GGR1620H - Institutional and Evolutionary Economic Geography

Instructor: Jun Zhang

Schedule: Winter 2014 - Tuesdays, 10am - 1pm, Room 5017B

Course Introduction
Both institutional and evolutionary perspectives have recently exerted enormous influence in economic geography, generating an explosion of research programs and publications. However, the literature remains highly fragmented, and there is still much ambiguity as to what it means to say that economic geography is institutional or evolutionary. Furthermore, evolutionary economic geography is yet to be made compatible with institutional and political perspectives, so that a multi-layered and multi-scalar evolutionary process can be conceptualized. This graduate seminar examines the frontier of the interdisciplinary literature on institutions and economic evolution. It is designed to develop a close dialogue between institutional and evolutionary economic economy, as well as between economic geography and other heterodox economics. It seeks to help students develop a critical angle to the existing literature, and a clear conceptualization of institutions and evolution from a geographic perspective.

Evaluation
The class is conducted mainly through discussion and you are expected to read all papers marked with a star. Class participation accounts for 25 percent of the final grade. The other requirement for the class is a written "research project" that can take several forms: a critical summary and evaluation of a relevant paper or book; a proposed research agenda; or a term paper. You have to decide on your research project prior to the end of the semester and get my approval. The last date to complete the project is April 1. Feel free to consult with me regarding possible projects. I will be happy to assist you.

Topics and Readings
Required readings are marked by asterisk(*).

1. Institutions and Economic Geography


2. Varieties of institutionalisms


3. Relations as institutions


4. Conventions as institutions


5. **Historical institutionalism**


6. **Institutional variety and complementarity**


7. Institutional Change


8. Evolutionary Economic Geography


9. Evolutionary Economics


Pavel Pelikan 2008. How to generalize Darwinism suitably to help understand both the evolution and the development of economies, Max Planck Institute of Economics, Evolutionary Economics Group, papers on economics and evolution, # 0817


10. Co-evolution


11. Path Dependence and Lock-ins


David, P. 1994. Why are institutions the “carriers of history”? Path dependence and the evolution of conventions, organizations and institutions. Structural Change and Economic Dynamics, 5, 2, 205—200.


12. Debating Evolutionary Economic Geography—Towards (Evolutionary) Geographic Political Economy?


