoral programme but encourage its students to actively participate in existing programmes.
41. The Programme encourages students to attend courses that are thematically in accordance with the school's agenda and/or suitable to further their knowledge of academic writing, presenting and publishing.
42. Doctoral Students of the Programme shall attend the research meetings and workshops of the Programme. The participation in the interdisciplinary "Research Seminar" of the Doctoral Programme is obligatory.

## **VI. Termination of the Doctoral Programme**

43. The Doctoral Programme shall cease, if
  - a. the members of the Faculty Assembly decide on the termination with a two-thirds majority.
  - b. the number of Doctoral Students does not reach three in the first three years or, thereafter, falls below three for a period of twelve months.
  - c. the rectorate of the University of Innsbruck formally terminates the Programme.
44. In case of a termination of the Programme, individual supervisors and teams of supervisors shall have the obligation to continue active supervisions.

Innsbruck, 18 April 2017

The Founding Committee  
(Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Ludger Helms,  
Assoc.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Franz Eder,  
Assoc.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Martin Senn)

## Appendix – Topical Scope of the Doctoral Programme

Institutions are one of the most central, and complex, subjects to be found in the international social sciences and beyond. Even the more specific term, ‘political institutions’ leaves room for a wealth of different understandings, which, after all, has proven to be a source of inspiration and resource for fruitful exchange. Following the world leading reference works in this field (see e.g. the *Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*), political institutions include: constitutions, governments, but also electoral and party systems as well as many other structural features of political regimes. Moreover, even public policies (the policies that governments make) and ideas (that guide different types of actors) have more recently come to be considered as political institutions. Arguably the single most important and influential conceptualization of institutions in contemporary political science, however, conceives of institutions as rules, including both written rules (i.e. formal institutions) and unwritten rules (informal institutions). Understood this way, institutions constitute the bedrock of any polity, including complex political orders at the transnational, international and global level. However, if relative stability is one of the most valued features of institutions, which allows the identification of particular patterns in otherwise elusive environments, institutional analysis has been careful not to neglect the dynamic and contingent element that characterizes real world politics. Institutions do not determine the outcomes of politics, they provide a framework in which individual and collective actors operate and interact with each other; they provide stability and shape the political process but, ultimately, it is actors and agency that drive things forward.

Of the many different forms of agency to be found in politics, this Doctoral Programme intends to focus in particular on leadership, understood as a complex social relationship, with leaders seeking to identify or define goals for a group and mobilize support for those goals. Leadership marks one of the most impressive growth sectors in the international social sciences. There is a host of recently launched leadership journals, book series and related scholarly activities. The spectacular rise of political leadership studies reflects to some extent the significantly increased public attention to, and expectation of, individual leaders in ‘personalized’ and ‘mediatized’ political environments, as well as the contrasting commitment of many scholars to forms of ‘dispersed’, ‘distributed’ and ‘shared’ leadership. Political leadership is marked by several features that distinguish it from leadership in other areas, such as business and management. Arguably, the single most defining characteristic relates to the fact that political leaders have to deal with a non-ascribed followership; more generally, political leaders have to combine ‘authority leadership’ with ‘legitimacy leadership’. While much public and scholarly attention continues to focus on powerful office-holders (such as presidents or prime ministers), or states, there is now a widespread acknowledgment in international research that leaders and leadership can possibly come from many different actors and contexts, including the different spheres of civil society. Moreover, while many manifestations of political leadership are associated with democratic regimes and democratic governance, leadership is by no means confined to the world of democratic politics. Leaders and leadership in authoritarian regimes as well as in the context of international political orders, whose boundaries and features remain uncertain and contested, are no less important items on the agenda of political leadership research than leadership in democratized contexts.

The nexus between institutions and leadership can be – and shall be – looked at from at least two different perspectives: On the one hand, as mentioned already, institutions provide a

framework that shapes the strategic choices of leaders as well as the relations between leaders and followers. For example, when pursuing particular public policies political leaders will take into account the veto power that extant institutional arrangements give to other actors which may have to be colluded into decision-making coalitions. Institutions also create particular times frames (for example, by setting the length of terms for electoral offices) that leaders will have to observe when trying to provide leadership that will be considered effective and worth supporting. Moreover, different institutional arrangements also create different expectations and regimes of accountability in which leaders and would-be leaders operate. Thus, other things being equal, the institutional parameters of a given polity are likely to be reflected in the leadership approaches of different actors, and will therefore shape the general patterns of political leadership across countries as well as sub- and transnational political orders. However, institutional arrangements do not determine the strategic choices and the overall performance of political leaders. In a contingent world, how leaders fare, and why, is difficult to explain, and even more difficult to forecast. Thus, uncovering the reasons for both leadership greatness and failure belongs to the key items on any institutionalist agenda of leadership research.

On the other hand, leadership is not a value in itself. Leadership needs purpose, and political leadership is more than anything else about providing solutions to collective problems. As leaders seek to perpetuate solutions, they have a vested interest in institutionalizing solutions by establishing institutional arrangements and orders that reflect those values that leaders and their supporters believe in. From this perspective, institutions mark the crucial dependent variable that leaders seek to shape their way. The activities in this field reach from establishing informal rules of behaviour in small subsets of political regimes to acts of formal constitution-making and the creation of complex political orders. However, leadership activities do not necessarily have to focus on legitimizing particular solutions, institutions or orders. Other leaders and would-be leaders may seek to challenge – and to de-legitimize – the actors in command, their agendas and activities. Indeed, oppositional leadership is just as much a genuine dimension of political leadership as is leadership by established power-holders.

Thus, the complex nexus between institutions and leadership includes a wealth of both empirical and normative aspects that can be explored from different angles. The latter also include the crucial question of ethics in democratic political leadership, which has long been neglected by leadership scholars who considered leadership as good per se, while refusing to acknowledge coercion and domination as (if highly problematic) forms of leadership in their own right. *The agenda of this Programme therefore covers institutions, both formal and informal; leadership, both good and bad; and the numerous and complex dynamics and patterns relating to institutions and leadership.* This shall be combined with a broad regional agenda that extends from sub-national contexts via nation states and transnational regimes up to the global stage.