

Prof. Dr. Patrick Köllner
November 4-5, 2014

**Course outline *Area Studies and Comparative Area Studies:
World Regions and their Study at GIGA and Beyond***

Course outline:

The GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies is engaged in (social-science based) area studies and comparative area studies. It thus behoves doctoral students at the institute to understand what such studies are all about, what approaches exist in these fields of study, and what are the relevant issues that are currently discussed in academic circles, especially with respect to comparative area studies.

The seminar will present an introduction to area studies writ large as well as to comparative area studies. The seminar will provide a broad overview of the various strands in area studies, sketch contemporary discussions concerning the rationale of such studies, and highlight recent conceptual and other work concerning the ‘new’ field of comparative area studies. With respect to area studies, existing spatial notions such as ‘continents’, ‘East’ and ‘West’, or the ‘Global South’ will be critically examined and the meta-geographical idea of ‘world regions’ will be introduced and discussed.

The two-day seminar, consisting of two morning group sessions and individual afternoon reading time, is targeted at all members of the GIGA doctoral programme, especially new ones, and at other interested doctoral students at the University of Hamburg. Participants will need to read some important texts in advance to fully benefit from the seminar. Relevant texts will be distributed electronically before the seminar to the participants.