



HAMBURG POLITICAL SCIENCE SEMINAR SERIES – HPS³

INVITATION

Please be invited to the Hamburg Political Science Seminar Series - HPS³ in Summer Semester 2026.

The HPS Seminar Series features international speakers presenting cutting-edge research in all subfields of political science and political economy. It takes place on Thursdays and Wednesdays. For further information about dates and speakers in SuSe 26 please refer to the [HPS³ Website](#).

We welcome on

April 8, 2026 17:15-18:45 CET in VMP9 B130

Professor Janina Dill (Dame Louise Richardson Chair in Global Security, University of Oxford)

Title: The Concept and Reality of Norms in International Relations: An Internal Approach

Abstract:

Despite significant advances, IR norms research would benefit from clearer conceptual delineation between norms and other normative “oughts” and from empirical indicators that capture these differences with greater precision. In response, this paper proposes an “internal approach” that focuses on norms as a type of belief. We define a norm as an individual’s second-order normative belief about what important others deem appropriate, which can be distinguished from first-order “personal” normative beliefs. Relying on interviews we show that British MPs understand their second-order normative beliefs about the appropriateness of military humanitarian intervention as distinct from their personal beliefs, and we identify different sources (practice, morality, law) and reference groups for decision-makers’ second-order normative beliefs (i.e. for norms). We then demonstrate that different constellations of first- and second-order normative beliefs are associated with differences in political preferences of ordinary citizens, relying on an original wave survey. Although first-order “personal” normative beliefs have a larger effect on support for military humanitarian intervention, the effect of norms is stronger, the more respondents identify with the reference group believed to endorse them. The article contributes to clearer conceptual delineations of a) norms from other normative “oughts” and b) among norms with different sources. It demonstrates the feasibility and empirical value of studying the internal enactment of norms in beliefs through interviews and surveys, complementing the prevalent study of their external enactment in discourse and behavior.

We invite everyone interested to attend!